

God-Given, or My Choice?

PRO TIP
Download other
grades for alternate
activities!

CONNECTIONS TO THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

CCC 364, 369

MATERIALS

- ▶ A photo or magazine picture cut-out of a man
- ▶ “Can I choose my sex?” video available at [SophiaOnline.org/Transgender](https://www.sophiaonline.org/Transgender)
- ▶ [God-Given or My Choice?](#)
- ▶ Scissors and glue sticks

CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY STANDARDS

3.8.1 TOB Relate how the body reveals the person. (TOB 14:4; CCC 364-366, 371)

SUGGESTED TIME

30 minutes

Teacher Background

Every person has an innate and absolute dignity. But why? How do we know this? Christians understand that every person has dignity because he or she is made in the image of God. Because God made us, and because we receive ourselves as a gift from God, Christians are called to uphold the goodness of every person's body as created by God to be treated with dignity. We do so by respecting everyone's bodies, including their sex as male or female as God made them to be.



HOW DOES THIS LESSON HELP INOCULATE STUDENTS AGAINST GENDER IDEOLOGY?

Gender ideology holds that our dignity comes to us externally, from the affirmation of others. But our human dignity is not dependent on affirmation from anyone else. We do not do anything to earn our human dignity, and we cannot do anything to lose it. It can never be taken away from us. God gives each human person dignity, whether or not that person recognizes that reality. And God gives all people their bodies, male and female, and says that they are good – even when we do not recognize our own goodness.

Activity

Note: Before you begin teaching, watch the “Can someone's sex be chosen?” video available at SophiaOnline.org/Transgender

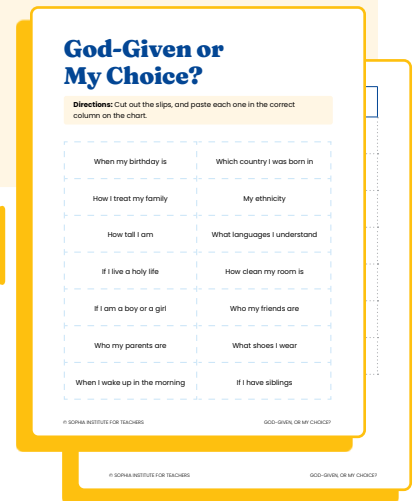
- A. Hold up the picture you brought in and tell the class, “This is Joe [or the person's name]. Look at Joe.”
- B. Then pause and say, “Now look at Joe's body.” *Pause.* “Now, look at Joe again.”
- C. Students may giggle or protest that it is the same thing. And of course, they are right!
- D. Explain that to see Joe is to see Joe's body, because we are our bodies. Similarly, to respect a person's dignity, we must respect the fact that they are their bodies. Sometimes, people talk like the body is just a shell or a cage, and the real self is inside. This false idea is not what we believe as Christians. The body and soul are united in one person, and the body is just as much a part of you as your soul. Everything about your body, including your sex as male or female as God made you, is a part of who you are. To respect a person, therefore, means that we respect their body.



E. Continue to explain that because God made us, and we receive ourselves as a gift from God. So just as with any gift, there are things about ourselves that we do not choose, such as our eye color, height, or sex. God has, of course, has given us free will and the ability to determine a lot of things about our lives. Ask for a few volunteers to say some choices we can make about our lives. Our favorite foods, our hobbies, our friends, how we spend our free time, sports we play, and so forth.

F. Distribute to each student a [God-Given or My Choice?](#) Worksheet and make scissors and glue sticks available. Have them cut out the strips, and paste each one in the column in which it belongs.

G. When they have finished, recreate the chart on the board and review the correct answers together by writing them on the board.



H. Wrap up by explaining the following: Because we are God's creatures, it is important that we accept about ourselves and others the things that God has given as gifts. Many of those gifts are things we cannot change, such as who our parents are, where we were born, and whether we are male or female. Our male or female bodies are a great gift that God has given us, and we ought to be thankful and respectful towards one another's bodies. It can be harder to see our bodies as good when we experience pain, illness, and other maladies. There may be times when we wish our body could be more athletic, graceful, stronger, or otherwise different. We can have faith that at the Resurrection, we will see as God sees, and our bodies will perfectly reveal His love.

