

Trans medical treatment and faith

By Cristan Williams

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Abstract

A reader writes: I am trans but also religious. Although I live as a woman, I was born with boy parts. In my opinion, to have surgery would imply that God made a mistake. I do not believe that God is capable of making a mistake, which means that I have the body I was [...]

Article

A reader writes:

I am trans but also religious. Although I live as a woman, I was born with boy parts. In my opinion, to have surgery would imply that God made a mistake. I do not believe that God is capable of making a mistake, which means that I have the body I was meant to have. I believe that God gave me a challenge and that I am playing the hand that I was dealt. I am trans and proud, but I will not second guess the Almighty. I hope there is room for that, and I love and respect those who believe differently. We are all in this together.

There is a story an old guy once told me. It's corny, but here it is:

There's this guy and there's a flood. He climbs on top of his roof to be safe from the flood. He begins praying that god save him and his faith in prayer is unshakable. He KNOWS that god will save him.

His atheist neighbors come by in a boat and tell him to hop in. They tell him that god isn't going to come down from the sky and save him because god doesn't exist. He tells them that his faith is unshakable and refuses to get in the boat.

The water continues to rise and in a little while, his Muslim neighbors from down the street come by in a boat. They tell him that their god allah told them to check in on him. They tell him to get into the boat. The man tells them that his god is an awesome god and that allah is a false god. He refuses to get in the boat.

The flood waters continue to rise. He is eventually swept away and dies. He then finds himself standing before god. He asks, "God, why did you not save me? My faith in you was unshakable!" God replied, "I sent not one, but TWO boats to save you and you refused to get in!"

I think that a lot of religious trans people view the medical treatment of gender dysphoria as their "boat" sent to them by their god. From what I've seen, they thank god every day for giving them the tools they needed to live the life they felt their god had designed for them.

What I do know is that there is a 'boat' that people can choose to get in. I have no belief that a god

programmed me with gender dysphoria so that I'd learn how to suffer well. I'm an atheist.

At one time ALL diseases - pathogenic and genetically caused - was viewed as being part of a god's design. If you got sick, it was god's will. When humanity began unlocking the causes of the physical maladies we suffered, most viewed these achievements as a gift from god; a 'medical miracle.' Indeed, many religious people believe that god guides the hand of the surgeon.

Many folks nowadays see the 'cross' they're bearing as both the physical malady and the treatment. Yes, a child may be very ill from both the cancer and the treatment, but folks view the treatment as a god-send. For them, the treatment is the window god opened when he closed a door. For them, surviving is an inspiration; they feel grateful that god showed them a healing path forward.

I wish you well in the path you've chosen. I encourage you to ensure that you have support (that doesn't resort to fear or shame-based tactics). Depending upon the degree you may suffer dysphoria, I can believe that your cross is indeed heavy. Please ensure that you have - at the very least - experienced and qualified therapeutic support in your corner.

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