



Canopy of Prayer

October 2017 · #029

Dear praying friends in Europe –

On our last “European Union of Prayer” conference in Tallinn last month Tunne Kelam, MEP for Estonia, said, that he knew what it means to live under the law of dictatorship, which was not a good experience, but nowadays he said, we are living under the law of relativism.

“Relativism is the idea that views are relative to differences in perception and consideration. There is no universal, objective truth according to relativism; rather each point of view has its own truth.” (Stanford enc. of philosophy) Or in the words of Hamlet: “There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.” (Act 2, Scene 2).



Corrie Oosterhuis

GENDER – Times are changing

It is a fact, that there have always been men and women who were more feminine or masculine. But nowadays it is a serious topic to discuss and a strong promotion to ‘become who you really are gender wise’.

Children and youth have to deal with questions like: ‘You look like the outside of a boy or girl, but do you feel you really are a boy or girl? You can choose who or what you want to be’.

The voice of the gender neutrality lobby starts to speak louder and louder. In the Netherlands the national railway company has decided not to speak anymore about ‘ladies and gentlemen’, but ‘dear travellers’. A well known department store (HEMA) used a letter from a girl, who didn’t like that it was written on the labels “typical clothing for girls”. A good reason to take it off.

Two years ago John McWhorter, from the Columbia University said: “ *“he” and “she” could be replaced with “ze” or “they”. We are opening up to the idea that binary conceptions of gender are unnecessarily rigid and don’t correspond to the self-image of a great many people, and even that people’s sense of their gender may not correspond to their biological sex. In this new world, a bland opposition between “he” and “she” seems increasingly antique, and even insulting, to many”.*

Attitude of the church

Many churches like to avoid the topic of gender neutrality and LGBT, hoping that they don’t have to deal with it, when it comes to their members. In other churches the ‘law of relativism’ has already triumphantly entered and everything is possible, as long as one is happy about it.

But when it comes to people who are very near to us and who struggle with their gender identity, it is hard to know what to do. We love them, but we cannot embrace their choices they make. Because we believe that God created man and woman with clear distinctions and that marriage is for a man and woman.

We do understand that we are living in a broken world, but when the brokenness becomes the normal standard, we should be awake as a church and stand up and fight. There is more going on, than we can see with our natural eyes and our pastoral hearts: No fighting against flesh and blood!

Many people are already confused about who they really are and maybe wounded due to what happened to them. It is true especially for young people in the process of developing their own identity. They need love and a place where they feel at home.

But the task of the church is to get on their feet or in the words of Paul “to put on the whole armor of God, so that she may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (Eph. 6:10).

Prayer:

- Praise God first for his clear binary sex=gender concept (Gen. 1:27).
- Pray for those who are confused, because they don’t know “who or what they are”.
- Pray for those who are closely connected to people who have some issues with their sexual identity; that they can love them, even if they cannot agree with their lifestyle.

Please also pray for

- the elections in Austria on the 15. October and for a stable and renewed government.
- humility and against humiliation in Spain and pray for soon fruitful negotiations.

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