I. Close by praying together **Psalm 139:13–14**:

*You formed my inmost being;
you knit me in my mother's womb.
I praise you, because I am wonderfully made;
wonderful are your works!
My very self you know.*

J. Be sure to have parents watch the "Can someone's sex be chosen?" video available at [SophiaOnline.org/Transgender](https://www.sophiaonline.org/transgender) for ideas on talking to their children.

God-Given or My Choice?

Directions: Cut out the slips, and paste each one in the correct column on the chart.

When my birthday is	Which country I was born in
How I treat my family	My ethnicity
How tall I am	What languages I understand
If I live a holy life	How clean my room is
If I am a boy or a girl	Who my friends are
Who my parents are	What shoes I wear
When I wake up in the morning	If I have siblings

STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

Things I Choose for Myself	Things God Has Chosen for Me
When I wake up in the morning	When my birthday is
What shoes I wear	How tall I am
Who my friends are	Who my parents are
What languages I understand	My ethnicity
How I treat my family	If I have siblings
If I live a holy life	If I am a boy or a girl
How clean my room is	The country I was born in

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**Things I Choose
for Myself**

**Things God Has
Chosen for Me**

My Body Is Me

PRO TIP
Download other grades for alternate activities!

CONNECTIONS TO THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

CCC 364-366, 371

MATERIALS

- ▶ Two different books/plush toys/other small items
- ▶ [Choices I Can Make, and Choices God Makes](#)
- ▶ [My Body Shows Who I Am](#)

CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY STANDARDS

3.8.1 TOB Relate how the body reveals the person. (TOB 14:4; CCC 364-366, 371)

SUGGESTED TIME

20 minutes

Teacher Background

God creates each person male or female. Sex is determined at conception, observed in utero or at birth, and never changes. Throughout the plant and animal kingdoms, there are only two sexes. An organism is either male or female, and this is defined by the type of gamete, or reproductive cell, that it produces: sperm or ova. Females produce large-cell gametes, (ova, or egg cells), and males produce small gametes (sperm). There is no third type of gamete, or any other sex.



HOW DOES THIS LESSON HELP INOCULATE STUDENTS AGAINST GENDER IDEOLOGY?

Transgender ideology puts forth that “gender identity” or “gender expression” are self-determined. But the truth is that our body reveals our sex, and that sex is an unchanging, biological fact that is genetically determined and reflected in every cell of the body.

Activity

- A. Begin by talking for a moment about what it means to make a choice. Hold up two different books, plush toys, or other small items, and ask the class which they would choose.
- B. Ask students to raise their hands and share a choice they made today.
- C. After calling on a few students to share, explain the following:
 - a. Some choices have to do with our favorites, or preferences. We might choose to play a board game over a video game, or to ride a bike rather than roller skate.
 - b. We can also make choices about ourselves and we will act. We can choose to be kind to our siblings, or to help someone who needs help.
 - c. We can make choices about how to use our gifts and talents: we can choose to be a soccer player, a violinist, or an artist.
 - d. There are other things about ourselves that we cannot choose, because God chooses them. Some of these include our birthday, whether we have blue, brown, or green eyes, or whether we are a girl or a boy.

