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## TGIF: Hope in a Transgendered Borderland

Written by [Danny Blackwell](#) and published by [Transgender International Fellowship](#). Quoted verbatim. See [Information on Re-publishing](#).

### Understanding and Ministering to a Transgendered Person

It was a gift from my wife, this second blue jean jacket, and the first one was a gift from my older brother when I was seven. A lot of things happened between these two gifts; things good and bad, things that added to me and things that took away from me. I don't remember what became of the first jacket all I remember is the pleasure of having and wearing it. Struggling with gender identity tends to fill us with mixed messages and confusing memories also. The second jacket didn't ignite the same type of joy but it stirred up the coals of smoldering masculinity and fanned the flames of what God wants to restore. Between these two gifts I have tried to fit into clothes and roles not of my gender design.

So I'm left with a dilemma, do I continue in futile attempts to block pain and escape being male or do I embrace the Master Tailor's call to put on restored masculinity. The Lord used that jacket to help me to see that being male is not ugly, dirty, or something I can put on and off but God's gift and it is for me. Funny, the jacket felt big and stiff with many empty pockets but the Lord, as the Master Tailor says gently, "I am with you and you are not alone".

Healing unfortunately is not as easy as putting on a jacket but one of God's greatest gifts is our gender identity and rather than continuing to discard it, we must embrace what God is able to restore. Sure I lost the first jacket but it was restored to me in love from my wife. So also God calls us to willingly face our losses and allow Him to clothe us again with His great gift, restored gender identity. Fortunately we are not called to accomplish this task on our own for He uses His Word, people, and counselling.

The Lord as the Master Tailor guarantees His work and He never fails. As it took time to make and like the jacket; so change in us will take time but by getting closer to the Lord, we are restored and healed.

“You are not transgendered, why are you here?” The person before me who made that statement assumed that because I wasn’t dressed as a woman and was part of a restaurant gathering for transgendered people, I was a mystery to that person. My answer to Susan (not real name) was I am a pastor and I care. Susan almost fell off the chair and said “Christians don’t hang around us...”

I could have easily answered Susan’s question with, “I use to be transgendered...” Transgendered can be defined as someone whose thoughts, lifestyle, or behavior crosses over gender boundaries thus a man might feel that he should have been a woman and visa versa. It is a continuum on one end where those who only wear clothes of the opposite gender to those on the other extreme who feel that they should be the other gender.

***Being transgendered is like being in a borderland, an area somewhere between accepting one’s male or female identity, that is God given. The Lord, who walks in that borderland, calls us to minister His heart and freedom to people there, as He is able to set people free.***

For those in this borderland there has been from an early age a sense that they were different, for some, it expressed itself in wanting to do opposite gender activities or play. For others there was a cross gender identification that was rooted in abuse, neglect or a sense that the other sex was treated better growing up. A lot of issues come together and in focus that puts one on the path to a transgendered lifestyle. There is a point that a decision may occur in a person’s life to go beyond cross gender experimentation to full gender transition and thus become the opposite sex at least in appearance for XX cannot become XY. This transition happens through multifaceted medical and psychiatric disciplines coming together, over time, to achieve the person’s goal. The cost of achieving this goal goes way beyond financial expenditures to

impacting extended family relationships as well as possible irreversible medical procedures.

**Does God care for people in this transgendered borderland?  
Yes, for we are all people who have gone our own ways and  
tried to meet our own needs without Him until His love  
reaches out to us with arms that say I love you, I died for you  
and I can change you....**

What is the best way for us to minister to transgendered people in their particular borderland?

The best example of this is seen in John 4, where the Lord rather than bypassing Samaria ministered there. First, we must go to them just like Jesus did. Then we must follow the three 'L's' look, listen and love. Jesus sat down at a well and reached out and transformed a woman who was a despised person in her culture. He reached beyond the Jewish cultural norm of the day, stepping out of a comfort zone.

Reaching a transgendered person is really no different than reaching anyone else for we are all the same. As we go to them and earn the right to be heard by listening, the Lord will work through our lives. We have to love them actively and use words if necessary as doors open. It is important to walk through those doors and serve. One example of that might be to look at their practical needs. Some seasonal holidays can be really lonely if one does not have financial resources or family support. Our ministry must be balanced and offer hope in Jesus' Name. Finally, the greatest hindrance to reaching these people or any other is our attitude.

He cares therefore we must care no matter, thus we are called to care:

There is HOPE Psalm 107

Acts of kindness build bridges i.e. cold pop, buying someone a hot dog and listening to them.

Church community dinners open doors – we must make friends to share Jesus

Don't be afraid to be yourself and be a servant of Jesus.

Realize that it is their turf, and respect it.

Be prepared for opposition from Christians.

Thus be ready to listen and talk to them.

Be there for the long haul. Go the distance with them.

Don't reject people if they fall, fail or let you down.

Walk with them as they take steps toward redemption.

Remembering rejection is something that can open the wounds from the past.

It is going to take God moving on their lives as a result of our prayers.

We are faced with people who have a strong sense of community and if we don't stand along side of them, we will loose them.

## **See Also**

[New Hope Outreach Archives](#)

## **Comments**

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