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*Because He lives
I can face tomorrow*

Grace and Lace Letter

*A Christian publication
for crossdressers, transgenderists, transsexuals*

March 1994

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"Why do you look for the living among the dead?
He is not here but has risen."

Luke 24:5

Dear Sisters and Friends,

The accomplishment of our salvation is in the death of Jesus Christ as He paid the ultimate penalty due our sins. Those, who by faith, have adopted the sacrifice as their penalty paid; have experienced full forgiveness for sin and have restoration to fellowship with God. The restoration is made permanent by the resurrection of Jesus Christ in a continuing fellowship with our God. Christ gained the victory over the Spiritual death our sinful nature was headed for.

God saw the mess the world was in in Noah's day so He destroyed humanity with a flood and saw it did no good so He said, "Never again . . ." This time He came into the world Himself and fulfilled His command in Ezekiel 18:4, "Behold, all souls are mine . . . the soul that sins shall die." By God's pronouncement death is sin's penalty. Death of the soul and spirit. God died that death in the person of Jesus Christ and in so doing opened up the way to fellowship with Him. The walking dead today are those who have neglected establishing a Spiritual life.

As the sacrifice of the Cross forgives our sins, the resurrection of Christ gives us the assurance of a continuing Spiritual relationship by the Holy Spirit given on the day of Pentecost. If there is no Resurrection then there is no Ascension and therefore there can be no Holy Spirit coming on the day of Pentecost to indwell those who believe, put their faith and trust in and adhere to and cling to Jesus Christ. If there was only the Cross but no Resurrection the most we could be is a bunch of miserable forgiven sinners with no Life in us. St Paul said in Romans 5:10, "For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, we shall be saved by His LIFE." . . . because I live, you shall live also." John 14:19

The whole creation hinges on His Resurrection. Remember it daily.

I hope you all have a nice Easter with your families. Those of you who have no family communications like me because of crossdressing, join me in Spirit and we can worship together in our churches. Also invited are those in the closet. Dress if you can and get a good Church service on TV and join us in that manner. I did that for many years.

Those of you who feel crossdressing is a sin which stands in the way of a good relationship with God I ask you to read my article, "Is God Against Us" in the Fall '90 issue of Femme Mirror. If you don't get the Mirror, I will be happy to provide you with a copy plus the first article I wrote for our Beta Chi NL. In no way is crossdressing a sin or any hindrance to a lifelong, rewarding fellowship with God. When the devil or forces of evil try to inform you that God thinks you are an abomination to Him, remember: Jesus dropped the charges.

n -

My love, in Christ
[Signature]

THE GIFT

By Janice Van Cleve

Wouldn't it be refreshing to see transvestism viewed as a positive good instead of a negative, or at best neutral, phenomenon? Fundamentalists decry it as a sin (a false charge as demonstrated in "The Bible and Transvestism", Tapestry #49); psychologists characterize it as a sexually motivated disorder; psychiatrists treat it as an aberration imprinted by upbringing. TV's themselves argue that it is a harmless hobby, a vehicle for appreciating softness and tenderness, or an expression of a feminine side of their nature.

But what if they're all wrong? What if these characterizations fail to describe what transvestism really is? What if instead we try to look at transvestism as a gift; and not just any gift, but a gift created by Almighty God Himself and deliberately bestowed by Him on certain chosen individuals to fulfill His divine plan. Zounds! Awesome! Radical! Yes, and frightening, too.

Of course, nowhere in the Bible does Christ say: "Hitch up your hose, girls, I've got plans for you." However, He does reveal a vision of His gifts to us all in their wonderful diversity through Paul: "There are different gifts but the same Spirit; there are different ministries but the same Lord; there are different works but the same God who accomplishes all of them in everyone. To each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good... preaching, teaching, faith, healing, miracles, prophesy, recognizing spirits, tongues and the interpretation of tongues. All these are the manifestations of one and the same spirit, who distributes different gifts to different people just as He chooses" (1 Corinthians 12: 4-11).

What's that? You didn't see transvestism in the list? Paul does not pretend that this short list includes all of God's gifts to us. He itemizes more in Romans 12:6-8 and Jesus names others in the Beatitudes such as meekness, thirst for justice, peacemaking and the rest. Indeed there are many gifts -- named and unnamed -- given to us "for the common good".

So why not transvestism? There isn't a shred of evidence that this is not a divine gift. Of course, when most people think of divine gifts they think of musical ability, artistic talent, intelligence, charisma, good health, etc.; but that is obviously too narrow a view. In a very touching story Jesus showed even blindness could be a gift: "He saw a man who had been blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned,

this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?' 'Neither he nor his parents sinned,' Jesus answered: 'He was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him.'" (John 9: 2-3). Then He gave the man sight.

