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Female Athletes with Differences of Sex Development (DSD): A Christian Perspective on Fairness and Compassion

“You hate me, but you don’t even know me. I don’t even know why you led this attack. You have been cruel to me, cruel to my family, to my mother... I don’t understand the behavior of people today.”

This poignant statement was made by Imane Khelif, a gold medal Olympic champion from Algeria. She described the extreme cyberbullying and online hate she received from powerful political and global leaders throughout her Paris 2024 Olympic experience. Khelif found herself at the center of an Olympic gender controversy after her bout with Italian boxer Angela Carini, who abandoned their fight after only 46 seconds. False reports subsequently surfaced claiming that Khelif was a transgender woman, leading to calls for her disqualification on the grounds that airing her fights against female competitors was unfair and glorified gender-based violence.

Amid the tremendous spread of misinformation and online hate toward the Algerian boxer, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) clarified that Khelif “was born female, was registered female, lived her life as a female, has a female passport” (International Olympic Committee, 2024). The Paris 2024 Olympics were not the first time Khelif experienced gender controversy, although it catapulted her into global criticism and unwanted public debate about her biology.

After winning a silver medal at the 2022 International Boxing Association (IBA) World Championship, Khelif was disqualified in 2023 by the IBA for an unspecified gender eligibility test. The IBA claimed that Khelif and another female boxer, Taiwan’s Lin Yu-ting, had elevated levels of testosterone. This dispute raised debate over the balance between fairness and safety,

particularly where differences of sexual development (DSD) can result in a competitive advantage that might prove dangerous. The IOC later stripped the IBA of its recognition as the global governing body for the sport due to its failure to complete reforms on governance, finance, and ethical issues (Reuters, 2023). This decision highlighted the lack of due process in the IBA's treatment of both Khelif and Yu-ting. It is important to note that this is unique only to female athletes; male athletes are not required to test or regulate their natural levels of testosterone.

DSD are defined as congenital conditions in which an individual's chromosomal, gonadal, or anatomical sex characteristics differ from typical binary categories of male or female (Sandberg & Gardner, 2022; Hirschberg, 2019). In a sporting context, DSD has become a highly controversial issue, particularly when it involves female athletes. Sex testing in sports has a long and contentious history, dating back to the 1960s when female athletes were subjected to unethical and invasive physical examinations to verify their gender. Over time, these methods evolved into chromosome testing and later to hormone-level assessments. Today, a complex challenge continues to evolve at the intersection of DSD and competitive sports, and it requires careful consideration. This paper aims to explore the multilayered and multifaceted issue of DSD athletes competing in women's sports, viewing it through the lens of Christian compassion and fairness while seeking to balance the principles of inclusivity, dignity, and competitive integrity.

Methodological Approach

Navigating this multilayered issue requires a methodology anchored in a theological-ethical framework that integrates biblical theology, disability theology, sport history, and sport science to address both fairness and compassion adequately. Theological sources were selected for their scholarly rigor and relevance to human dignity and biblical justice. Scientific sources

prioritize recent, peer-reviewed research in sport physiology, while historical sources draw from established sport history literature. Additionally, an interdisciplinary approach was used to honor both the complexity of DSD as a biological reality and the ethical demands of Christian faith in addressing competitive sports. The analysis that follows makes a distinctive contribution by integrating disability theology with sport ethics to reframe DSD not as pathology requiring correction but as biological variation within God's creation, offering both a theological critique of frameworks that oversimplify fairness to biological metrics and a pastoral framework for Christian higher education institutions navigating these tensions.

Understanding Differences of Sex Development (DSD)

DSD variations can occur at genetic, hormonal, or physical levels, presenting in diverse forms. The prevalence of DSD is estimated to affect about 1.7% of live births, though more noticeable variations occur in approximately 0.5% of births (Mehmood & Rentea, 2023). Understanding these biological variations requires careful distinction from other gender-related topics. In the context of this paper, it is crucial to distinguish DSD from transgender and broader LGBTQ+ issues; while individuals with DSD may have variations in sex characteristics from birth, transgender individuals have a gender identity that differs from their assigned sex at birth. DSD is fundamentally about biological sex development, whereas LGBTQ+ identities primarily concern gender identity and sexual orientation. This distinction is vital for understanding the unique medical, ethical, and social considerations surrounding DSD, particularly in the context of competitive sports.

