

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

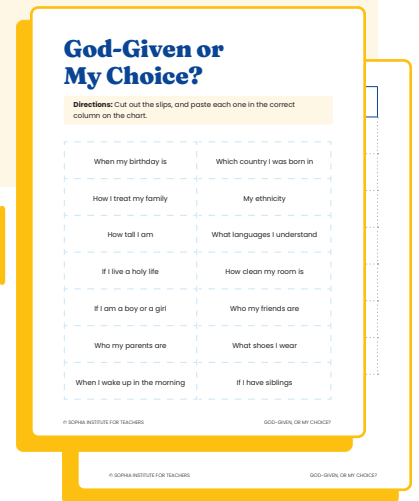
- A. Hold up the picture you brought in and tell the class, “This is Joe [or the person's name]. Look at Joe.”
- B. Then pause and say, “Now look at Joe's body.” *Pause.* “Now, look at Joe again.”
- C. Students may giggle or protest that it is the same thing. And of course, they are right!
- D. Explain 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**