Christians have always had difficulty comprehending how a loving, good, and merciful God could permit conditions that are contrary to their concept of good. Birth defects, arthritis, an untimely death, even AIDS -- all the frailties of human existence -- seem cruel. Some ascribe these to sin while others become callous or turn against their God. Their faith is lacking and Jesus calls them blind: "If you were blind, you would not be guilty, but since you say, 'We see', your guilt remains." (John 9: 41)

Is it not possible that even these so-called evils are also gifts of God? And perhaps not just gifts to those stricken, but to all of us -- to give us an opportunity to demonstrate a caring and loving attitude toward all our brothers and sisters. Consider the story of the Good Samaritan: Was not the victim an opportunity for the Levite, the priest, and the Samaritan to show love for another human being? But only the Samaritan saw the "gift" in the situation and helped the victim.

In the same way Christians and others often fail to comprehend how transvestism (or transsexuality or homosexuality for that matter) could be God's blessing to certain chosen persons -- for their benefit and the benefit of us all. Instead, some set themselves up as judges and condemn what their pride cannot accept. "You must love your neighbor as yourself; but as soon as you make distinctions between classes of people, you are committing sin," James warns them. Besides, "who are you to give a verdict on your neighbor?" (James 2:9, 4:12) Jesus Himself told Peter: "What God has made clean, you have no right to call profane." (Acts 11:9)

However, any gift may be used for good or evil. Everything God created is good, but its ultimate value depends on what we do with it. If we accept transvestism as a divine gift, we instantly realize that it can no longer remain a self-gratifying hobby or a mere aberration to be tolerated. Rather, it becomes a positive good -- a calling or vocation. It is right and morally good to express it and morally wrong to suppress it. Chew on that, Jerry Falwell! See what power, what confidence, what affirmation we gain from accepting this as a gift! "If God is

with us, who can stand against us?" (Romans 8:31)

But wait! Before we charge off to conquer the world, take note: God's gifts do not come without strings. Remember the parable of the talents (Matthew 25: 14-30)? Three servants were given gifts. Two dared to risk their gifts in investments and won a profit. The third suppressed this gift -- and it was ripped from him and he was thrown out. If the two had risked and failed, would they have been punished? I think not. God does not allow us to be tested beyond our strength (1 Corinthians 10:13). The point is, the two acknowledged their gifts and accepted them. With faith in their master -- they tried and succeeded.

God's gifts are His investments in us and He expects a return on the investment. Paul's advice to Timothy applies equally to us: "You have in you a spiritual gift...do not let it lie unused." (1 Timothy 4:14) The third servant did not use his gift and it was taken from him. The fig tree that did not bear fruit was ordered to be cut down (Luke 13: 7-8). The spirit who distributes these gifts "just as he chooses" gives some more gifts than others. Do not envy them; for the more they have been given, the more will be demanded of them (Luke 12:48).

And what return can we transvestites make on the investment our god has made in us? Certainly we do not propose to convert the world to TVism. That's absurd! We (and transsexuals and homosexuals) are born with our gift. We can no more teach someone without our gift to become one of us than a therapist can take the gift from one who is born with it. Like it or not, the gift is given -- it is ours -- in us as an integral part of our unique being.

So what do we do with it? Certainly we have to acknowledge it and accept it. Then what? For starters we can learn from it. We can learn a deeper appreciation and respect for all people. As a minority we can see more clearly the stupidity of prejudice. We can embrace this gift, treasure it, enjoy it, explore and develop it to its full potential, and share it with others. We can help those similarly gifted: removing their fears and roadblocks so they can become all they want to be. "Each one of you has received a special grace, so, like good stewards responsible for all these different graces of God, put yourself at the service of others." (1 Peter 4:10)

And when we've learned to appreciate ourselves and others, and when we've given help to our sisters, then we can reach out to the public who do not share our gift. We can step out with pride in the full light of day as ornaments to our society. After all, "We are God's work of art, created in Christ

Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning He had meant us to live it." (Ephesians 2:10) We are needed in society -- precisely because we cross a gender boundary which is taken so complacently by the majority. Just by being who we are, we challenge false assumptions about gender and genuinely help the public reassess their attitudes. We demonstrate in our being the diversity of God's creative genius, and we help deflate the arrogance that leads to discrimination -- against us and against other minorities.

