

The transgender obsession

[OpinionMartin Thielen](#) | July 26, 2023

An anti-LGBTQ demonstrator carries a sign with an evangelical Christian message outside a Glendale Unified School District (GSUD) Board of Education meeting on June 20, 2023 in Glendale, California. Coming two weeks after another GUSD board meeting where a motion was discussed to recognize June as Pride Month sparked violent protests, police were out in force to keep the sides separated.

A large segment of American Christianity is obsessed with transgender people. Anti-trans sermons, articles, videos, study guides, billboards, podcasts and social media messages, along with massive political efforts to harass transgender people, are rampant.

For example, more than 700 legislative bills have been put forward in 2023 that seek to strip rights and protections from the LGBTQ community, especially transgender people. Which raises the obvious question, Why? Are transgender people, already a tiny group of highly marginalized people, really a threat to God, religion, the family and America? n

Just to be clear, Jesus never once mentioned the subject of homosexuality. He certainly never talked about transgender issues. **[On the contrary! Jesus twice brought up the transgender issue. Once, on the road to Jerusalem, and, secondly, while talking to his disciples who were searching for a place for their Passover meal. Ed.]** The topic of homosexuality is a miniscule concern of the Bible, which was written during a time when people had absolutely no conception of sexual orientation.

And yet, large numbers of Christians continue to expend enormous amounts of mean-spirited energy on gay and transgender people, which was evidently not a topic of concern to Jesus. At the same time, many of these same Christians ignore the things Jesus actually did care about including love, justice, mercy, grace, compassion, empathy, inclusion and not judging others.

For decades, the Christian church in America has asked the question, “What would Jesus do?” The obvious implication is that we should try to figure out what Jesus would do and then follow his example. Since Jesus never broached LGBTQ issues, **[Actually, hr did. Indirectly. Ed.]** we can’t say for sure exactly what Jesus would do. But whatever Jesus may have thought about gay and transgender people, he certainly would not have treated them with the contempt many modern-day Christians do. In fact, the only people Jesus ever condemned were arrogant, intolerant, self-righteous and judgmental religious people.

Transgender people are not a threat and do not need to be abused. If anything, they need extra empathy.

For example, transgender teenagers are far more likely to be bullied, assaulted and kicked out of their homes. They are also far more likely to attempt suicide. They need compassion, not condemnation. So when the church lashes out against these highly vulnerable young people in the name of God and Scripture, it makes Christianity look like a cruel, small-minded, extremist, hate-filled religion. Which is a major reason the American church is in a free fall decline of epic proportions, especially among teens and young adults.

In short, the current nonstop attack on transgender (and other LBGTQ) people is deeply hurting an already wounded and marginalized group of people. It’s also destroying what’s left of the reputation and credibility of the church. Worst of all, it’s breaking the heart of Jesus. It’s (past) time to stop this abuse.