

Should a Christian Attend a Homosexual or Transgender "Wedding" Ceremony?

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Host: David Wheaton 00:08

Should a Christian Attend a Homosexual or Transgender "Wedding" Ceremony? That is the topic we'll discuss today right here on The Christian Worldview Radio Program where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. I'm David Wheaton, the host. The Christian Worldview is a listener supported radio ministry. You can connect with us by visiting our website, TheChristianWorldview.org, calling toll free 1-888-646-2233, or by writing to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

Before we preview today's topic, I would just like to spend a few minutes telling you about a new endeavor of the Overcomer Foundation that we are planning for the summer 2024. You probably know that the Overcomer Foundation is the actual nonprofit charitable foundation. That is the umbrella over The Christian Worldview Radio Program. The new endeavor is this. We're calling it the Overcomer Course for Young Adults. This is going to be a two day course for young adults to gain clarity and conviction on God's plan and their purpose in it. The first course we have planned is for Friday and Saturday, June 21 and 22, 2024.

It's going to be located at Stone House Farm just outside the metro area of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Whether you are aged 19 to 25 or not, you know that this stage is a major life transition, going from dependence to independence, going from parental values to forming your own personal values, going from a time of education in life to moving into your vocation, and from being single to potentially being married. Those are a lot of transitions. That's a lot to navigate. There's a lot at stake. The convictions that are developed and the decisions that are made during this crucial time of life sets the course for years to come. We have all seen or perhaps experienced ourselves at this stage of life. Between 19 and 25 can be turbulent and be set by drifting in life, getting involved in detrimental actions or relationships, or even deconstruction of everything someone thought they believed.

So why is it called the Overcomer Course? Have you ever noticed how in Christ's letters to each of the churches in Revelation, He concludes each one by saying, to him who overcomes? In other words, that's the goal for the believer, to be an overcomer just like Jesus is. He said in John 16:33, *"In the world you have tribulation. But take courage; I have overcome the world."* So an overcomer is a genuine Christian, not a perfect Christian, who overcomes the test the trials and the tribulations of life with the supernatural resources God provides. In eight sessions over two days, addressing what we consider to be life's most important issues such as, Who is God? What is the gospel? What is a biblical worldview? How do you grow spiritually? How do you proceed with relationships and marriage? Your vocation? The local church and more? Each session will contain two elements. About 35 minutes of teaching, followed by a similar amount of time for a group discussion, where questions

and comments will be welcome and encouraged. To maximize personal connection, the course is going to be limited to about 30 total attendees, both men and women. I'm going to lead most all of the sessions and we will also have staff and volunteers from the Overcomer Foundation assisting on site. I'm going to finish by briefly going over the eight sessions.

Day one:

- Session 1: Are you on the mission? Believing the Gospel is the gateway to being an overcomer.
- Session 2: What is your foundation? The foundation is that God exists and speaks and that changes everything.
- Session 3: Are you focused on the fundamentals and that understanding God's arc of history provides the framework for right thinking and right living?
- Session 4: Are you growing and sharing? How God provides ordinary means of grace to grow in your faith and to share it with others.

Day two is going to be more focused on the major institutions that God has established for us.

Session 5 takes place first on day 2.

- Session 5: That's trusting God's design in gender, sexuality, singleness, and marriage.
- Session 6: Embracing God's design for work time and money.
- Session 7: Engaging God's design in the local church.
- Session 8: How to overcome the world and will you?

We are excited about the potential and what God will do in the lives of those who come to the Overcomer Course. You can go to our website, TheChristianWorldview.org for more information, or give us a call toll free 1-888-646-2233. There's much more information there about local lodging and registration. We're going to do it on a donation basis for a minimum donation of \$75 to the Overcomer Foundation. That will cover our cost of meals and course materials, but not staff time and everything else that's going to take to put on this course. So if you'd like to support this new endeavor of the Overcomer Foundation, get in contact with us the usual ways. Also, if you know someone aged 19 to 25, who you think this would be beneficial for, tell them about it or contact us and we can get in contact with them and send them some information on it.

Now to today's topic. Should a Christian Attend a Homosexual or Transgender Wedding Ceremony? It can be confusing, and even destabilizing when a pastor or Christian leader who has been orthodox in his teaching for decades, says something that seems to compromise God's Word. Such occurred recently with revered pastor Alistair Begg. Begg, who is from Scotland but leads Parkside Church in Cleveland is the Bible teacher on the popular radio ministry called, Truth for Life.