Diagnosing and managing DSD presents significant challenges for medical professionals, affected individuals, and their families (Brain et al., 2010). The wide spectrum of DSD conditions, in addition to their often-subtle presentations, can lead to delayed or misdiagnosis.

Even when identified, determining the most appropriate course of management is complex. One must also consider the scarcity or limitation of resources available in developing countries. Ehua et al. (2023) found that the socioeconomic challenges of the population, lack of access to basic healthcare and diagnostic tools, in addition to negative cultural representations of sex differences, can often contribute to significant limitations in the management of individuals with DSD. The psychological and social impacts of DSD can be profound and long-lasting. Affected individuals may struggle with issues of body image, gender identity, and social stigma, often intensified by a lack of community support and public understanding.

Theological Foundations

The central argument of this paper, that DSD athletes are worthy of compassionate treatment grounded in their inherent dignity, is founded on the understanding of what it means for humans to be created in the image of God (*imago Dei*). This theological concept has been debated throughout church history, with significant implications for understanding the essential core of what it means to be a human being (Peppiatt, 2022). Early church theologians like St. Augustine emphasized humans' capacity for reason, moral judgment, and relationship with God, while Thomas Aquinas focused on the rational nature as deeply intertwined with a relationship to God (Holmes, 2023). Reformers such as John Calvin understood *imago Dei* primarily in terms of righteousness, holiness, and wisdom rather than physical characteristics. Contemporary theologians continue this debate through three primary views. The *structural* (or substantive) view locates God's image in human capacities like reason. The *functional* view sees the image expressed through human activities, such as stewardship. The *relational* view, advocated by Karl Barth and Emil Brunner, finds the image in humanity's unique capacity for relationship with God (Smith, 2024). Significantly, the majority of leading theologians throughout history have

understood *imago Dei* as primarily spiritual, relational, or functional rather than physical, challenging any assumption that physical characteristics are central to human dignity. While acknowledging this theological diversity, this paper will argue that whether one emphasizes the structural, functional, or relational dimensions of *imago Dei*, the conclusion remains consistent. Human dignity transcends biological variation, and DSD conditions represent natural expressions of God's creative design rather than deviations requiring correction.

Christian communities throughout history have had a complex relationship with physical difference, encompassing both compassionate care and harmful exclusion. Contemporary disability theologians like Nancy Eiesland and John Swinton offer crucial insights for reframing biological variation within a theological framework. Rather than viewing physical differences as deviations from an ideal human form, these scholars argue that biological diversity reflects divine creativity and intentionality within God's creation (Swinton, 2017; Eiesland, 1994). In the book of Genesis, the declaration that creation is "very good" (Genesis 1:31) encompasses the full spectrum of human variation, suggesting that conditions like DSD are part of God's original design rather than flaws requiring correction. This theological perspective provides an invitation to see biological diversity as expressing the richness of divine creativity. Likewise, individuals with disabilities have historically encountered many barriers preventing their meaningful participation in church community life and spiritual and religious activities, and even faced exclusion from Christian congregations (McMahon-Panther & Bornman, 2024). However, there are also rich traditions of inclusion, particularly in monastic communities that prioritized care for the most vulnerable members of society (Yong, 2011). Learning from both the failures and successes of church history, contemporary Christian theology continues to recognize that *imago Dei* is not diminished by physical variation. Rather, it may be revealed through the diverse ways

humans embody their created nature. This theological reframing moves beyond mere tolerance of difference toward an active celebration of the varied expressions of human life as designed in God's creation.

Applied specifically to individuals with DSD, this theological framework reveals that biological variations are natural expressions of diversity within God's creation rather than abnormalities or deficiencies requiring intervention or correction. Regardless of whether one believes that *imago Dei* includes physical dimensions or focuses primarily on spiritual and relational aspects, the conclusion remains consistent: human dignity is inherent and not dependent on conformity to narrow biological categories or binary sex classifications. Several theological principles emerge from this understanding that directly inform how Christian communities should approach DSD athletes. First, human dignity transcends specific physical characteristics, meaning that an individual's worth is not determined by their chromosomal patterns, hormone levels, or anatomical features. Second, biological variation reflects divine creativity rather than divine error, suggesting that DSD conditions represent intentional diversity within the spectrum of human development. Third, the church is called to defend those whom society marginalizes, especially when that marginalization involves invasive scrutiny of intimate biological characteristics (Creamer, 2009). Fourth, Christians must resist the tendency to view physical differences as disorders requiring correction, recognizing that efforts to make all bodies conform to a standard often stem from cultural biases and expectations rather than God's design. These principles offer a clear foundation for navigating the complex issues facing DSD athletes in competitive sports, where questions of fairness need to be carefully considered alongside the core Christian conviction that every person bears God's image and is worthy of full dignity.

