This paper is my personal Position Paper on the Subject. It is written in response to the story of a Professor of Theology (Chair of the Department) in an Evangelical School who recently announced that she was really a male, i.e. a transgendered person; and to his comments in the article and in a video message. See-


With due respect to Alexander Pope who wrote his An Essay on Man: "Know then thyself, presume not God to scan [in Pope's day, this word meant "to look over or analyze closely]; The proper study of Mankind is Man."; the Christian and Biblical understanding of "Man" and Mankind does begin with scanning or examining God closely God! "Man" is understood properly only in "his" relationship to Him.

To understand the nature of human beings, we must begin with an understanding of the nature of their Creator, who self-reveals in the Christian Bible, in the Person of Jesus Christ and in the Natural World. The Biblical teaching is that humans, as created, reflect, image and represent this God in His communicable attributes [CA]; however partially or imperfectly they may do that after their Fall into a sinful or corrupt State and thus became alienated from Him.

This is foundational truth. Everything else in this paper is built on it. The Image of God is a very important concept. It is what gives all people, equally, their intrinsic and infinite value, even though the phrase itself is used only a few times in the Bible (Gen1:26-27, 9:6; Col 3:10; James 3:9, 5:1). And the Image of God is not to be confused with the Spirit of God who comes to live within those humans who experience regeneration (conversion to Christ).

A Summary of the Nature and Character of God. His attributes that are shared by all Humans [the Communicable Attributes are indicated by CA]

God is spirit, non-corporeal [CA]; infinite, omnipresent, including in and above Time
He is Eternal, uncreated, unlimited and unchanging; He is Self-sufficient and perfect, complete. He can not develop, make progress or regress, gain or lose anything (including knowledge and memory) [NOT CA]

He is all-knowing; knows Himself (is Self-conscious) [CA]; He knows everything that exists-past, present and future- all at once;

He is intelligent, has a Mind, is rational [CA] [we know what Formal or "Aristotelian" Logic is, or what the Rules of Thinking are, by studying how God thinks]

He has His Purposes and Plans, a Will; He makes judgments and choices; He is a Creator, a Designer, a change-maker [CA]

He has a Moral Will. [CA]He has Principles and Norms about how everything is meant to be in the world He created. [That is what determines what is right and good.]

He is present within Creation and History (an Activist, a Worker) to see to it that His Will and Purposes and Design is fulfilled or to thwart what is not. [this is what Justice is] [CA]

God has a personal relationship with Himself (Father, Son and Spirit) and with what He has made (He is not distant and uninvolved); He particularly seeks a relationship with Human Beings [CA]

He has emotions. He is not unfeeling. He has compassion for His Creation including all People. He is not untouched or unaffected by our experiences, especially our suffering but also our transgressions. [CA]

God is all-powerful, free and able to do whatever He wants. He has absolute Authority in the world He has made, so He has the right to exercise His Power as He desires [NOT CA]

To summarize, God is a non-physical, non-material personal Being who existed, and exists now, as a complete person before and apart from the natural, material world. As a "person", God knows and enjoys Himself, has a purpose and will, is intelligent, thinks rationally, is creative and works to fulfill His ideas or thoughts. He acts within the natural world, governing and preserving it. It is by His standards and actions, that we know what is good and right in the world. We exist in relation to Him, but He does not exist in relation to us. He reveals some of Himself to us in word and deed and it is through that revelation that we know Him and our true selves.