We are all members of the same crew on spaceship Earth and we will all grow or die based on the contributions of each individual member. No one could contribute if we were all the same, could we? "If your whole body was just one eye, how would you hear anything? If it was just one ear, how would you smell anything? Instead of that, God put all the separate parts into the body on purpose. If all the parts were the same, how could it be a body? As it is, the parts are many but the body is one. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I do not need you,' nor can the head say to the feet, 'I do not need you.' ...God has arranged the body so that...each part may be equally concerned for all the others. If one part is hurt, all parts are hurt with it. If one part is given special honor, all parts enjoy it." (1 Corinthians 12: 17-21, 24-26)

We all have a place and a purpose in this world whether we understand it yet or not. Rednecks, Jews, men and women, whites and blacks, Baptist, bankers, Gays, TV's and TS's -- all are here at His command. Is this difficult to swallow? Even Paul had trouble with it, but he understood: "I should like everyone to be like me, but everybody has his own particular gifts from God, one with a gift for one thing and another with a gift for the opposite." (1 Corinthians 7:7).

Accepting transvestism as a divine gift means accepting also the purpose for which it is given. That may be too uncomfortable for most. But those that do accept acquire also the power and confidence that comes from being right -- not just correct according to human logic -- but morally right. Slander and abuse, criticism and laughter cannot defeat them. Their self assurance and open friendliness to all people win them friendliness in return. They take their place in society as a contributing member and the world was better for them. It's a gift that truly keeps on giving.

-- from Religion and Transvestism
a Tapestry publication

REVIEW

Ambi-Gendered: God's Special Gift

by
Dana Cole

Reviewed by Rebecca Allison

It is very encouraging to see several new publications which deal with religious issues and persons with gender conflicts. We who write for Grace and Lace recognize the need for a diversity of publications to present God's love and words for us to our "community".

We have received an advance copy of a pamphlet, Ambi-Gendered: God's Special Gift, written by Dana Cole. Ms. Cole is a scholarly and well respected member of our community whose articles, including a magnificent essay on realistic expectations for transsexuals titled "Severing Your Options", have appeared in other journals.

In Ambi-Gendered, the author proposes to identify a Biblical model for members of the Transgender/Transsexual community, persons she calls "Ambi-Gendered". The monograph is written with the best intentions, and I wish I could recommend it without reservation.

I do recommend the work, but not without some reservation. The principal theme relating the transgender/ transsexual person to the "eunuch" as described in the Bible is at best a questionable connection. In addition, the monograph contains statements which are disputable and sometimes obviously incorrect.

The term "eunuch" in the Old Testament has a very specific meaning. It refers to a male who has been castrated. The castration was most commonly performed on prisoners of war or other captives, some of whom were put to use as servants of the ruler, his family, or other government officials. Others were voluntarily castrated as preparation for priesthood in pagan religions.

Perhaps in the strictest sense, a post-operative transsexual person might be

considered a "eunuch". [Most transsexuals, incidentally, would deny that they are "ambi-gendered". I, for example, do not feel a part of the male gender in anything but a physical detail.] The crossdresser, on the other hand, could be considered ambi-gendered: but it is not possible by any stretch of the imagination to consider a crossdresser a "eunuch".

*No one who has been emasculated
by crushing or cutting may enter
the assembly of the Lord.*

-Deuteronomy 23:1

Note the location of this verse: it is in the same section as Deuteronomy 22:5, which has been discussed in Grace and Lace on many occasions. Both verses refer to practices found in the heathen people who dwelt in the lands close to the Israelites. By making themselves visibly different from these people, the Israelites called attention to the fact that their God had called them to be unique and devoted to Him. By the time of the later Old Testament prophets such as Isaiah, God's love and grace were much better understood, and were seen to include persons who might have been excluded under the old statutes and ordinances of the Israelite nation.

*Let not any eunuch complain, "I am
only a dry tree."*

*For this is what the Lord says:
"To the eunuchs who keep my
Sabbaths, who choose what
pleases me and hold fast to my
covenant —*

*To them I will give within my temple
and its walls a memorial and a
name better than sons and daughters;*

*I will give them an everlasting
name that will not be cut off."*

-Isaiah 56:3-5

These references are mentioned on pages 16 and 17 of Ambi-Gendered, but are merely listed among the historical passages referring to the presence of eunuchs in the service of pagan kings.

Earlier, on pages 10 and 11, reference is made to Jesus's teaching about "spiritual eunuchs" who abstain from sexual practice out of dedication to the kingdom of God. This section is well written and could have been combined with the passages from Deuteronomy and Isaiah to give a comprehensive discussion of the subject of the spiritual significance of the eunuch.

The monograph also strays from the central theme on numerous occasions to present often irrelevant facts and opinions. For example, an attempt to relate the Biblical role of the eunuch to the American Indian Berdache is interesting, but the introduction of a pagan practice into a discussion of Christianity creates confusion.