Understanding biblical justice and how it relates to fairness means recognizing that Christian concepts differ from secular approaches to equity and competition. While secular fairness typically focuses on equal treatment and following the same procedures for everyone, biblical justice offers a broader vision of *shalom*, a theological concept that summarizes an overarching vision of human wholeness and flourishing (Bekker, 2025). The Psalms and Old Testament prophets consistently demonstrate that biblical justice reflects God's acknowledgement and compassion for the vulnerable and marginalized. Additionally, God is consistently shown defending the widow, orphan, and stranger (New International Version [NIV], 1983, Psalm 146:9; Isaiah 1:17). Biblical justice does not diminish the idea of fairness but makes it more dynamic and comprehensive by including healing relationships, restoration, and equitable distribution of resources. Therefore, when it applies to DSD athletes, a Christian understanding of fairness must consider not only competitive equity but also protecting human dignity, including the marginalized, and pursuing *shalom* within sporting communities. This theological approach suggests that true fairness in sports cannot be achieved through policies that humiliate, exclude, or dehumanize athletes, even when trying to maintain competitive balance. Instead, Christian fairness seeks creative solutions that honor both the integrity of competition and the full humanity of all participants, recognizing that God's justice often goes beyond human categories and compels communities to embrace a complex, nuanced approach rather than seeking simple and binary answers.

These theological foundations create both clarity and necessary tension for addressing DSD in elite sports. The clarity comes from an unwavering Christian commitment to human dignity that transcends biological variation; the tension emerges in balancing this commitment with legitimate concerns about competitive fairness and justice for all athletes. Both compassion

for the marginalized and the pursuit of justice are deeply rooted Christian values, creating a complex ethical landscape that requires careful navigation rather than simple answers. Biblical justice reveals God's deep concern for those who are vulnerable and oppressed, while also requiring that all people be treated fairly and with integrity (Wolterstorff, 2015). Rather than seeing dignity and fairness as opposing values, Christians should recognize that genuine justice requires both protecting the vulnerable and maintaining fair systems. The discussion of sports that follows will be guided by these theological foundations, aiming for postures that demonstrate both Christ-like compassion and biblical justice while recognizing that potential solutions may require ongoing wisdom and grace.

DSD in Elite Women's Sports

As previously mentioned, intense debate has been stirred with the presence of female athletes with DSD in recent elite women's sports competitions. This global debate has led to the creation and implementation of regulations aimed at protecting fairness and equity in competition. However, these regulations are often infused with controversy as they often most impact the eligibility of female athletes from specific, non-European countries and contribute to a narrow definition of femininity and gender perceptions.

There have been numerous iterations of rules and regulations that stipulate whether or not an athlete with DSD can compete in sports competitions (Mandal, 2020). In 1946, World Athletics, formerly known as the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), demanded female athletes submit a medical certificate to demonstrate they met the requirements to participate as a female. During the next 20 years, various methods of documented proof were required by the IAAF to demonstrate eligibility. However, the written documentation was deemed insufficient, and in 1968, the IAAF began to require sex testing of selected female

athletes (chosen based on perceived “male-like” muscles, perceived masculine traits, and angular facial structure). Sex testing involved female athletes being required to have their genitalia and sexual characteristics checked indiscriminately by a doctor or representative of the IAAF. Additionally, the IOC began implementing the Barr body test, which began a controversial period of eligibility regulations for female athletes. The Barr body test involved taking samples from inside the athlete’s cheek to find evidence of XX chromosomes, indicating that the athlete was female. Though the practice was modified over the years, it continued through the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta and received considerable criticism from the scientific community for being an inaccurate test of both biological sex and athletic performance advantage.

Various forms of sex testing were still prevalent in international sports competitions outside of the IAAF and IOC, which was highly problematic. Pieper (2016) describes how sex testing practices that privileged Western norms were critically detrimental to the participation and development of international female athletes with DSD for decades. Over the years, the IOC moved toward hormone readings and recommendations for medical hyperandrogenism treatment and ultimately created a *2021 Framework on Fairness, Inclusion, and Non-discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity and Sex Variations* (International Olympic Committee, 2021). This framework was developed to safeguard athletes from intrusive and unethical gender verification practices that have been a common practice for decades.