Although the Nature and Character of God is unchanging (James 1:17 cf Heb 6:17, 13:8), He is not unchanging in the ways in which He works out His Will and Purposes; however, God can not do anything contrary to his Nature or Character, eg-He can not lie. See Number 23:19, Titus 1:2, Heb 6:18
Human Nature and the Image of God

The Divine Attributes that Humans share with God are as follows [I use the male pronoun for convenience. Of course, females are included among Human beings]

- The Human Nature is spirit and non-corporeal
- The human being knows himself (is Self-conscious)
- He has a Mind, is rational and can do abstract, symbolic thinking.
- He has His Purposes and Plans, a Will; He makes judgments and choices; He is a Creator, a Designer, a change-maker
- He has innate Moral Principles, Norms and a sense of Justice.
- He is active within Creation (a Worker) to see to it that His Will, Purposes and Designs are fulfilled or to thwart what is not.
- Humans beings are personal and have the capacity and need for personal relationship with God and with other humans (Community)
- He has emotions. He is not unfeeling. He has compassion

Human Nature and Personhood

I am a person because I am the Image of God, made in His likeness. I have the need and capacities to know and enjoy God as well as myself (I am God-conscious and Self-conscious). Like Him, I am able to think and do so rationally and abstractly, to work creatively and to live in a meaningful relationship with both God and others. I also have the capacity to make decisions and to do so responsibly. I have a basic, innate sense of what God has determined is moral or good and what is evil or not good. I am a rational moral being. All of this together is what a “person” is. I am an animal, a Mammal, but Personhood gives me sets me apart and above all other living things.

Note the Image of God is not physical or corporeal. Our infinite value as a "person" does not depend on, or derive from, our "Race", Gender, Sexuality, physical abilities characteristics or attributes.

All human beings have natural "life” in common with all other animals - all are "living things" with the "breath of life", nevertheless there is an essential difference and the distinction between Humans and other Animals must be maintained

Genesis 1:26 God said, “let us make man = “adam” = [ahh daahm] = [humanity] in our image, in
our likeness and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Not only the other animals, but also the plants (both flora and fauna) exist for the sake of Human Beings.

Genesis 1:11 And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth." And it was so. 12 The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 29 And God said, "Behold, I have given you [Humans] every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food.

This is in no way a license to exploit the Natural World. On the contrary, Human Beings were created with the purpose of cultivating and caring for the Natural World. All People are born with that Mandate (Gen.1:28, 2:15)

**Human Nature is a Unity**

I define all these qualities of Personhood collectively as my "Soul". The Bible talks about "body", "soul" and "spirit", sometimes interchangeably, but they are not identical. Jesus spoke of "heart, soul and mind" in Matthew 22:37. There is debate about what each is and how they are related. Theologians do not agree; but the dominant view is that a human being is "one", a "unity", and neither tripartite (spirit, soul and body- 1Thess 5:23) nor a dualism (soul and spirit- Heb 4:12, body and soul- Matt 10:28) There is truth in the explanation that these terms do not refer to any objective thing, but are dynamic and are best used to refer to functions. Generally speaking, when we talk of our (Human) relationship to the physical world, using our 5 senses, we talk of "Body". When we talk about our personal relationship with ourselves or other people, we are talking about our "Soul". And "Spirit" is ourselves in relationship with God and spiritual reality. Obviously the concepts are often overlapping and connected. Scripture says the Holy Spirit dwells in our spirit, in our soul or heart (thoughts and emotions) and in our bodies. 1 Cor 6:12-20 et al

Inasmuch as the Spirit of God is God, we must not identify the Spirit within us as ourselves or our "true selves". We are not God or Deity. The Spirit may control us, fill us, enable or empower us, illumine and guide us; but we can not be, and should not seek to be, in a union with God in which we literally lose ourselves in the Spirit. The distinction between the Creator and Creation must always be preserved. We must reject all language and forms of Monism [All is One], pantheism [All or the One is God] or panentheism [All is in God]. We are to avoid Mysticism or New Age Spirituality in which the Person seeks to be assimilated into the Divine.

**GOD and SEXUALITY**
Based on the above characteristics describing God, we can be certain that God is a complete, full Person, but yet He has no body, no physicality. Therefore, God is not sexual and has no gender (The male pronoun is used, and He is called Father, but that is metaphorical and not to be taken literally. He also is described as being like a Mother- Deut. 32:18; Isaiah 42:14, 49:15? and 66:12-13. These, too, are figures of speech. They are not meant to teach God is female, any more than Genesis 1:27 teaches that God is both male and female or bisexual. Therefore, having a body and sexuality are not essential to being a Person. Human beings image the eternal God.