In an episode in September 2023, Truth for Life host, Bob Lepine, was interviewing pastor Begg about his new book, *The Christian Manifesto*, which seeks to help Christians live out Jesus' Sermon on the Plain from Luke 6, in a 21st century brave new world context. Pastor Begg brought up the example of what he said to a grandmother who had contacted him about whether to attend her grandson's wedding to a so called transgender person. We'll play the audio of Pastor Begg's response in just a minute. But in short, he suggested the grandmother attend the ceremony and buy the couple of gift with the purpose to keep the lines of engagement and gospel witness open with her grandson. Those in theologically conservative circles collectively choked on his response, while

theological liberal's said, "This is the way." But the really important question is, What is God's will for Christians in an issue like this? Is it a matter of right versus wrong? Or is it a matter of personal conscience? Preacher and evangelist Justin Peters, joins us today to give us some counsel on how to make wise God honoring decisions. Let's get straight to the interview with Justin Peters. Justin, it's so good to have you back on The Christian Worldview Radio Program. It's been a couple years. I think it's worth you're reminding us how you came to saving faith in Christ. Also tell us about your history with the Word of Faith Movement.

Guest: Justin Peters 08:23

Hey, David, what a joy to be back on your program, brother. I appreciate the invitation so very much. My involvement with the Word of Faith Movement and my work against that and my testimony are a bit intertwined. Long story short, I was born and reared in a Southern Baptist Church. I made a profession of faith when I was seven years old, but was not truly converted. I prayed the "sinners prayer" and made intellectual assent to the basics of the gospel, but I wasn't converted. I thought that I was. But as a teenager, I got involved in the Word of Faith Movement. A neighbor of mine told me that God had spoken to him and told him that I was going to be healed of my cerebral palsy that I was born with, cerebral palsy, CP, and walked with crutches.

So when I hear at age 16, a grown man say, God spoke to him, He told me he's going to heal you, I really latched on to that and I wanted to be healed. I wanted at the time to be able to do all the things that my friends were doing. Driving and playing football, and all that kind of stuff. So I went to see some "faith healers" as a teenager, under his strong suggestion and guidance, and bad guidance I now know. But I went to see "faith healers" in hopes of being healed. And of course, I was not healed. That was my first exposure to what I now know to be the Word of Faith Movement, the prosperity gospel. But it wasn't until years later as a seminary student that I actually began to study the Word of Faith Movement on a more academic level, and began to see that this is a different gospel altogether.

Now, related to my testimony, David, is that even at that time as a seminary student, I still was not truly converted, believe it or not. I actually graduated from seminary with two degrees, but I was truly converted later, as a preacher. So my full testimony is written out on my website, justinpeters.org and people can read that. I believed the gospel intellectually, but there seemed to me, David, to be a massive inherent contradiction within the gospel that I could not understand. That was basically that salvation is not of works. That made sense to me. I understood that I couldn't do enough good deeds to earn my salvation.

On the other hand, we would tell people in order to be saved, they had to repent, which seemed to me to be doing a work because for my Armenian theologically speaking background, I thought repentance was something I had to do. You had to just will yourself to turn from certain sins, it was something you mustered up on your own. So there seemed to me to be this massive, inherent contradiction. How can you say that the gospel is not of works, but then in order to be saved, you have to repent, which is doing a work? I just could not rectify that in my mind, and I had doubts about my salvation. I thought I was saved. I truly did. I thought that. At the same time, I was plagued with doubts. I had these ongoing doubts about my conversion, whether or not if I died, I would

really go to heaven, or if I would go to hell. I just had no lasting assurance of it. By God's grace, as a preacher, actually God brought me to a point of true repentance. True Repentance is granted by God. God grants repentance. So repentance is a work, but it's a work of God. It's not a work we do. It's a work that God does in us. And by God's grace, He worked that true repentance in my heart. Godly sorrow over sin per 2 Corinthians 7. And so yeah, that's the cliff note version.

Host: David Wheaton 12:05

Thank you for sharing that, Justin. Justin Peters is our guest today here on The Christian Worldview. I think this is so unnecessarily misunderstood today, that sometimes the Bible says repent, just alone repent, or just believe in Christ, or repent and believe. And it's all a package. Like you said, it's a work of God, that faith is a gift to believe. So as you mentioned, is repentance. It doesn't need to be delineated if it's some extra work we have to do. Of course, repentance is a part of saving faith, because sin is our major problem. So we don't just enter into belief without any understanding and turning from our sin. That turning is not us pulling ourselves up by the bootstraps. It's God's work through His Holy Spirit in our life that convicts us of sin, that gives us the power to turn from our sin and turn to Christ. Romans 2:4 says, *Do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?* It is God who leads us to repentance and enacts repentance in our hearts. Thank you for explaining that. I had forgotten that about your testimony of coming to saving faith. But that's a very important distinction you just made and so I'm thankful you made it, Justin.