Several high-profile athletes have been at the center of prolonged legal battles challenging these pre-existing rules and practices, arguing that they were discriminatory and violated human rights (Court of Arbitration for Sport, 2019). Most notably, the aforementioned Algerian boxer Imane Khelif and South African middle-distance runner Caster Semenya. For decades, Semenya, a two-time Olympic gold medalist, endured invasive public scrutiny of her

biological characteristics, highlighting the ethical issues of racializing and sexualizing practices in elite athletic competitions (Camporesi & Maugeri, 2010). In 2009, after the World Championships in Berlin, the IAAF required Semenya (who was 18 years old at the time) to take medication that artificially lowered her naturally high levels of testosterone (Imray, 2022). Semenya claimed the medication made her sick, made her gain weight, and induced panic attacks. She described the pain as “like stabbing yourself with a knife every day” (Imray, 2022, para. 7). Semenya explained:

I have been subjected to unwarranted and invasive scrutiny of the most intimate and private details of my being. Some of the occurrences leading up to and immediately following the Berlin World Championships have infringed on not only my rights as an athlete but also my fundamental and human rights, including my rights to dignity and privacy. (Pastor, 2019, p. 17)

The controversy surrounding DSD athletes in women’s sports extends beyond individual cases, raising critical questions about fairness, inclusivity, and the nature of biological sex in competitive athletics. Critics argue that these regulations unfairly target women from specific, non-European countries and enforce a narrow definition of femininity and gender perceptions. Supporters, however, contend that such rules are necessary to maintain a level playing field in women’s sports (Karkazis & Jordan-Young, 2018). This ongoing debate underscores the complex intersection of biology, gender, and fairness in elite sports.

Nature and Nurture in Elite Sports

The debate regarding female DSD athletes competing in elite sports is underpinned by numerous scientific and ethical considerations. Berman and Garnier (2017) found correlations between female athletes’ serum androgen levels and their performance in specific track and field

events (400m, 400m hurdles, 800m, hammer throw, and pole vault). However, the extent and generalization of these advantages remain controversial. The study found no significant correlations in many track and field events, suggesting that testosterone's influence on performance is highly sport-specific rather than universally applicable across women's athletics. Critics argue that the research has methodological limitations, including its focus on correlations rather than causation and failure to control for confounding variables such as training intensity, genetic factors beyond hormones, and socioeconomic access to coaching and facilities (Jordan-Young & Karkazis, 2019). Sport physiology research demonstrates that athletic performance is multifactorial, involving not only hormonal profiles but also training, biomechanics, neuromuscular efficiency, psychological factors, and sport-specific skills.

Krane et al. (2022) emphasized the problematic approach of considering testosterone levels alone and claimed that this limited analysis disproportionately affects female athletes from the Global South. The intersectionality of race, religion, class, and nation must be considered to acknowledge cultural narratives and implications. It is critical to refute the notion that one biological component of a body is the singular cause of exceptional performance outcomes (Krane et al., 2022). Education, compassion, and ethics are needed in order to best understand this issue from a scientific research perspective. The debate regarding the ethical implications of requiring athletes to regulate natural biological variations and the human right to maintain bodily autonomy is ongoing and profound. Fundamental questions arise about the nature of fairness in sports, the ethics of requiring medical interventions, and the balance between inclusion and equity in competition. As research continues to evolve in this area, the approach to evaluating these complex issues must evolve as well.

A Biblical View on Biological Variation in Athletics

Building on the theological framework established earlier in this paper, this section examines how Scripture specifically addresses biological variation and social marginalization based on physical differences. The understanding that human dignity transcends physical characteristics, whether one emphasizes the structural, functional, or relational dimensions of *imago Dei*, provides the interpretive lens for examining biblical narratives about difference and inclusion. As contemporary disability theologians like Eiesland (1994) and Swinton (2017) have demonstrated, Scripture consistently challenges cultural assumptions about physical normalcy and reveals God's preferential concern for those whom society marginalizes due to biological variation. For DSD athletes, who face contemporary forms of exclusion through invasive testing and public scrutiny of their bodies, these biblical insights offer both theological validation and practical guidance for Christian response. The four theological principles established earlier (that dignity transcends physical characteristics, biological variation reflects divine creativity, the church must defend the marginalized, and Christians should resist the medicalization of difference) find clear expression in Jesus's radical ministry of inclusion.