But, unlike God, Human beings obviously have physical bodies and sexuality. Jesus had a body and therefore gender/sexual identity (male). Sexuality, gender or physical, genetic identity are all essential to who we are and how we live our life on earth. It is important to keep in mind that a person born is a fully human being, not a potential human being. How a particular human will develop and live their life remains to be seen over time, but that development is not what makes or measures the reality of the child being human. Value is not added on or subtracted from her or him -Ps.39:13-16, 52:5, et al

- Sex is to enable men and women to become "one flesh" (Eph 5:31)
- Sex is to enable Humanity to reproduce (Gen.1:28; Matthew 19:45-6)
- However Jesus and presumable Paul did not have sex
- Some are gifted to be celibate
- Angels in Heaven have bodies but no intercourse
- God knows we need food, clothes, etc for our bodies. God provides it. (Matt 4:4, 5:17, 6:11, 28-33) but humans are to eat to live and not live to eat. (1 Cor 6:13, Phil 3:18-20, 4:12-13; 1 Tim 6:17-19)
  - God/Jesus healed bodies
  - We are to discipline our body and its appetites
  - We are to enjoy our bodies and sex
  - Bodies are to be kept holy- temples of Spirit
  - Eternal Life is of different quality and of more value than physical life (John 4:34, 6:27)
- The physical body is to be resurrected like Jesus’ was- our glorified bodies shall be in Heaven (1Cor.15, 2 Cor 5, et al)

**Human Sexuality**

Like other living (breathing) physical beings and all primates, we are are born with a gender. Some have male genitalia and some have female genitalia. God created humans to be male
and female. People are conceived and born as either one or the other (Gen 1:27) Besides different body parts and organs, there are distinctive male and female traits or distinguishing characteristics [the Professor I mentioned at the beginning inadvertently gave testimony to this fact- she said she had a female body but always knew deep within herself that she was a man]. Gender and gender traits are determined by God at conception and realized from birth (Psalm 139:13-16)

The Doctrine of the Incarnation teaches that the person we are born as is the one we became at conception. The Person and his or her gender began at conception and if that is a fact, gender can not truly be changed later, ie- trans-generation would not be possible.

The major evidence and the prime example of this is Jesus. Jesus was God incarnate and a male human being from the moment of his conception. That was what he was born as. He did not become either at some later time in his life. In his resurrection, Jesus continued to have male traits. Our resurrection shall be as his was. We share the same continuity from conception to Glory. The Birth Narratives tell us this-

Matt 1 18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. ... [Mary] was found to be with child... 20 ...that which is conceived in her ... 21 [shall be] a son ...23 "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son ...

Luke 1:31 ... you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

John 1:1 ... the Word was God. 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us ...

Obviously, human beings were created biologically to mate and reproduce: some female to become pregnant and be mothers; others male to impregnate and become fathers (This is true even though for many persons, male and female, the role of producing children is not possible for physical reasons.) This was obviously God's General Plan when He created Human Beings. In this way, people were to "fill the earth" as His stewards of the Created World.

Gen. 1:27 God created male and female … 28 God blessed them and said to them, "be fruitful and increase in number, ie- human beings have bodies with either male or female genitalia primarily for them to procreate other human beings.

An odd testimony to this fact is the command for humans not to have sex with other species of animals-

Lev.18:23 ... you [man] shall not lie with any animal and so make yourself unclean with it, neither shall any woman give herself to an animal to lie with it: it is perversion.

Exo. 22:19 1 Whoever lies with an animal shall be put to death.

However, Sexual Intercourse is normal and good in and of itself apart from procreation. It is important to the relationship of husband and wife.
Hebrews 13:4  marriage should be honored by all (It is used as a metaphor of the relationship between Christ, the Groom and the Church, the Bride (Eph.5)

Jesus agrees:  Mark 10:6 "at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.7 'for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, 8and the two will become one flesh.' so they are no longer two, but one .... ."