Now we are going to talk more about the Word of Faith Movement in part two of our interview next week with regard to a, I think you can only describe it as a major story within the Word of Faith or New Apostolic Reformation World with Mike Bickle, who I think for all intents and purposes, was the founder of the International House of Prayer in Kansas City, and he's fallen from a standpoint of moral failure.

But before we do, there's been a very recent controversy with a beloved pastor preacher that many of our listeners will have heard on the radio and he's impacted my life. His name is Alistair Begg. He pastors a church in Cleveland, Ohio. He was recently doing an interview with his host for his radio program, which is Truth for Life. Bob Lepine was the host that was interviewing Pastor Begg about a book that Pastor Begg had written called, *The Christian Manifesto*. I'll read the transcript at the beginning of this interview. It said in this interview about his book *The Christian Manifesto*, Alistair Begg considers the challenge presented to us in Jesus' Sermon on the Plain. Not the Sermon on the Mount. This is different, Luke 6, called *The Sermon on the Plain*, that's what it's known as, and its relevance to us 2,000 years later. The Lord's teachings on forgiveness, possessions, obedience, and more speak to and make demands on believers from every background. But as we remember the compassionate character of our Lord and put our trust in Him, we can learn the life He's called us to live with perseverance and humility.

So Justin, there was about a 25, 30 minute interview. Bob Lepine the host of Truth for Life interviewing pastor Alistair Begg. During the course of that interview, toward the end of it, an issue came up about the challenges of the modern culture we live in, because that's what the book is about, living out the Christian faith in a really contrary culture. So I'm going to play the fuller context

of the audio clip. By the way, we have this linked for you to watch it at our website as well if you'd like to go back and see it for yourselves. But here's Bob Lepine from Truth for Life, interviewing Pastor Alistair Begg, where he tells the story of a grandmother contacting him asking what to do about whether she should attend her grandson's wedding to a transgender person.

Audio Sound Bite: Bob Lepine 15:44

I think every pastor who preaches, every author who writes a book like this comes away thinking, I hope my readers or my listeners will think differently as a result of their interaction with this, will feel differently and will act differently. As you think about this book and your prayer for this book, what do you hope will be different? How do you hope people will be different after they have read this book, and they've meditated on this sermon?

Audio Sound Bite: Pastor Alistair Begg 16:16

Well, first of all, you know, I hope that I will be different. The old song that we never sing, you know, Not my brother, nor my sister, but it's me, O Lord, standing in the need of prayer. I mean, that is foundationally the case. And so I hope that that would be multiplied. I hope that our church family, those who choose to read this book, that it might have an impact among us, because learning to say, I'm sorry, learning to say, please forgive me, learning to say, you know, I'm not at my best at the moment, can you come alongside me?

Learning to say, Yes, I know that these people believe a very different agenda, that their lifestyle is orientated in another direction, and learning to say, but I have no basis upon which I could argue that I myself would not be where they are, were it not for the amazing grace of God, were it not for His compassion towards me. And in very specific areas this comes across. I mean, you and I know that we field questions all the time that go along the lines of, my grandson is about to be married to a transgender person and I don't know what to do about this and I'm calling to ask you to tell me what to do, which is a huge responsibility.

In a conversation like that just a few days ago, and people may not like this answer, but I asked the grandmother, does your grandson understand your belief in Jesus? Yes. Does your grandson understand that your belief in Jesus makes it such that you can't countenance in any affirming way, the choices that he has made in life? Yes. I said, well, then okay. As long as he knows that, then I suggest that you do go to the ceremony. And I suggest that you buy them a gift. Oh. She said, What? She was caught off guard. I said, Well, here's the thing. Your love for them may catch them off guard. But your absence will simply reinforce the fact that they said these people are what I always thought. Judgmental, critical, unprepared to countenance anything. And it is a fancy, it is a fine line, isn't it? It really is. And people need to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. But I think we're going to take that risk. We're going to have to take the risk a lot more if we want to build bridges into the hearts and lives of those who don't understand Jesus and don't understand that He is a king.

Audio Sound Bite: Bob Lepine 18:55

John tells us He was full of grace and truth and we have to figure out how we can be full of grace and truth at the same time, don't we?

Audio Sound Bite: Pastor Alistair Begg 19:04

Yes, our words should be full of grace and seasoned with salt. It's so easy to get that upside down. When a pastor does, then that will take on a role in a congregation as well and flavor it and so, you know, let not many of you become teachers.

Host: David Wheaton 19:23

Justin, these comments by Alistair Begg have caused quite the controversy. Now we're up against a short break, but when we return, I'm going to ask you whether Begg's suggestion for the grandmother to attend the wedding ceremony of her grandson to a transgender person is wrong in the eyes of God? Or is this as Begg seems to indicate, a preference or conscience issue? As in, there are good reasons that a Christian should attend so that the grandson sees her love, rather than confirms to him that she is as Begg said, judgmental, critical and unprepared to countenance anything.