Pages 9 and 10 contain several *non sequiturs* and incorrect assumptions:

"...if only one out of three or four men survived the amputation, it could be assumed that the survivors of castration were those whose personal will, whose desires, tended toward removal of the male genitalia, anyway."

No such assumption could be made. The discussion then shifts to the present day, and asserts that

"since gender related topics are so frequent on daytime television, the percentage of men who are closeted and are secretly dealing with gender dysphoria is very high."

Such confused logic detracts from the theme of God's inclusive love for persons who differ from mainstream society.

The author concludes with statements which inspire enthusiasm even if they were not the logical conclusion from her Biblical study:

Ambi/Transgendered people will soon regain the respect due to them, and regain their proper position within our society!

Being Ambi-Gendered is not something God did "to" anyone; it is something God did FOR a few chosen people.

It is truly a special gift from God, to be utilized wisely to make the world a better place for everyone else.

Perhaps it is. But I suggest that "Ambi-Gendered" persons will be better served by the knowledge that God, through Jesus Christ, loves them as much as he loves anyone on His earth.

****To my discredit this month I threw the baby out with the bathwater. Gloria Lemmon sent me a beautiful picture she had drawn in color and I put it back in it's envelope to protect it and then later on threw it in The trash with other empty 9X11 brown envelopes. Fortunately she was able to send another copy which you will see in the June G&LL. To further add to my discomfort I cannot find the covering letter Dana Cole sent with the book which is reviewed above by Rebecca whom I consider more qualified to review TS writings than myself. Anyhow I don't have Dana's P.O.Box # but if you'd like to have the book you may write to her here at G&LL, POB 31253, Jackson MS 39286-1253. I will remail all inquiries to her private address. I wont forward it, I will put it in another env. unopened and send it. And finally. The Tiffany Club of New England had an announcement that Dr. Roger Peo is in physical distress with possible cancer. That notice got mislaid. I am sure Dr. Peo would love to have a card or note or both from you. His address is: Dr. Roger Peo, hD., P.O.Box 3445, Poughkeepsie NY 12603. Join me in putting Him on your prayer list. He has comforted us with his ongoing "Roger's Notebook" series in most all CD publications. Ask God to comfort him now. Then enjoy the blessings of God you will receive as we pray for one another. L&G P.

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE
ON LAW

BY

Dr. *Jaye Raviers*

THE LAW. The Law of God! How awesome is the unequivocal law of a righteous and almighty God! We've all certainly heard it. In fact, most of us suffer many bumps and bruises due to the application of the Law to ourselves by ourselves and by others.

The Law as interpreted by our ministers, by our society, by virtually everyone around us (and us too!) is indeed an awesome thing. The pity is so few understand the law for what it really is, to whom it applied, and what its purpose is.

The Law demands perfection. It sets forth the perfection demand of a totally righteous God. It allows no human error. It allows nothing short of total compliance for we are taught the violation of any portion of the Law of God is the same as violation of the entire body of Divine Law.

All this is set forth clearly and simply. We are troubled by the Law. We fail in many ways to comply with the Law in its totality. We fail worse in understanding the essence of the Law. We fail in the broad scope of total application of the Law. We pick and choose various elements of the Law to disregard and to apply. We fail to understand what the Law is and what was the purpose of the giving of the Law.

Scholarship has shed some light on our lack of knowledge. Lest we be totally ignorant and fall into the trap of literalism and selective application of God's Law, let us look at some history and attempt to understand the Law in the context in which it was given.

Let me quote from a book by The Reverend John Shelby Spong, Episcopal Bishop of Newark, NJ.

"In 596 b.c.e. the city of Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian army. The city was sacked, and in keeping with Babylonian policy, a program of deportation into exile began. In the ancient world this policy normally meant the end of a nation's life. In captivity the conquered people tended, after a period of time, to intermarry with their captors and to lose their national identity. This is exactly what had happened when the people of the northern kingdom of Israel were resettled after their defeat by Assyria some 130 years before. For Judah this moment was the supreme challenge. Everything she stood for—

her worship, her God, her Law, and even the values that resided at that moment only in the genes of her people—was put in jeopardy. In 596 b.c.e. most of the elite of Judah were marched into captivity. In 586 b.c.e., following an abortive attempt at revolution, another deportation occurred that all but obliterated the nation. Other peoples were brought in to resettle Judah. These people intermarried with the few natives left and became known as the half-breed Samaritans.

Many of the Psalms were written during this period of exile, including the plaintive cry of Psalm 137: "By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. On the billows there we hung up our lyres. For there our captors required of us songs and our tormentors, mirth, saying, 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion!' How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?"