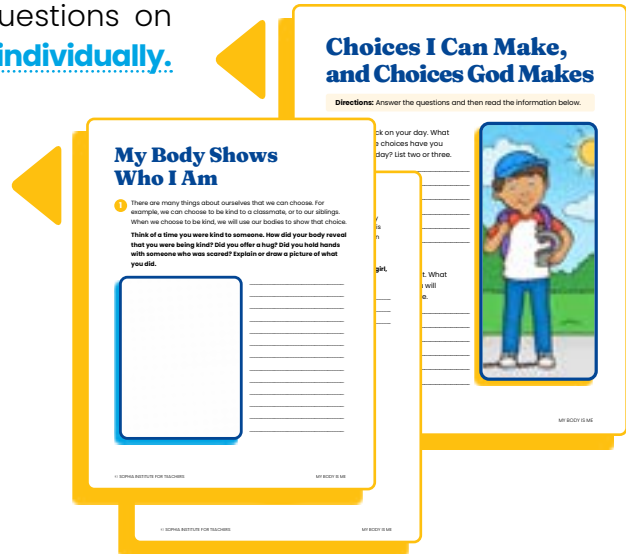
E. Continue to explain that being a girl or being a boy is something very special. It is an important part of who we are. In the beginning, God made human beings male and female. When God made the first man, Adam, He did not want Adam to be alone. He made a helper, or partner, for the man. That was the first woman, Eve. Men and women are equal in dignity, meaning God loves us just as much whether we are a girl or a boy. Girls are not better than boys, and boys are not better than girls. But we are different. When a man and woman unite in marriage, their love creates life. Their differences complement each other, and are a beautiful part of God’s design.

F. Have students complete the first three questions on **Choices I Can Make, and Choices God Makes Individually.**

G. Then read aloud the information on **My Body Shows Who I Am.** Give students a few moments to draw their pictures and compose their prayers, and ask if anyone would like to share.

H. Take care NOT to introduce the wrong idea that students should wonder if they are a girl or a boy. However, if a student asks about someone who is identifying as transgender, you could add:

“I know Jane [be sure to use her given name and grammatically-correct pronouns for her sex] from your class is confused about her sex right now. We will pray she and her parents will get through this and that Jane realizes she is wonderful just as God made her to be.”



Choices I Can Make, and Choices God Makes

Directions: Answer the questions and then read the information below.

1 Think back on your day. What are some choices have you made today? List two or three.

Answers will vary.

2 Think ahead to tonight. What are some choices you will make? List two or three.

Answers will vary.



STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

- 2 There are many things about ourselves that we can choose. And some things God chooses for us, such as whether we are a girl or a boy. Just like our body reveals some choices we make, our body reveals whether we are a boy or a girl. Being a girl or being a boy is something very special. It is an important part of who we are. Even before God made you, He knew who you would be, and He had a plan for you. He loves you as the person He made you to be.

Write or say aloud a prayer, thanking God for the gift of being a girl, or the gift of being a boy.

Individual prayers will vary but should include a mention of gratitude for being a boy, or being a girl.



My Body Is Me

Choices I Can Make, and Choices God Makes

Directions: Answer the questions and then read the information below.

1 Think back on your day. What are some choices have you made today? List two or three.

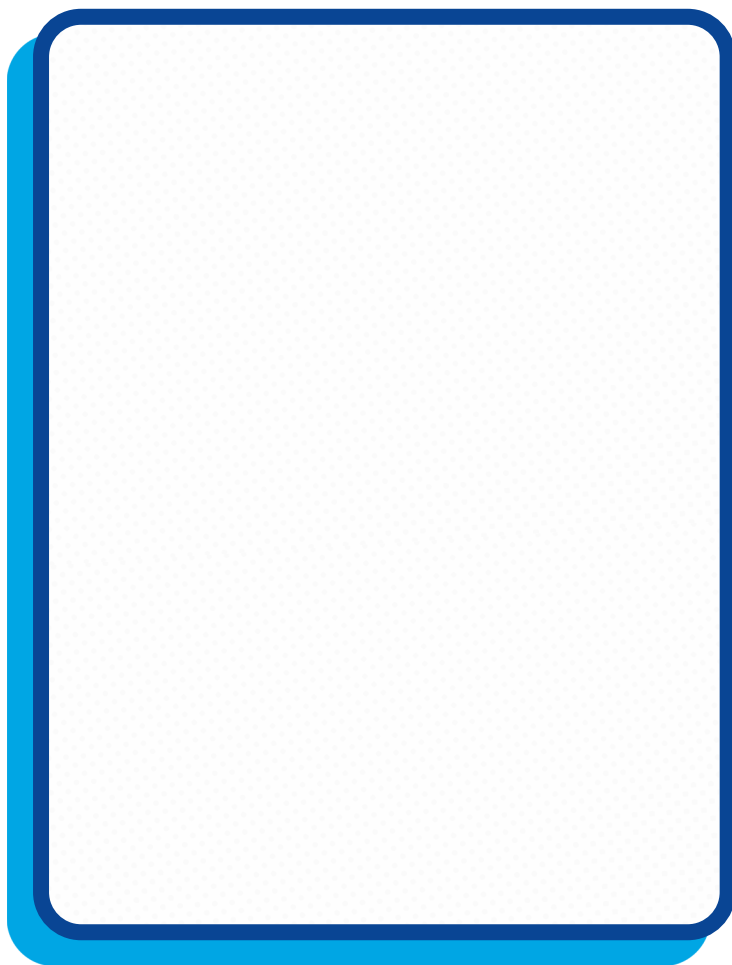
2 Think ahead to tonight. What are some choices you will make? List two or three.