Throughout Scripture, Jesus consistently demonstrated a revolutionary acceptance of those whom society marginalized due to physical differences, embodying the principle that human dignity transcends physical characteristics. Consider Jesus's interaction with Zacchaeus (NIV, 1983, Luke 19:1-10), where Scripture deliberately notes his short stature. The fact that his height warranted mention suggests he was notably shorter than other men, so much so that he needed to climb a sycamore fig tree to see Jesus over the crowd. While Zacchaeus was already marginalized for his profession as a tax collector and viewed by society as corrupt and untrustworthy, his physical stature added another layer of social stigma (Blythe, 2024). Yet Jesus

deliberately chose to acknowledge him publicly, even sharing a meal at his house. This subversive act of inclusion by Jesus challenged both social and physical prejudices of the time. This narrative powerfully parallels the experiences of DSD athletes who face double marginalization, scrutinized both for their athletic participation and for biological characteristics that deviate from societal expectations. Like Zacchaeus, they often find themselves seeking recognition and acceptance in sporting communities that question their legitimacy based on physical attributes beyond their control.

Beyond his encounter with Zacchaeus, Jesus is seen throughout Scripture healing and having fellowship with the marginalized. When Jesus healed a man born blind (NIV, 1983, John 9:1-3), he explicitly rejected the prevalent belief that physical differences were divine punishment, instead showing that such differences could reveal God's purpose. As biblical scholar Yong (2011) observes, Jesus's response directly challenged the tendency to view physical differences as signs of divine punishment or human failure. This theological principle directly applies to DSD athletes, where their biological variations are not disorders requiring correction but natural expressions of human diversity that may reveal aspects of God's divine creation. The tendency to subject DSD athletes to medical interventions aimed at "normalizing" their bodies echoes the disciples' flawed assumption that physical difference indicates something inherently wrong that needs fixing.

Similarly, Jesus's interaction with the woman who had been bleeding for 12 years (NIV, 1983, Mark 5:25-34) provides another powerful example of how he engaged with individuals who had biological differences. In the Gospel account, Jesus not only healed her physical condition but publicly acknowledged her worth in a culture that had deemed her excluded from religious and social life due to her biological condition. The woman demonstrated immense

courage in approaching Jesus despite social stigma, and his response of calling her “daughter” reveals a profound affirmation of dignity that transcended physical characteristics (Dube, 2020). This interaction particularly resonates with DSD athletes who face invasive scrutiny of intimate biological characteristics and potential exclusion from athletic participation based on naturally occurring variations. Just as Jesus publicly validated this woman’s worth despite her biological difference, Christian communities today are called to respond to DSD athletes with dignity, respect, and inclusion rather than suspicion, invasive testing, and exclusion.

Jesus continually demonstrated not only compassion but also affirmation of people’s full dignity and worth in a culture that often viewed physical differences as signs of God’s judgment and disfavor. These interactions were profoundly countercultural, as Jesus publicly acknowledged, engaged with, and validated those whom society had deemed “other” and unworthy due to their physical characteristics.

This biblical pattern of embracing human biological diversity provides a compelling framework for contemporary Christian engagement with DSD athletes. Just as Jesus’s radical inclusion challenged first-century cultural assumptions about physical differences, the Christian community today has an opportunity to demonstrate similar counter-cultural acceptance of DSD athletes. The marginalization of these athletes through invasive testing, public scrutiny, and questioning of their athletic legitimacy parallels the social exclusion faced by those whom Jesus deliberately included in his ministry. Christ’s example calls believers to move beyond mere tolerance toward active advocacy, affirming these athletes’ full participation in sport while recognizing their unique challenges in a society that often struggles to understand biological variation. This biblical foundation thus reinforces the theological framework established earlier,

providing both scriptural warrant and practical guidance for approaching the complex intersection of faith, fairness, and competitive athletics.