The Jews of the exile, however, were a hardy breed. Led by their priestly class, headed at the beginning of this period by the prophet-priest Ezekiel and culminating in such priests as Nehemiah and Ezra many years later, they rose to meet this national crisis in a way no captive people had ever done. They did it primarily by asserting the power of the religious traditions of the Jews over the total life of the people. In the process they also edited and rewrote massive parts of their sacred story.

For people to maintain their national identity in captivity, they had to be perceived as different. The priestly leaders accomplished this in two primary ways. Out of their Jewish past they lifted two traditions that actually had fallen into general disuse—circumcision and Sabbath day observance—and they invested these with such meaning that they became the distinguishing marks of a Jew. Every Jewish male had on his body the physical sign of his Jewishness. All Jewish people were those strange folk whose religion required that they do no work on the seventh day. Under pressure from these priestly writers, the familiar seven-day creation story that opens our Bibles was written to root Sabbath day observance in the moment of creation. The God who rested from creation on the Sabbath hallowed this day and mandated its observance by all those who would be the people of this God."

(Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism)
Harper, San Francisco 1992

This brief quote gives us some of the flavor of the situation in which the Jews (specifically, the people from the Southern Kingdom. The people of the Northern Kingdom—after the great schism when the Kingdom gathered

together by David and by Solomon had split—had been conquered and taken away into captivity by the Assyrian Empire 115 years earlier. They had ceased to be recognizable as a people, losing their identity, a fact which was known to the religious leaders of the Southern Kingdom at the time they were taken away captive to Babylon in 596 BC.) found themselves before the ceremonial Law was given. This tells us here was a people in grave danger of losing their identity and being assimilated into the Pagan culture of their captors. If you will read again the quote, you will find a clear statement of the purpose for which the portion of the Law we find specifically in the OT book of Deuteronomy was given. Simply put, these specific strict behavior and dietary codes were laid upon the people in captivity so they could by obedience of these laws, retain their distinct identity by being different.

Clearly, there was nothing sanctifying or justifying before God for the individual in the keeping of these laws. In fact, there was little thought in those times of the individual as we today consider individuality. To those people, everything was in essence a corporate experience, a group event, a group activity. These laws were set forth to establish and to cement the group identity of the captive Jews as being a clearly identifiable and distinctive people so their national identity, even in slavery, could be maintained and with it both their cultural and religious lives could be sustained.

Now, Ms. Crossdresser, Ms. Transgenderist, and Ms. Transsexual concerned about your Faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ, Divine Son of God, together with and inseparable from the Divine Father and Holy Spirit, how does all this apply to you?

My question is purely rhetorical. The answer is clearly revealed in the reading of this historical review. The answer is clearly evident in coming to understand the historical background for the giving of the ceremonial Law and for its purpose in the lives of a people long ago. The answer lies not in a literal reading of a law given long ago for a clearly defined purpose which has been totally fulfilled, but in coming to see yourself as an individual living and walking in Faith in a Risen Lord who has forgiven you all your sins, past—present—future.

How then, we can ask, do we remain troubled by the ancient and already purpose fulfilled law which is so often called upon to condemn us because we find it essential to express created self by crossing the nylon frontier?

We consider the fullness and the awesomeness of God. We think in terms of the supernatural essence of our Divine Creator. We sing the praises of Jesus the Christ. We implore the in-filling and constant companionship of the

Holy Spirit all with the full knowledge and awe of the spiritual essence and supernatural power of our

What we forget is our enemy is also supernatural. Our enemy has great power to deceive and to try to render us naught our witness for our Lord and Savior. We forget the enemy knows well what is in our hearts and is able to sow doubt and discord. We forget our enemy knows well the Sacred Scripture and can quote it to our dismay and confusion. We forget our enemy can confuse and deceive us with the very Word of God. We forget our enemy seeks constantly to neutralize our Faith and if not to destroy it, to weaken it to the point it is ineffective and we are of little threat to him. We forget our enemy knows well how to use accusation and guilt to bring us down when our faith is weak. We forget all this and more.

It is through the misapplication of selected sections of the Divine Word our enemy attacks us most successfully. He instills doubt, fear, and above all guilt. With these he attacks our faith in our Lord and tries to bring us down. Guilt inspired by an inappropriate literal application of law, the purpose for which is long fulfilled, is his weapon against the Crossdresser, the Transgenderist, and the Transsexual. With guilt the enemy seeks to destroy our faith and disrupt our relationship with our Creator. Misapplication of literal reading of long fulfilled law is a major weapon to which we have been vulnerable in the past.

We need no longer to be vulnerable in this way. We need realize we are precious in the sight of our God who loves us and who has made us as we are made. We need realize we need but walk upright in Faith in Jesus the Christ for our eternal salvation and let the Devil take hindmost!