1 Corinthians 7:2… each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. 3 The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4 The wife’s body does not belong to her alone, but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. 5 Do not deprive each other [of sexual intercourse]

Gender Roles

The primary gender roles are assigned by God. They are described after the Fall this way-

Genesis 3:16 [Female Role: subservient wife and suffering Mother] To the woman He said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

Genesis 3:17 [Male Role: dominating, but hard working Provider] And to Adam he said,…cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; 19 By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground,

It is important to note that we say these roles are "described". They are not "prescribed". These roles, as described here in chapter 3, are among the consequences of the Fall. However, the roles prescribed and expected by God of men and women are found in chapters 1 and 2. Couples (male and female) are to reproduce and are to work together as equal partners to cultivate the earth. The Fall added a "curse" to their original roles. Redemption removes that Curse and restores the original relationship and roles. Marriage is meant to be redeemed in Christ. See Eph. 5:21-32

I agree that many other and specific gender roles are culturally and arbitrarily assigned to men and women which are not innate, eg- housekeeping (female) and truck driving (male). Such roles have changed through the centuries.

The important point here is that sexuality or gender, and any traits and roles associated with gender, are not what sets human beings apart from all other beings. They are all elements with varying value to our physical and social and well-being, but they are not essential to who we are
as persons. To repeat, we know this because God's Personhood does not require, indeed is perfect and complete, without a physical, sexual body. We are also sure of this because at death our body and soul are separated and our Soul (the Person we are) continues to live on in Heaven, with God, apart from the physical body we now have. For example-

Acts 7:59 as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." cf Rev 6:9-11

Luke 20:37 But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. 38 Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him."

Philippians 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.

2 Cor 5:6 So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, 7 for we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9 So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

Matt 10:28 do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. [The soul, the person, is eternal. This is a warning, not about annihilation of the soul, the person; but, of it being sent into eternal punishment.]

Sexuality in Heaven

When we enter Heaven, we continue to be who we have been, male or female. Jesus lives there now as an embodied Man (Col 2:9 cf 1 Tim 2:5) Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus is a book written by counselor John Gray. It sold more than 50 million copies and was very popular and influential in the 1990s. Its thesis, and that of many other similar books, is not Politically Correct in these egalitarian times, but I think it is demonstrably and scientifically valid. Men and Women each have unique characteristics innate to their sex, their gender. (The alternative is a unisex society, wherein "gender traits" and roles are individually selected or assigned simply by someone's personal preference.)

We take our natural, God-given personalities, temperaments and unique characteristics with us
when we enter Heaven. "We" exist in Heaven. The person we have been continues and is not lost, eg- Moses and Elijah (Matt 17:3, Luke 20:37-38, 23:32-43) But we are not complete during the interim period before resurrection. We die and go into Glory, joining in community with all the Saints who have preceded us there (Heb 12:22-23) but our sexuality is missing, meaning those innate psychological and personality traits that we have specifically because of our physical bodies and gender.

Our resurrection body shall be very different than the body we now have. It, and all its gender specific traits, is to be transformed. More is added to us, we are completed, in the Resurrection (1 Cor 15:35:54). That is its purpose. Paul insists this transformed body is essential (Rom 8:11,18-24; Phil 3:2). Even while affirming that to die is to be absent from the body and present with the Lord, the thought of being without that glorified body really upsets him. We need our bodies, our sexuality, to be complete in Heaven (2 Cor 5:1-10). The most common definitions of Sexuality focus on sexual orientation and attraction and attitudes toward consequent sexual behavior. As real and important as these are, they are not what I mean by Sexuality.