My Body Shows Who I Am

1 There are many things about ourselves that we can choose. For example, we can choose to be kind to a classmate, or to our siblings. When we choose to be kind, we will use our bodies to show that choice.

Think of a time you were kind to someone. How did your body reveal that you were being kind? Did you offer a hug? Did you hold hands with someone who was scared? Explain or draw a picture of what you did.



2

There are many things about ourselves that we can choose. And some things God chooses for us, such as whether we are a girl or a boy. Just like our body reveals some choices we make, our body reveals whether we are a boy or a girl. Being a girl or being a boy is something very special. It is an important part of who we are. Even before God made you, He knew who you would be, and He had a plan for you. He loves you as the person He made you to be.

Write or say aloud a prayer, thanking God for the gift of being a girl, or the gift of being a boy.



Our Bodies Are Good

PRO TIP
Download other grades for alternate activities!

CONNECTIONS TO THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

CCC 456–458, 606–607, 618

MATERIALS

- ▶ Optional: A set of small animal toys, and one girl and one boy doll.
- ▶ [Set Apart](#) worksheet (one per student)
- ▶ [Self-Portrait](#) worksheet (one per student)
- ▶ Crayons, markers and/or colored pencils

CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY STANDARDS

3.2.1 TOB Give examples of man's unique relationship with God as set apart from the rest of creation: naming the animals, cultivating the earth, and choosing between good and evil. (TOB 5:4, 6; CCC 343, 356, 373, 378)

SUGGESTED TIME

20 minutes

Teacher Background

God Himself is an eternal exchange of love between the three Persons, and He has destined His children to share in that love. He created men and women in His image and likeness, set them apart from the rest of creation, and gave them special privileges and responsibilities. Created in God's image, man is thus also created for this communal exchange of love. This exchange of love occurs with all persons in the human family, and, in a particular way, within the context of the family, where the love of a husband and wife is manifested in the begetting of children.

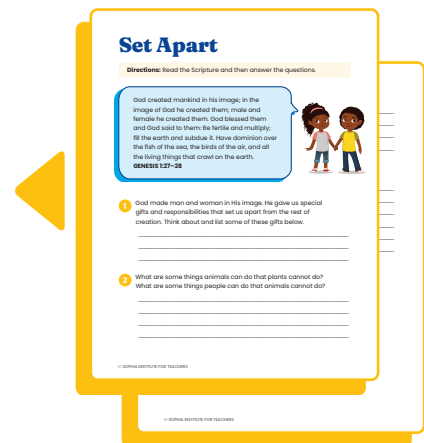


HOW DOES THIS LESSON HELP INOCULATE STUDENTS AGAINST GENDER IDEOLOGY?

Gender ideology asserts that our bodies are tools for self-expression, and that they can be manipulated and controlled. But students will learn the truth is that their body is part of who they are. God loves them, and God loves their body. We all have the duty to lovingly care for creation, so life may flourish.