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(For those of our readers new to Grace and Lace, Dr. Reviere, or simply Jaye as most of us know her, is a retired Psychologist. Jaye is a Christian of long standing and a true student of walking in a simple Child-like Faith. She spends her time (when she's not riding her GoldWing in the spectacular mountain scenery of her northern New Mexico home) writing and sharing the Lord's Love with whomever the Lord brings to her door. Her penetrating discussions of matters of the Faith always return to the central core theme: Jesus the Christ and the essential nature of a personal Faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Jaye has been writing for Grace and Lace since very soon after its inception. If you would like to contact her for discussion of any issue of concern, you may write directly to Dr. J. Reviere, PO Box 667, Las Vegas, NM 87701. Yes, there is a Las Vegas, NM. It was in existence long before that 'thing' sprang up out in the Nevada desert.)

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE REALLY SAY ABOUT TRANSSEXUALISM?

by Lynn Montgomery

With our transsexual support group we frequently hear questions like, "Is this against God?" "Am I going to hell?" "Is changing your body a mortal sin?" Families and friends who have never mentioned Christianity suddenly develop religion as soon as they hear that you are transsexual. Suddenly you are in danger of hell fire because this is against God.

First, let me assure you that "transsexualism", "transgenderism" or "gender" is not mentioned anywhere in the Bible. If someone says it is, challenge them to find the scripture, write it down and send it to me, because a computer search says it does not exist. I have read the Bible from cover to cover many times, and I have never seen it.

Most people can tell you their general interpretation of the Bible, but they cannot tell you where the supportive passages of Scripture are.

Most people quote the passage that says something to the effect that men should not wear women's clothing; likewise, women should not wear the clothing of men. But most of them cannot tell you where to locate this in your Bible.

Let's look at what the Bible really says. I will give references and I will quote from both the *King James Version (KJV, in italics)*, followed by the same verse from the more simplified Today's English Version (TEV) where the language of the KJV is archaic. I am quoting from the KJV because some people do not believe any other version of the Bible. The KJV is sometimes hard to interpret for someone not highly versed in ancient languages. That is why I am using the TEV. You can follow along in your Bible if you like.

The passage that is quoted most often is found in Deuteronomy, chapter 22, verse 5:

22:5 *The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth to a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment; for all that do so are an abomination to the Lord thy God. (KJV)*

22:5 Women are not to wear men's clothing, and men are not to wear women's clothing; the Lord your God hates people who do such things.: (TEV)

This was the law that was given to Moses by God.

But now let's look a little farther down the SAME chapter in Deuteronomy 22: verses 8-9 and 11-12.

8. *When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thy house, if any man fall from thence.*

8. When you build a new house, be sure to put a railing around the edge of the roof. Then you will not be responsible if someone falls off and is killed.

9. *Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled.*

9. Do not plant any crop in the same field with your grapevines; if you do, you are forbidden to use either the grapes or the produce of the other crop.

11. *Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together.*

11. Do not wear cloth made by weaving wool and linen together.

12. *Thou shalt make thee fringes upon the four quarters of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest thyself.*

12. Sew tassels on the four corners of your clothes.

These are the laws of the times, the law that God gave Moses. Yet how many of

us put railings around the roof of our houses? ...But it's the Law...God's Law.

Also, we plant all sorts of various seeds in our gardens, whether it be a vegetable or flower garden. This also is against the law of God. According to the laws in the Old Testament, we are breaking the law to plant corn and beans in the same garden.

What about the clothes we wear that are made of many different blends of natural and synthetic fibers?

How many of us go around with tassels hanging from the four corners of our jackets and coats? Yet, this was God's law.

Can someone take one verse of scripture out of context and fit it to his purposes while ignoring the rest of the chapter?

I think not.

These quotes are in the exact same chapter as the one about wearing the clothes of the opposite sex. Does someone who does not have tassels on his clothing or a railing around his roof have a right to judge someone who is wearing clothing of the opposite sex? Again, I think not.

Of course, all this is actually irrelevant to transsexualism. If your brain tells you that you are female although your body is male, (or vice versa), and you wear the clothing opposite your biological sex, then you are wearing the clothing that is congruent with your gender. You are **NOT** wearing the clothing of the opposite sex.

But still, let's look further. Since these laws were written in the Old Testament, are we still expected to follow them? Or did the advent of Christ change the way that we should think about the laws of the Old Testament?

In John 1:17 we read:

17. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

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17. God gave the law through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Galatians, chapter 3 talks about the purpose of the Law and salvation. In Galatians 3:11, 17-29 we read:

11. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident; for the just shall live by faith.

11. Now, it is clear that no one is put right with God by means of the law, because the scripture says, "Only the person who is put right with God through faith shall live."

17. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot dis-annul, that should make the promise of none effect.