Stay tuned. There's much more coming up on this. I'm David Wheaton and you are listening to The Christian Worldview Radio Program.

TCW Desk Calendar for 2024

To kick off the year, we are offering a listener favorite from our store. The Christian Worldview desktop calendar for a donation of any amount. The calendar is made up of 5 x 7 cards held in a small wood block with each month's card displaying a beautiful landscape or wildlife scene of God's creation from Richard Ganzel photography, who's also a member of our team. Each card has a verse of Scripture and the days of the month. You can preview the calendar in our store at TheChristianWorldview.org. Normal retail is \$12.99. For a limited time and while supplies last, the desktop calendar is available for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview. We encourage you to get one for yourself and gift one to a friend. To order, go to TheChristianWorldview.org or call toll free 1-888-646-2233, or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

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Welcome back to The Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit our website, TheChristianWorldview.org where you can subscribe to our free weekly email and annual print letter, order resources for adults and children and support the ministry.

Our topic today is, Should a Christian Attend a Homosexual or Transgender "Wedding" Ceremony? Our guest is Justin Peters, an evangelist and preacher. If you just joined the program, at the end of the first segment, we played an audio clip of a conversation between Bob Lepine who is the host of the radio program Truth for Life, which features the preaching of Pastor Alistair Begg. The issue came up of a grandmother asking pastor Begg whether she should attend her grandson's wedding to a so called transgender person. Whether she should go or not. I think it's important enough to replay just the portion of the soundbite that has caused a lot of controversy. Here it is again, and then I'll follow up with you with a question, Justin.

Audio Sound Bite: Pastor Alistair Begg 23:23

You and I know that we field questions all the time that go along the lines of, my grandson is about to be married to a transgender person and I don't know what to do about this and I'm calling to ask you to tell me what to do, which is a huge responsibility. In a conversation like that just a few days ago, and people may not like this answer, but I asked the grandmother, does your grandson understand your belief in Jesus? Yes. Does your grandson understand that your belief in Jesus makes it such that you can't countenance in any affirming way, the choices that he has made in life? Yes. I said, well, then okay. As long as he knows that, then I suggest that you do go to the ceremony. And I suggest that you buy them a gift. Oh. She said, What? She was caught off guard. I said, Well, here's the thing. Your love for them may catch them off guard. But your absence will simply reinforce the fact that they said these people are what I always thought. Judgmental, critical, unprepared to countenance anything. And it is a fancy, it is a fine line, isn't it? It really is. People need to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, but I think we're going to take that risk. We're going to have to take the risk a lot more if we want to build bridges into the hearts and lives of those who don't understand Jesus and don't understand that He is a king.

Host: David Wheaton 24:56

That was Alistair Begg, one of the most respected and well known Bible teachers, I think you could say around the world. Justin, there are lots of scenarios morally and ethically that Christians often have to wrestle with inside their conscience. On one hand, you have many Christians who are willing to shop at, let's say, a Target store, which is a business that is a vocal and visually pro homosexual, pro transvestite advocate. Or there are many Christians who are willing to buy alcohol, and enrich companies that promote all kinds of ungodliness. There are many Christians who are willing to attend movies at the theater knowing full well that Hollywood and the theaters are making their money corrupting the minds and the hearts of people who walk into these theaters.

On the other hand, Justin, there are many Christians who would never bake a cake and write a pro homosexual message on that cake or take photos at such a "ceremony" of a so called gay wedding. I can't imagine a born again Christian parent being willing to go to an abortion, an elective abortion, that their daughter has decided to have just out of support for their daughter. So with that as some context, just to make the point that we as Christians face all kinds of moral and ethical choices. Are

Alistair Begg's comments, is his position on this a clear violation of God's Word like a right versus wrong to attend a ceremony that blatantly rejects God's design? Is it that, or as he intimated, let every one workout his own salvation with fear and trembling? Is this sort of a preference conscience issue? In other words, that you can attend without affirming or supporting this ceremony, as he was saying, Well, before you go, does this grandson understand that you're not affirming his decision in any way? So what are your thoughts on that kind of big overarching question here?

Guest: Justin Peters 26:54

Yes, David. This is not even a difficult question. This is a sin issue. This is not a personal preference issue. This is a sin issue. Romans 14:22 says, *Blessed is a man who's not condemned by what he approves.* And it's incongruous to say that as long as that person knows that you disagree with their lifestyle, and even if you disagree based upon biblical convictions, as long as they understand that, it's okay to go and be there and show your support. That doesn't even make sense because your very presence there is a tacit approval to what the occasion represents. And that is an abomination. There's no such thing as homosexual marriage or transgendered marriage. God defines marriage. Not us. Not the United States Supreme Court. It is His creation, He gets to define it. Anything outside of His parameters is an abomination and it's an affront to God.

