

Alistair Begg Responds to Furor Over His Counsel to Attend "Trans Wedding"

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Host: David Wheaton 00:08

Alistair Begg Responds to the Furor Over His Counsel to Attend "Transgender Wedding." 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. In case you haven't heard the controversy that is being hotly debated in Christian circles, Pastor Alistair Begg, who leads Parkside Church in Cleveland, but who is even more well known for his daily radio program, Truth For Life, which features his preaching, and is heard by millions around the world, said in an interview that he received a letter from a grandmother asking whether she should attend her grandson's wedding to a transgender person. Here's how Alistair Begg counseled that grandmother.

Audio Sound Bite: Pastor Alistair Begg 01:25

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. You're 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.

Host: David Wheaton 02:36

Now loving and engaging with non believers is prescribed in scripture. But attending a ceremony that openly rejects God's design for marriage? For the vast majority of theologically conservative Christians, this was a line that ought not be crossed. We reported last week that American Family

Radio, after discussion with Truth For Life Representatives, has removed their program from their network. And this week, it has been reported that Begg will no longer be speaking at Shepherds' Conference, a worldwide event for pastors held at John MacArthur church in March. This speaks loud and clear for how significant Beggs comments to this grandmother are being taken.

To his credit, Alistair Begg responded to the controversy in a full 40 minute message to his church this past Sunday night. We have that video linked at our website, TheChristianWorldview.org. We're going to play some audio clips from Alistair Begg's message today to give as much context as possible about his reasoning and why he counseled the way he did. Then later in the program, Justin Peters will join us for some follow up discussion. Before we get to the audio clips, I'd like to give three takeaways that I think are important to keep in mind with regard to this situation.

The first takeaway is this. Alistair Begg has been a faithful preacher for many decades. This does not mean that we will be perfectly aligned with him. But he is clear and sound on the gospel as he is with sexuality and marriage. He does not affirm homosexuality or transgenderism. His advice to the grandmother doesn't make him a heretic or an apostate. Those are people who reject Christ and the gospel.

But anyone who listens to him should keep his position on this issue in mind. 1 Timothy 5 says, *Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father.* Begg is an older man. He's a pastor. And we will not sharply rebuke him. We do appeal to him to reconsider his position, but we will also state clearly why we think his position is unbiblical and is a slippery slope to even more compromise.

The second main takeaway. In pursuit of loving our enemies and having compassion for the lost, in our view, he goes beyond what Scripture allows, models, or calls Christians to do, which is attend and participate in a covenant ceremony that mocks and rejects God's design for marriage and celebrates what Scripture calls in Romans chapter 1, a depraved relationship. Once you give the advice he did, on what basis would you tell a grandmother not to attend the abortion procedure of her granddaughter, or that a Christian church shouldn't host a transgender wedding? We don't believe there's any biblical support for scenarios like that, and further, this advice will cause some other believers to violate their conscience and attend a ceremony like this, and it puts pressure on other Christians to conform.

After all, Alistair Begg is counseling Christians to do this, to reach out to the lost, so should you. He also never addressed in his message this main criticism that attending a transgender wedding is akin to participating or being a witness of or tacitly approving of this ungodly ceremony. Not only does

he not address the main criticism, but three times in the message he was really quite confusing about what his actual position is.

In one place of the message he said, "My response to one grandmother was not in any way a blanket recommendation to all Christians to attend LGBTQ weddings. It was my personal opinion, as I sensed what was best." Something like this should not be a matter of our personal opinion. It should be, What does scripture say? On what basis would someone know whether to attend or not to attend? So there's confusion here.

A third takeaway is this. In his response, Alistair Begg compares faithful Christians who wouldn't attend a transgender wedding to the Pharisees, like the older brother in the parable of the lost son, who wouldn't attend his younger brothers celebration after the younger brother returned home repentant. The older brother, who represents the self righteous Pharisees is actually angry that his father throws a party for his younger brother after all the younger brothers debauchery. So the older brother refuses to attend the party. He won't celebrate his younger brother's repentance, he has no room for grace, like the Pharisees don't.

But of course, a Christian who does not attend a transgender wedding is not the same scenario as the older brother who refused to attend the return party of his repentant younger brother. But that is the comparison that Begg makes in the message. That Christians who would refuse to attend are like the older brother, the Pharisees, who are too afraid of contaminating themselves, rather than reaching out to the lost. So Alistair Begg using that parable to marginalize and almost demean Christians who would refuse to go to a transgender wedding was really quite disappointing. In this first soundbite, he gives some context for how he came to his position. He starts out by reading from his latest book, The Christian Manifesto.

