

# What About Gender?

**I've been discussing the subject of gender with my son and we're looking for further healing insight. Is gender divinely natural or is it an illusion of mortal sense? – A Reader in California**

It's interesting that the root word for *gender* is the same for the word *begin*, which includes in its definition the word *prepare*, "to qualify for a particular purpose." We might then ask the question, "Who or what fits us for a specific purpose?" Biology says that matter as an X or a Y chromosome has the intelligence to randomly, and sometimes imperfectly, determine and fit us as male or female, as identified by sex. In this instance, gender or "kind" is a concept of a material, mortal mind that defines man born of the flesh.

Contrast this view of gender with the Genesis account where, "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (1:27). Clearly, God, Soul, determines the gender of His ideas. Here, gender does not refer to sexuality but is, as Mary Baker Eddy explained, "mental, not material" (*Science and Health*, p. 508). We each express a divinely united consciousness of male and female qualities (see *Science and Health*, p. 577). Divine Mind, Soul, is really what fits us or gives each of us a unique combination of spiritual qualities for the specific purpose of being God's individual witness. Soul designs with grace the form, outline, and color of our being.

We might ask then, "Where are we looking for our true identity and gender?" To personal feelings about ourselves? To the body as defined by sexuality? To DNA? Or do we realize that our gender and true being start with God, our Maker. God has a perfect understanding of our being and so do we as Mind's reflection. There can be then no confusion, no misinterpretation, no mismatch – just Mind, Soul, cognizing with clarity each idea and each idea reflecting that cognizance and feeling. Identity or true body is in perfect harmony with Soul. Knowing this, we "Let the 'male and female' of God's creating appear" (*Science and Health*, p. 249).

**Janet Clements**  
Evanston, Illinois, US