David, I was quite honestly, absolutely flabbergasted when I saw that clip. Because like you, I have admired Alistair Begg for years. I've met him before just on one occasion. He was very gracious, very kind. And I've benefited from his preaching. The Man on the Middle Cross is one of my favorite preaching clips of all times. So I was dumbfounded at this. It was almost like a spacetime continuum for me was ripping apart. I could not believe what I was hearing. It's also incongruous with what I have heard Alistair say on other occasions. In another interview, he was asked about his views on homosexuality and whether he would ever compromise even under the penalty of breaking a law where you speak the truth to those issues. What do you do? And basically, I'm paraphrasing here, he said, Well, this is not hard. You go to prison if that's what it comes to. You stand on the truth and you go to prison if that's what happens.

So I really am having a hard time squaring what I've heard him say on two different occasions. It seemed so at odds with one another. It was especially even more disturbing for me in this is that you can tell from the clip that's clearly something he's thought through. It wasn't like he was just kind of caught off guard. This is something he's given thought to. And it's wrong, David. I can't sugarcoat it. It's wrong. What he said. It's unbiblical what he said, and it is sinful what he said.

I am praying for Alistair. I wrote him a letter and I'm imploring him to rethink this and come out and make a very clear public correction. David, it's not just the "couple" that's you know, getting "married." It's not just those two people. What does it say to everyone else at this abomination? Everyone else at this unbiblical wedding? When all the other guests see you there, and they know you claim to be a Christian? Undoubtedly many of those people would. I mean, if you're close enough to the couple to be invited to the wedding, other people there will also know who you are. What does it say to them? Oh, here's a Christian. And look, they're here. Even giving a gift, which, I mean, it's like, you just keep thinking through this and it gets worse and worse the more you think about it.

To be there, A, and then to give a gift on top of that in honor of this abomination before God? His reasoning in this is to show love. But David, that's not love. The most loving thing we can do for someone is to tell them the truth. What you say with your lips, like I don't believe in this, I think it's wrong, then if you say that with your lips and you take it right back with your presence there, it's hopelessly incongruous and it's a terrible witness to a watching world. It's a terrible witness for the gospel. It grieves me, David. It really does. What he said, truly grieves me. I'm praying that he will think through this. I'm praying that other people around him will give him wise, Godly counsel, biblical counsel. I pray that he comes out and makes this right, because that's a big fail. It's been a stumbling block to a lot of people.

Host: David Wheaton 31:09

Thank you for your perspective on that, Justin. I really agree that your comments are based in Scripture and what you said is accurate. So thank you for that. Justin Peters here on The Christian Worldview. He is a preacher and evangelist. You can find out more about him. Go to our website, TheChristianWorldview.org. We have links to him at justinpeters.org. The reason he gave for attending, Does your grandson know where you stand? That you're a Christian and where you stand on this issue? The reason he gave to attend is he said, here's from the transcript, Well, here's the thing. Your love for them may catch them off guard. In other words, that you're attending this ceremony. But your absence from the ceremony will simply reinforce the fact that they said, so here's their perception of you, the grandmother, these people are what I always thought. Judgmental, critical, unprepared to countenance anything. I talked to another believer I respect and asked him about this issue as well before our conversation.

He said something very, I think interesting and true. In some ways, even those who believe in God's sovereignty in salvation, we hold to that, that God is sovereign in salvation. Yet sometimes we don't act like He is. In other words, like not going to this ceremony would result in the grandson not coming to saving faith. In other words, our absence there, this is going to cause them well, what I do here is going to cause this person not to be saved. When you could look at it like, express before hand how much your love is for this grandson, how much you want to stay engaged with the grandson and how much you are there to support of being truthful for what your convictions are. And that's why you cannot come to a ceremony that's inherently rebellious against God. That seems to me to provide a lot of context and love why you wouldn't come. Anyone who couldn't accept that seems like that's not the grandmother's fault. That's the grandson's fault. But the reason he gave has to do with this issue that we say and believe God is sovereign, that's what Scripture teaches, but we act like if we don't do something, attend the ceremony, that somehow we're going to keep that grandson from being saved. Your comments on that, Justin.