Audio Sound Bite: Pastor Alistair Begg 08:26

The proof that we understand how we have been loved by God, says Jesus, is to love our enemies. The kind of love that is only possible as God enables us by the Holy Spirit. Love your neighbor as yourself. When the category of neighbor includes everyone you meet, including your enemies, to do so is a supernatural action and it is an action that is proof of our salvation. "This is supposed to be an uncomfortable challenge." It is certainly very uncomfortable to me. It's what I'm saying in the book. Here is how I think through what it would mean for me to live out Jesus' command myself.

I think of people who are behaving in a way that rejects God and His ways. Now, what you need to know is that when I'm writing this, I am actually dealing with the circumstances that were in our

minds when we studied Romans chapter 1. The reality of the finger in the face of God that is represented in those who have turned their backs on God, even to the point of their own sexuality being turned upside down. So when I write the line, I think of people who are behaving in a way that rejects God, that is a comprehensive reality, but this is what is in my mind, who reject God and His ways. They do it publicly, and they do it in a fashion that makes it absolutely clear that they have no interest in it while "mocking" Christians as bigots as a context.

Naturally, I do not like them, but I am called to the supernatural work of loving them, not ignoring them, not avoiding them, but actively seeking to bless them. I am not called to walk on past them, like the religious leaders in the parable of the Good Samaritan. No, I am called to be like the Samaritan, who is the classic illustration of loving and lending and doing good without a calculator, and without the expectation of a payback.

Now, that is then the context when a grandmother phones me up in tears, and gravely concerned for the circumstances in relationship to one of her grandchildren. I'm not quoting the book to her, I'm only responding to her. She wrote a long letter, it sat on my desk for a long time. This happens to us all as pastors all the time. And on that occasion, when I listened to her talk, my great concern was for her and for her relationship with her granddaughter. I wasn't thinking about the nature of the circumstances in that moment of time. All I was thinking about was, how can I help this grandmother not to lose her granddaughter who has already publicly turned her back on God and her back on God's design, and in every other way? And in the course of that conversation I said, you know, one of the ways in which to catch your granddaughter off guard, is actually do the opposite of what she expects you to do. What does she expect you to do? Avoid her, stay away from her, don't get contaminated by the situation. I said, Well, isn't that interesting? So what would happen if you actually went? Well, that gave great pause. And I said, but you should talk to your husband. You have to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Those were all the caveats that went around the conversation. But then I said, Well, I think you should go. And why don't you give her a gift? Well, how would I ever know that I would set the cat among the pigeons, because after all, it was a personal conversation between myself and somebody that I've never met in my entire life.

Host: David Wheaton 12:23

He said a lot there. He was Orthodox almost all the way through. Loving our enemies, those we don't naturally like. But when he says, All I was thinking about was how to help the grandmother not lose her granddaughter, and by the way, Begg originally said in the interview with Bob Lepine that it

was a grandson, but now it's a granddaughter, so not sure which is the case, he says, Do the opposite of what she expects. I think you should go. He has now put subjective feeling over objective truth into the equation. All Alistair Begg should have been thinking is, what kind of counsel to this grandmother is faithful to God and His Word. Then he finished this section by saying that, How would I know that this would cause such a big deal?

Really? The LGBTQ movement is the zeitgeist issue of our day. Christians who stand for biblical truth on this issue, who refuse to participate in so called gay weddings, they've lost their livelihoods and more over their stance. I have heard of no other high profile, theologically conservative pastor publicly take this position, encouraging a Christian to attend a transgender wedding. So how he could say, How would I ever know this would set the cat among the pigeons? I can't imagine that someone like Alistair Begg, who is very intelligent, very well read, he often states he reads the New York Times, so he's aware of the issues going on in the world, he's not sequestered, someone who is so experienced in life and ministry would think his position on this issue wouldn't cause an earthquake. Let's listen to another portion of his message.

Audio Sound Bite: Pastor Alistair Begg 14:12

In that conversation with that grandmother, I was concerned about the well being of their relationship more than anything else. Hence, my counsel. Don't misunderstand that in any way at all. If I was on the receiving end of another question about another situation from another person in another time, I may answer absolutely differently. But in that case, I answered in that way, and I would not answer in any other way no matter what anybody says on the internet as of the last 10 days. If that were the case, I should never have said it in the first place. People want me to recant and to repent. To repent? I repent daily, because I say a lot of things that I shouldn't say. I mean, check with Sue, but the fact of the matter is, I'm not ready to repent over this. I don't have to.