Faith-Informed Approaches to the DSD Controversy

Christians may wrestle with the profound tension between advocacy for the marginalized, as Jesus demonstrates in his compassion for the outcasts of society (NIV, 1983, Matthew 25:40), and maintaining the values of justice and fairness in sports. However, the four theological principles previously established provide guidance for navigating this complexity. Christians are called to advocate for DSD athletes who face discrimination, invasive medical procedures, and public scrutiny, while also wrestling with legitimate concerns about competitive fairness. As discussed earlier, biblical justice requires both protecting the vulnerable and maintaining fair systems, creating what may seem like a complex ethical dilemma for Christians. The challenge exists in finding the balance between demonstrating love and support for DSD athletes, affirming their God-given identities as part of God's diverse creation, and feeling compelled to ensure fair competition for all athletes. Addressing this challenge requires the careful discernment and ongoing wisdom that the theological foundations suggest. This means engaging with difficult questions about the nature of God's diverse creation and the integration of dignity, biological variation, and fairness within this context. Ultimately, Christians are called to seek solutions that honor both the dignity of DSD athletes and the integrity of fairness in sports, recognizing that perfect answers may require the ongoing grace and wisdom that biblical justice demands.

Within the DSD controversy, Christians can embrace a faith-informed approach and offer unique perspectives and practical solutions grounded in the theological principles previously established. Faith communities can advocate for continued ethical and compassionate scientific research into DSD conditions and aim to deepen the collective understanding of biological

diversity and its implications for athletic performance, following the principle that biological variation reflects divine creativity rather than medical pathology. This commitment to knowledge and stewardship of information can help ensure that policies and regulations are grounded in sound evidence rather than cultural assumptions about “normal” bodies.

For example, within Christian higher education, athletic departments might implement these theological principles in several practical ways. They could establish confidential support systems where campus pastors, trained counselors, or student-athlete support staff provide guidance to athletes navigating questions about their biology and eligibility. Coaches at these institutions can foster inclusive team cultures by educating athletes about biological diversity, addressing misinformation proactively, and establishing clear policies against harassment or invasive questioning of teammates’ bodies. When eligibility questions arise, athletic administrators at faith-based institutions can advocate for processes that protect athlete privacy, ensure medical record confidentiality, and promote policies that honor bodily autonomy and dignity rather than requiring invasive testing of intimate biological characteristics.

At the same time, faith leaders can facilitate dialogue and advocacy for inviting various voices into the conversation that represent a more holistic view, reflective of the body of Christ’s diversity (NIV, 1983, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27), and embody the church’s calling to defend those whom society marginalizes. Christians have an opportunity to help bridge gaps in understanding by fostering inclusive discussions characterized by empathy among all stakeholders (medical professionals, ethicists, athletes, and sports administrators), following Jesus’s example of engaging with those society deems “other.” By embracing biblical values of hospitality and welcome (NIV, 1983, Romans 15:7), churches and faith-based organizations can combat misinformation and promote a nuanced understanding through intentional actions. This might

include hosting academic forums where medical professionals, sport ethics researchers, and theologians help promote an understanding of DSD from both scientific and theological perspectives, educating sport coaches and administrators to recognize and respond appropriately to issues regarding athletic eligibility, and establishing mentorship programs that connect DSD athletes with Christian counselors who can provide pastoral care affirming their dignity as image-bearers of God while navigating the unique challenges of competitive athletics. Christian sports organizations can lead by example by developing and implementing inclusive policies that respect the dignity of all athletes while maintaining integrity, demonstrating how biblical justice protects the vulnerable while ensuring fairness. These faith-informed approaches can contribute to shaping a more inclusive and God-honoring sports landscape for DSD athletes and all competitors.

From Controversy to Compassion

The topic of DSD in sports presents a complex challenge that is multilayered and multifaceted. As this paper has explored, the controversy surrounding DSD athletes like Imane Khelif and Caster Semenya reveals the dynamic nature of human sexual development and traditional gender-based divisions in sports. The tension between maintaining competitive equity and respecting the dignity of all athletes calls for a nuanced approach. There is a significant need to address this issue with both research-based data and Christian compassion. While research can provide critical insights into some of the physiological aspects of DSD and the potential impact on athletic performance, a Christian perspective calls for consideration of the inherent worth of every individual athlete, as they were created in God's image and with a unique purpose and design. A faith-informed approach compels believers to approach this topic with sensitivity, empathy, respect, and compassion. Continued discussion within the Christian community should

aim to advocate for the development of policies that are evidence-based, ethical, and reflective of the Christ-like values of love and fairness. By remaining open to new discoveries and demonstrating a willingness to experience cognitive dissonance, this complex issue can be navigated in a way that honors both the integrity of sport and the diverse mosaic of God's creation.

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