Guest: Justin Peters 33:23

David, I tell people all the time when it comes to things like this, you do the right thing. And you trust God for the results, whatever those results are. As you said, we claim to have a high view of God's sovereignty and salvation and so we need to act like it. We do the right thing and trust God for the results. So in this situation that he portrayed, that he painted for us, your absence is not going to reinforce how judgmental you are. Your absence from this abomination of a wedding will

reinforce in the minds of everyone there, that you really do believe what you say you believe. That's what it's going to reinforce. Anything else is just a compromise and it's incredibly confusing, especially for us watching this. Some people might say, Well, would you go to the wedding of two lost people? Well of course. As long as they're a man and a woman. Because I believe that two unregenerate people, a man and a woman who are married, are legitimately married.

You know when two professing atheists or two Buddhists or Muslims or Hari Krishna's or whatever, when they get married, as long as it's one man, one woman, that's a legitimate marriage. That's God's definition of marriage. But anything apart from that is not. I cannot imagine attending something like this, which is such an abomination before God and an insult to His face. I wouldn't attend a homosexual or transgender or whatever wedding any more than I would attend an execution of one of my brothers and sisters in Christ. That may sound extreme, but I truly believe that. I mean that.

Host: David Wheaton 35:04

You mentioned one scenario there of two nonbelievers being married. What about a situation of attending a wedding ceremony where one person in the ceremony has been unbiblically divorced and is now to be remarried? That's a very common one, sad to say, within the evangelical world. It happens all the time where someone is unbiblically divorced and then being remarried. Or secondly, let's say attending the wedding of a believer, let's say your son, who was getting married to an unbelieving girlfriend? In other words, they're not marrying per 1 Corinthians 7, in the Lord. It's an unequal yoke. What are your thoughts on those two scenarios?

Guest: Justin Peters 35:48

So if someone is getting married, and they've been unbiblically divorced, No, I would not attend that. For the same line of reasoning. After they got married, I would treat them as the married people that they are because they are legally married. But no, I would not attend that. Because that too, would be unbiblical. And I'm not going to give my approval, even tacit approval by my presence there. I keep coming back to Romans 14:22. *Blessed is the man who is not condemned by what he approves.* To be there and not say any objection to it, is to give your tacit approval.

Host: David Wheaton 36:25

By the way, the tacit approval that used to be, a verse that would be very common in wedding ceremonies. I'm not so sure it is today, that there was a line in there that if anyone present has any objection to this marriage ceremony, speak now or forever hold your peace. So as a believer, if you went to any of these kinds of wedding ceremonies we're talking about here, you would be remiss not to say anything if there was a clear biblical, a flaw or fault going on in this wedding. The second scenario I mentioned, Justin, was attending the wedding of, let's say, your son who's a believer, marrying an unbelieving girlfriend. So you're not marrying in the Lord. I'm assuming you've come to the same conclusion there.

Guest: Justin Peters 37:03

I would David. If my son claims to be a believer, and he's firm in that affirmation of his belief, and he's knowingly marrying someone who is not just a false convert, but this woman does not on any

level claim to be a Christian and he's knowingly doing that, then no, I would not attend and of course, it would also bring up questions. Okay son, are you truly in the faith? Because you're deliberately doing something that you know is unbiblical. That God does not approve. You understand that. You're doing it anyway with forethought and planning. This is not stubbing your toe on the bedpost at night when you get up to get a glass of water. This is not an instantaneous kind of oops! You're thinking this through and planning it out. So if that were my son, I would be pointing him to 2 Corinthians 13:5 to examine himself to see if he's in the faith.

Host: David Wheaton 37:57

Justin Peters has been our guest today. He's exactly right about that. It's not just the issue of whether Christians should attend an overtly sinful ceremony like a so called transgender or homosexual wedding, but other kinds of weddings that reject God's clear design in Scripture as well. Actually Grant Castleberry, who was a recent guest on this program, he's the pastor of Capital Community Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, made a short video about this. We'll play that after this short break and have some concluding thoughts on this issue. I'm David Wheaton and you are listening to The Christian Worldview Radio Program.

Featured Resource: One Day Nearer

With every rising and setting of the sun, we draw one day nearer to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. So writes Steve Miller in the opening line of his new book, One Day Nearer Daily Devotions in Anticipation of Jesus' Glorious Return. Steve goes on to say, As we grow in our knowledge of the Lord and his plans for our future, may our desires for the things of earth diminish and be replaced by increasingly fervent longings for the things of heaven. One Day Nearer is a soft covered, 365 Day devotional that retails for \$19.99. For a limited time, you can order it for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview. This is an excellent supplement to Bible reading, or to give to a friend. To order go to TheChristianWorldview.org or call toll free 1-888-646-2233 or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

Featured Resource: The War on Men 39:34

We've largely lost the honor and the nobility and the glory of biblical manhood and so many young men are not trained to be a leader, a protector and a provider in a Christ like way. That then, creates the actual end product of young men who don't know how to be a man. So we've largely lost the script for what being a biblical man is.