There shall be sex (ie- gender) in heaven, but not physical intercourse. There is no need for physical sex in Heaven, no need for the physical union of a man and woman and no need for procreation. (Luke 20:27-36) These physical activities are not what we shall be about in Heaven. Gender and Sexuality is spiritual, mental and emotional, as well physical. It is these spiritual, mental and emotional qualities, derived from being male or female, that are essential to being a person, as well as to being individuals. And this is the definition I have in mind here for "Sexuality". This understanding of sexuality is known and demonstrated by everyone's experience. The resurrection involves the glorification of all that we are as individual persons, including these spiritual, mental and emotional aspects or dimensions of sexuality. In this sense, the Risen Jesus remains sexual (a male) and this explains how we, too, shall enjoy "sex" (gender and gender traits) in Heaven after our "bodily" resurrection.

[After his resurrection, Jesus said] "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have," (Luke 24:39).

Col.2:9 in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form

Acts 1:11 ... "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Rev.1:7 Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.

Are some people born asexual? homosexual?

Matt 19:12 [Jesus said] For there are some eunuchs who were that way from birth [literally from
the womb] and some who were made eunuchs by others and some who became eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven

Although quoted by Gay Advocates to the contrary, Jesus says nothing here about gender and this verse does not teach that some people are born homosexual. The context is Marriage. The word translated as "Eunuch" [ενουχίζω=yoo-noo'-khos] originally referred to a man who guarded over a chamber of women (a chamber-man. There were also chambermaids.) or had other servant-type work in a Court. They were men who had been castrated. The theory was that castrated men, though still males, would be functionally asexual (or very likely, as a result of the castration, literally asexual, having no interest in sex at all) and could serve a King or Court without the distraction or temptation of sexual activity. There is nothing in this that indicates or requires them to be Gay.

The word eunuch is also often translated simply as "celibate" and that is its meaning in this text. Jesus is teaching that while men are normally expected to marry and have children, some are called to remain celibate for the sake of the Kingdom (such as Jesus himself and the Apostle Paul did- See 1 Cor 7:29-40).

There are some who argue from ancient sources other than the Bible that Eunuchs were Gay (by definition) and thus, they insist, Jesus teaches, matter-of-factually and without condemnation, that some men are born that way [lit. "from the womb", but that phrase could also mean castrated upon birth] Certainly, there is nothing in these verses about females being born Lesbian.

This verse is used as a "proof-text", in connection with the story of the conversion and baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8, that the early church accepted Gay Men into their membership. I am not convinced. There is no indication at all that the Ethiopian was Gay by nature or otherwise. The most we can say was that he had been castrated.

Addendum re Abnormal Categories of Sexual Identities

“Hermaphrodite” implies that a person is both fully male and fully female. This is a physiologic impossibility" and the label is rejected by the Intersex Society of North America (Source: ISNA)

"Atypical development of physical sex characteristics are collectively referred to as intersex conditions. These conditions can involve abnormalities of the external genitals, internal reproductive organs, sex chromosomes, or sex-related hormones." - ISNA

"If you ask experts at medical centers how often a child is born so noticeably atypical in terms of genitalia that a specialist in sex differentiation is called in, the number comes out to about 1 in 1500 to 1 in 2000 births. But a lot more people than that are born with subtler forms of sex anatomy variations, some of which won’t show up until later in life." -ISNA

"People who identify as transgender or transsexual are usually people who are born with typical male or female anatomies but feel as though they’ve been born into the “wrong body.” For example, a person who identifies as transgender or transsexual may have typical female
anatomy but feel like a male and seek to become male by taking hormones or electing to have sex reassignment surgeries." - ISNA

"People who have intersex conditions have anatomy that is not considered typically male or female. Most people with intersex conditions come to medical attention because doctors or parents notice something unusual about their bodies. In contrast, people who are transgendered have an internal experience of gender identity that is different from most people."

-ISNA

Some use the existence of the persons in the above categories as proof that "Gender" itself is an arbitrary cultural or social construct. We grant that these persons may exist, such as the Theology Professor who is Transgender. But to me this definitely does not warrant a conclusion that all gender is a social construct any more than the existence of persons born with two heads [as reported in a recent News Story] proves that having one head is normal only by cultural custom.

An additional note: None of these labels or categories mean "homosexual".