Activity

- Explain the following to your students: God created men and women in His image, set apart from the rest of creation. Only human beings are made in God's image and likeness. Human beings alone can know and love our creator. We can see this very special and unique relationship of love that God has with mankind from the very beginning. God gave Adam and Eve the important privilege and responsibility of naming the animals, and cultivating the earth. Cultivating the earth means caring for it, so that it will bring forth the things we need to live, such as plants and animals. In this way, Adam and Eve would cooperate with God and each other in nurturing life and all the gifts of creation.
- Optional:* If you have them available, spread out a selection of small animal dolls, such as small plush toys or plastic figures, and arrange them with the dolls, Adam and Eve, in the center. Then explain that by setting them apart, it means that God said they were special. They were different from all the animals. And they would be treated differently because of their special nature.
- Distribute the [Set Apart](#) worksheet to your students. Read aloud **Genesis 1:27–28** and ask if anyone noticed anything in the Scripture that was similar to what you just discussed. Then have them complete the activity. Ask students to share their responses when they are finished. Use the answer key to guide discussion.



- D.** Explain that each one of them was created in God’s image and this means they are loved and created to share in God’s love. All of God’s creation is good. Our bodies are part of God’s creation! God made every part of their body, and every part of their body is good. Their body is a precious part of who they are. God loves them, and He loves their body. We should love and care for our own bodies the way God would want us to—with love.
- E.** Finally, distribute the **Self Portrait** worksheet, and make crayons, markers and/or colored pencils available to your students to complete the activity.
- F.** Circulate around the room admiring students’ work. Say each students name, and remind them they are a son or daughter of God. For example, “That’s a beautiful drawing. Jane, you are a wonderful daughter of God.”



Set Apart

Directions: Read the Scripture and then answer the questions.

God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and God said to them: Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that crawl on the earth.

GENESIS 1:27–28



- 1 God made man and woman in His image. He gave us special gifts and responsibilities that set us apart from the rest of creation. Think about and list some of these gifts below.

Only human beings are made in God's image and likeness. Human beings alone can know and love our creator. God gave Adam and Eve the important privilege and responsibility of naming the animals, and caring for the earth so the living things we need can grow, such as plants and animals.

- 2 What are some things animals can do that plants cannot do?
What are some things people can do that animals cannot do?

Allow discussion. A major difference between plants and animals is that animals can move freely whereas plants cannot, because they are rooted. The most important difference between humans and other animals is that humans are made in God's image and likeness. We alone can know and love our creator.

STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

- 3 What are some responsibilities people have towards the rest of creation? Why?

To care for it. Creation is a gift. God gave people this duty to care for the gift of creation so that living things (including, of course, human beings!) will be able to flourish.

- 4 Our bodies are part of God's creation. What does this mean for how we should care for our bodies?

We should care for it lovingly, so our own bodies can flourish.

Self-Portrait

You were created in God's image and likeness. This means you are deeply loved by Him. All of God's creation is good. God made every part of your body, and every part of your body is good. Your body is a precious part of who you are. God loves you, and He loves your body. We should all love and care for our own bodies the way God would want us to – with love.

Directions: Draw a self-portrait of yourself as God sees you – God made you in His image, and He loves you.

Drawing will vary but should convey somehow the idea that God loves them and sees them as a beloved son or daughter. As students draw, remind them that God loves them as the boy or girl He made them.

Our Bodies Are Good

Set Apart

Directions: Read the Scripture and then answer the questions.

God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and God said to them: Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that crawl on the earth.

GENESIS 1:27–28



- 1 God made man and woman in His image. He gave us special gifts and responsibilities that set us apart from the rest of creation. Think about and list some of these gifts below.

- 2 What are some things animals can do that plants cannot do?
What are some things people can do that animals cannot do?

3

What are some responsibilities people have towards the rest of creation? Why?

4

Our bodies are part of God's creation. What does this mean for how we should care for our bodies?

Self-Portrait

You were created in God's image and likeness. This means you are deeply loved by Him. All of God's creation is good. God made every part of your body, and every part of your body is good. Your body is a precious part of who you are. God loves you, and He loves your body. We should all love and care for our own bodies the way God would want us to – with love.

Directions: Draw a self-portrait of yourself as God sees you – God made you in His image, and He loves you.