17. What I mean is that God made a covenant with Abraham and promised to keep it. The law, which was given four hundred and thirty years after, cannot break that covenant and cancel God's promise.

18. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

18. For if God's gift depends on the law, then it no longer depends on his promise. However, it was because of his promise that God gave that gift to Abraham.

19. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

19. What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added in order to show what wrongdoing is, and it was meant to last until the coming of Abraham's descendant to whom the promise was made. The law was handed down by angels, with a man acting as a go-between.

(to be continued)

LETTERS

"Dear Lee Frances"

I hope you are having a happy, healthy New Year.

I definitely felt the earthquake. This one was different in that it lasted so long. Usually they last only a few sa few seconds, not 3 minutes as this one did. Thank God I live in a travel trailer. The shaking makes the trailer think it is going down the road. A few things got knocked down and one of the televisions got knocked around. We didn't lose water, power or gas but we have to boil the water.

I do enjoy G&LL and it does help me. God bless you. In Christian Love,

Jeanette Madison CA

" I do pray for you and I do pray God keeps G&LL going strong and I eagerly await the next issue."

" I truly do believe in God and Jesus Christ. I am not a Church goer due to my beliefs being different from the Church where I live. I am concerned how God will accept my love to dress as a woman and if He will forgive me. I do pray to Him for forgiveness for me being this way as well as all my sins.

I must admit I am not familiar with the Bible and should be reading it as I honestly do want to build my faith in God and show my love and faith to Him. I feel that my crossdressing has made me feel I am not worthy and made me feel that God is angry with me for being this way causing me to have low self esteem. I do feel in my heart and soul that God does love me and will forgive me of all my sins. Please send a sample copy of Grace and Lace."

CO

Here's what makes G&LL worth it all.

"My friend Lee, your letter and copy of G&LL has really put my mind at ease about how God feels about us crossdressers. I understand now that He loves us for our love and faith in Him through prayers and asking for forgiveness through Christ, not the way we dress."

"Please accept my support for G&ll. The continuation of this ministry is needed. If the persecution of guilt from just one more CD, it's worth it all."

CA

"Hi, I'm a Christian CD who is very confused about my gender identity problem. Please send G&LL and perhaps it will help."

IN

"Thank you for putting me on your G&LL mail list. Tho I'm a TS, your Newsletter is helpful to me. The Bible verses, Psalm 139:13-16 and Isa 4:9 were of much help."

CA

"G&LL has helped me through some of the roughest times of my the most difficult times of my life. The road is often lonely but I know within me. Please pray for me as I pray for my sisters."

" I look forward to receiving the publication and am happy to see it is Christian oriented. More of this type of thing is needed in our TG community. Thank you for thinking of us and making G&LL available."

GA

"I was very happy to see the ad for your Newsletter in Femme Mirror. I too, am a Christian CD. It is truly fabulous to know there are enough Christian members out there that would justify a Christian NL just to meet our special needs."

VA

I sent out a few "feelers" on the idea of having a Retreat here in Jackson this Summer. Surprisingly, I a favorable answer from 10% of those who received the letter. Others were favorable but lived too far away. My idea was not to get commitments but just to see if it was a good idea and acceptable our sisters. Overwhelmingly YES!. More on this later. Here is a reply from one girl that embodies all of the replies .

"I love the idea of the retreat. I'd love to come if the timing is right. The Lord has shown me many things about myself when I have gone on Retreats. I would expect no less from this one. I know this Retreat would touch areas of my life oth-r Retreats could not, nor would not, since they deal with the mainstream view of life and do not make any allowances for those of us who have this special gift. I know we could greatly benefit from it, not to mention getting to know you better. I am open to letting the Lord lead me in this direction and will be praying for the success of the retreat and for wisdom and discernment for you and those in attendance. I'd love to be in a place where I could be accepted as I am by other people and not rejected or criticised by those who do not fully understand my need to be what I am. Please keep me posted and maybe every thing will work out for me."

FL

In the reference to , "being accepted as I am by other people and not rejected or criticised . . ." I'm sure she had reference to the possibility of going to Church on Sunday morning at my Church, Methodist. Anyhow now for the facts, ma'am. The Retreat will have to be in '95 as I have to work alone on it. No one here in a position to help. I could throw one together real quick but that's not the Lord's way. Join me in prayer about this as I am fully planning on it. Where I thought we might be able to get 20 of us together, it looks more like 50. IN THE MEANTIME can we plan a Small Group Meeting here this summer or early Fall. Just an informal group to study the Spiritual needs of us CDs and how God, thru thru the Bible, can, does and is meeting those needs. Any other ideas? Let's have some input.