That was Owen Strachan, author of the excellent book, The War on Men. This is a book for the entire family to read, understand, and then pursue what biblical manhood is. The War on Men is hardcover, 256 pages and retails for \$29.99. For a limited time, you can get a copy for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview. To order, go to [The ChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) or call toll free 1-888-646-2233 or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

Host: David Wheaton 40:42

Welcome back to The Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit our website, TheChristianWorldview.org where you can subscribe to our free weekly email and annual print letter, order resources for adults and children and support the ministry.

Our topic today is, Should a Christian Attend a Homosexual or Transgender [actually, transvestite is the more accurate term] "Wedding" Ceremony, in light of Pastor Alistair Begg's recent comments suggesting that a Christian grandmother attend her grandson's wedding ceremony with a transgender person and get them a gift. Now, at the end of the last segment, Justin Peters was talking about other types of weddings that Christians need to think about whether to attend or not. Grant Castleberry did a short video on this. You remember he was a guest just a couple of weeks ago on the program. He's the pastor of Capital Community Church in Raleigh, North Carolina. Here's what he had to say.

Audio Sound Bite: Pastor Grant Castleberry 41:39

I made a post the other day arguing that Christians should not attend a gay or transgender wedding because your presence at the wedding ceremony is a blessing and endorsement of the union that is taking place. As a result of that, I got all sorts of questions about, What type of weddings can and should Christians attend? So let me just break this out in categories of the type of weddings you should attend and what type of weddings you should not attend. The type of weddings you should attend are 1.) A Christian marrying another Christian. I think that's obvious. Second, is actually a non Christian marrying another non Christian.

Let me give you an example of this. Let's say that your brother's a non Christian, he's marrying another non Christian, that would be a wedding that you can attend because marriage is a creation ordinance. It's not just a Christian ordinance. It's ordained in Genesis chapter two. All sorts of people all over the world getting married. Paul says marriage points to in Ephesians 5, the relationship of Christ in the church. So you hope that they will come to see that, but you can endorse a man and a woman getting married. Now here's the catch. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7 to marry only in the Lord. So if a Christian is marrying another non Christian, that would not be a wedding that you would want to attend and endorse. And the last example is if there's grievous sin taking place. If a man is leaving his wife, committing adultery, you would not want to attend that type of wedding.

Host: David Wheaton 43:09

Again, that was Grant Castleberry, the senior pastor of Capital Community Church in Raleigh, North Carolina. He's exactly right. Just to have some summary comments here, let's start with God's will and the definition of marriage that Jesus Christ Himself gave. In Matthew chapter 19, some Pharisees came to Jesus testing him and asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all? He [Jesus] answered and said, Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.

So Jesus here defines what marriage is. It's one man and one woman becoming one flesh for life. So you go from what is God's definition of a marriage to then what is a wedding? A wedding is a ceremony where a marital covenant an agreement takes place between a man and a woman before God and before men. It's actually a celebration of this covenant. Those who attend the ceremony are there to participate in the occasion, unless of course, they're there to object with that one line that

used to be in many marital vows. If anyone objects who's here, speak now or forever hold your peace.

So a homosexual or a transvestite wedding isn't actually a wedding, nor a marriage in the eyes of God. What it is, is an event that celebrates an inherently depraved and sinful relationship. One that openly rejects God. So to attend is to participate or affirm or celebrate something that is just ungodly. Plus, as Alistair Begg suggested, giving a gift, that only further deepens it because giving a gift is a token of congratulations and celebration for this couple. This goes in direct violation of what it says in Ephesians chapter 5. Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them. For it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. I think that passage very much applies to a homosexual or transgender so called wedding.

But then someone will say, "Well, yes, but it's my son, or it's my grandson, or my daughter, or my granddaughter. I want to err on the side of being loving toward them. I don't want to break off communication and fracture the relationship." Well, no one is saying to not love them and not to continue to engage with them. But you don't need to attend a sinful ceremony to keep those lines of communication open. Explain to them why you can't attend. You could say something like, I can't affirm by my attendance a relationship and event that is dishonouring to God. And so I think Alistair Begg is assuming too much and putting too much importance on the potential reaction of the grandson if his grandmother doesn't attend his so called wedding. Begg said this. Your love for them may catch them off guard. In other words, if you attend the wedding. But your absence will simply reinforce the fact that they said, These people are what I always thought. Judgmental, critical, unprepared to countenance anything. Well, we don't know that. They may come to that conclusion. And if the grandson concludes that, he's not going to be able to stand before God on judgment day and say, My grandmother not attending my wedding ceremony, kept me from repenting and believing. That's not going to work. Who knows, the grandson could conclude the opposite. Wow, my grandmother loves God more than she actually loves me. What a woman of conviction. He'll remember that.