Grace and Lace Letter

Lee Frances, Editor

Post Office Box 31253

Jackson MS 39280-1253

001-302-0335

BOOK REVIEW

The Cross & The Crossdresser

By Vanessa S.

Reviewer. Lee Frances

Objective Rating: Four Stars ****

Subjective Rating: Not Enough Stars in the heavenlies to give proper rating

"Crossdressing as a behavioral phenomenon has existed in every culture throughout history and is even mentioned in the Bible. In fact, this biblical reference (deuteronomy 22:5) is often used as a proscription against crossdressing. How then, does a crossdresser who considers him/herself a moral Christian reconcile Spirituality with this behaviour? Can a person be a good Christian and a crossdresser?" (Book's Back Cover)

Here follows a Book of 48 pages of answers to every (Spiritual) question you could ever ask about harmonizing crossdressing and Christianity. The Author states: "I feel by limiting my remarks specifically to crossdressing as a phenomenon in and of itself I can better focus on a specific group with it's own specific needs and situations. I have the utmost respect for transsexuals and transgenderists and others in various places on the gender spectrum. I believe that their concerns and Spiritual circumstances are equally valid and important and while I have no desire to exclude anyone from a Christian standpoint, I feel it to be appropriate that I direct my remarks primarily to the crossdressing phenomenon for the sake of clarity. If this offends anyone, please accept my apologies and know the slight is unintentional." End quote. Sorry Babe but I have to deduct one rating star from the heavenlies on that one. God's word, as you well know, is not limited. When I started Grace & Lace Letter I too was reaching out to crossdressers only. When we started advertising in Femme Mirror and Crosstalk (thanks to both of them for their gratuity) I started to receive requests for sample copies from both TG and TS and happily discovered they were just as interested in Christ's salvation as CDs are. I discovered that in God's sight a soul is a soul. Dress or gender shifts have no effect on God's love for that being He created and that Christ died for to redeem that soul. A TS visitor to my cluttered house-trailer last week sat down among the cat toys, my exercise step, books lying around and 4 cats doing the same and read portions of TC&TC and had one word for it. Terrific! She is a born-again Christian TS.

In the chapter, "Theoretical Approaches To Crossdressing Etiology" (cause origin/ed.) Vanessa gives a concise but thought provoking glimpses into the highly speculative subject. "The first etiological theory is that of a biological cause for the existence of the crossdressing desire . . ." End quote. "The second theoretical approach is primarily concerned with environmental factors in the development of a crossgender personality . . ." e.g.

Having laid a groundwork of primary needs and causes the Author tackles the issue of the Church with a Chapter titled, "The Church's Response To The Crossdresser" in which she states, "The rationale most utilized by the anti-crossdressing forces within the Church is the Bible passage of Deuteronomy 22:5. The inclusion of this verse in the Canon of Scripture has been a thorn in the side of many crossdressers over the centuries. It has led to various incidents of expulsion and/or rejection from the Church, loss of faith by many crossdressers and occasionally drastic action including suicide by those who were taught they were immoral, sinful or evil because of their inner need to crossdress." e.g. Vanessa then follows with the finest exposition of the 5th verse of the 22nd chapter of Deuteronomy and it's the best discourse ever. It's written by our kind for us. The Church, if they are truly interested in souls as they proclaim they are, would do well to read this Chapter with an open (Ha!/ed.) mind and learn. They have consigned us to an immoral morass because of misunderstanding this verse. The verse DOES NOT apply to us and the author really clears the air on that subject.

The Chapter, "Inclusion" states, "Jesus Christ died for all. The Church can. . . should and must begin to understand the Gospel is inclusive, in the truest and best sense of the word."

Vanessa then covers the Spiritual sufferings crossdressers go through feeling God wants nothing to do with them because they wear skirts. Exactly who has been and still assumes authority on that? The Church. Repression, purging or denial or all three are an exercise in futility. God loves you, Christ died for you and then took back the life the do-gooders took from Him.. Romans 5:10 states very simply, ". . . we are saved by His LIFE." Sins are forgiven by His sacrifice on the Cross and His resurrection life is imparted to us by His Holy Spirit when we ask Him into our lives.

I have failed to remain objective in this review. I tried hard, but the subject is too dear to my heart. Jesus Christ means too much to me for me ever to be objective where He is concerned. I do not apologize.

The minute a crossdresser and especially a Christian crossdresser puts on a skirt for the first time they should be handed this book. If you are a Christian and are struggling Spiritually then do the right thing by your soul and your Spirit. Get this book. If you are one who believes your crossdressing is condemned by God, GET THIS BOOK! It's the Emancipation Proclamation for the Gender Community.

Thank God and thank Vanessa for the book and God bless JoAnn Roberts and C.D. for publishing it.

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