You can look at the opposite perspective and think about King David. A stern rebuke from the prophet Nathan was what God used to bring King David to repentance. So it's not always our kindness. Sometimes it can be a rebuke and a confrontation of where we have gone wrong. So when Alistair Begg says, we're going to have to take that risk a lot more if we want to build bridges into the hearts and lives of those who don't understand Jesus and don't understand that He is a king. This sounds to me like Alistair Begg is saying Christians need to take the risk and attend ceremonies like this. Risk of what? The risk is that you're going to violate your conscience to attend a ceremony like this. That's never worth the risk.

We shouldn't violate our conscience, especially when it goes against something that is inherently sinful, like a ceremony like this. Here's the sad part. This is causing great division amongst Christians. I heard just a couple of days ago that American Family Radio had a conversation with Truth for Life over this and Truth for Life stuck by their position that this is a matter of conscience and not a matter of it being wrong for a Christian to attend a sinful wedding ceremony. Truth for Life will no longer be airing on the American Family Radio Network. Alistair Begg is scheduled to speak at Shepherds

Conference, the pastor's conference at John MacArthur's church that attracts 3,000 or 4,000 men from around the world each spring. What is Shepherd's Conference going to do with a pastor who is supposed to be speaking there who suggests that Christians attend homosexual weddings and buy a gift? It's going to be very telling what comes of this. Will Alistair Begg reconsider and change positions? Or will this be the new frontier? The justification for other professing Christians to say, Well, Alistair Begg suggests this. I have already seen online that there's a heretical guy named Kevin Young, who posted the news about Alistair Begg suggesting going to this kind of ceremony and said, This is the way. When you have the heretics complimenting you, you know you haven't made a good decision.

Now if you've listened to this program for very long, you know that I personally have been greatly impacted by Alistair Begg's preaching. I listened to him frequently. I play audio bites of him on this program from time to time. If I have any bias, it is toward leading with grace toward Alistair Begg rather than the sharp tip of a sword. I don't think he's a heretic. This doesn't nullify all of his good teaching in the past, but it does some bad things. First, the influence this will have on Christians and the church more broadly. Causing some to disobey the Word and attend an inherently God dishonouring ceremony. That's what it is. Or to violate their conscience to attend.

Did you notice that the grandmother responded to Begg's suggestion in surprise? Her conscience was troubling her about attending, and the council should have been to listen to her conscience and have it informed by the Word of God. You really could say here that Alistair Begg's counsel led this believer into doing something that dishonors God. I think these comments also cause some doubt about where Alistair Begg is heading. Will he go further down this road? It divides true believers like we're seeing right now. And it actually marginalizes Christians who will take a stand and not attend a ceremony like this. Like what's the matter with you? You must be a hater? Alistair, Begg suggests that you go to these kinds of ceremonies. So what do we do with this? We all need to be praying for Pastor Alistair Begg. That he would reconsider his position. That he would come out and say, I've thought more about this, and realized that I was wrong to suggest that Christians attend an inherently God dishonouring ceremony. We can love and reach out to our loved ones and yet not participate in their sinful ceremony and congratulate them with a gift. So please remember to pray for Alistair Begg.

Lord, we ask that you convict his heart and that he responds humbly. That he corrects his words and comes to a position that is faithful and honoring to you, Lord, and that you cause him to become an even more faithful and impactful preacher, even more than he has been over the decades.

We are out of time. But thank you for joining us today on The Christian Worldview. In just a moment, there'll be information on how you can hear a replay of today's program, order transcripts and resources and support this non profit radio ministry. Just a reminder to go to our website, TheChristianWorldview.org to find out more about the Overcomer Course for young adults that we'll be holding this June. Call us if you'd like more information on that. Or if you have a spiritual need. If you're not sure whether you are born again and would like to know how to be born again, you can go to our website and click on the page, "What must I do to be saved?" Or give us a call. Let's

anchor ourselves in what Scripture says. Jesus Christ and His word are the same yesterday, and today and forever. So until next time, Think biblically, live accordingly, and stand firm!

The mission of The Christian Worldview is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. We hope today's broadcast encouraged you toward that end. To hear a replay of today's program, order a transcript or find out, "What must I do to be saved?" Go to TheChristianWorldview.org or call toll free 1-888-646-2233. The Christian Worldview is a listener supported nonprofit radio ministry furnished by the Overcomer Foundation. To make a donation, become a Christian Worldview Partner, order resources, subscribe to our free newsletter or contact us, visit TheChristianWorldview.org, call 1-888-646-2233 or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331. That's Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331. Thanks for listening to The Christian Worldview.