Host: David Wheaton 15:04

Unfortunately, he sounds defiant here. Not ready to repent over this. I don't have to. Well, that is because this is his core conviction. It is not just misspoken words or poorly expressed counsel, this is what Alistair Begg believes on this issue. But I would think if you're arriving at a different position than 99% of those who are in theologically conservative circles, people within your own ballpark theologically, like John MacArthur or James White or Owen Strachan or Grant Castleberry, Phil Johnson, Tom Buck, Justin Peters, I would even say Vodi Bachmann, although I haven't seen him comment on this yet, you would really need to deeply consider whether your position truly lines up with scripture like you think it does. No doubt Begg has close friends he respects. Sinclair Ferguson

is one of them, I've heard. It will be very revealing to know if he's receiving affirmation for this position from anyone in a theologically conservative circle. But what he said next is quite revealing.

Audio Sound Bite: Pastor Alistair Begg 16:13

I've lived here for 40 years, and those who know me best know that when we talk theology, when we talk stuff, I've always said I am a little bit out of sync with the American evangelical world for this reason; that I am the product of British evangelicalism, represented by John Stott, Martyn Lloyd Jones, Eric Alexander, Sinclair Ferguson, Derek Prime. I am a product of that. I have never been a product of American fundamentalism. I come from a world in which it is possible for people to actually grasp the fact that there are nuances and things. Those of you who are lawyers understand this. Everything is not so categorically clear that if you put one foot out of this box, you have to be removed from the box forever.

Host: David Wheaton 17:09

This is a low blow toward American Christians and fundamentalists. It's really European elitism. That we can actually grasp nuance and aren't so binary like you Americans and fundamentalists. He went from saying he's never been in sync with American evangelicals and he's not a product of American fundamentalism. These are two different groups. But if that's the case, the question is, Why has he been preaching in America for all these years then if you think we're all just a bunch of troglodytes?

We need to take a short break for some ministry announcements, but we have much more coming up on this issue of Alistair Begg and what he counseled about attending a transgender wedding. So stay tuned. I'm David Wheaton, and you're listening to The Christian Worldview Radio Program.

Host: David Wheaton 19:56

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, Alistair Begg Responds to the Furor Over His Counsel to Attend a Transgender Wedding. He continued in his message this past Sunday night defending his position by referencing John Stott, a British pastor, who he said influenced him on his views regarding being a Christian and engaged in this world.

Audio Sound Bite: Pastor Alistair Begg 20:41

I dug out a book that I have had since I was in my 20s, *Christ the Controversialist* by John Stott. And in that book, he is tackling the challenges of living in the world without being capitulating to the thoughts of the world. He outlines it by first of all identifying the attitude of the Pharisee. And he points out, after the Babylonian captivity, the people were repatriated. The infiltration of the culture into Judaism was such that there were two branches that emerged from it. One branch were the Hellenists, who said, I think that we can engage with the culture, and in doing so they surrendered some of their convictions. On the other side of the Hellenists, were the Hasideans or the Hasidim and the Hasidim said, No, under no circumstances are we going to get involved in any of this stuff. Pharisees actually is an Aramaic term for separatists. The Pharisees were the religious exclusives of their day. "In their determination to conform strictly to the law, they held aloof from any and every contact, which in their view might defile them." The superior and scornful attitude which the Pharisees adopted towards the common people appear several times in the gospels, including right here in chapter 15.

Host: David Wheaton 22:23

Here's where he makes what I believe to be the poor comparison between those who separate from certain situations or people, like Christians who wouldn't go to a transgender wedding out of their conviction, as being like the Pharisees. He bases it on John Stott's interpretation of Luke chapter 15, and the parable of the lost son.

Audio Sound Bite: Pastor Alistair Begg 22:44

Pharisee doctrine of holiness of separation from the world, he says, was a perverted doctrine. The motivation to keep yourself pure and holy is a right motivation. But it was perverted by the way in which they applied it. Instead of seeking to be holy in thought and word and deed, while retaining relationships of love and care with all men, they withdrew from social contact with sinners and despised those who didn't follow suit. They basically became a holy club. And they in the process became harsh and censorious. And it is that which Jesus is taking on when He tells these stories and when he gives these parables.

If that's the Pharisees attitude, what is the attitude of Jesus? Well, the attitude of Jesus is totally at variance with the Pharisees themselves. They were scandalized by His free and easy fraternization with these people. You can't do that. You can't go there. That's why it begins. All the publicans and sinners who said, We have to go meet Jesus. And the Pharisees were grumbling, can you believe this thing? He goes to the house of publicans and sinners. He meets with sinners. The motivation for purity and holiness of life and circumspection and so on, is absolutely unquestionable. The real

challenge comes when we are confronted by issues that don't just fit our clean little categories. What distinguished Jesus from the Pharisees, "was in a word, grace."

Host: David Wheaton 24:31

So Alistair Begg gives examples of Christ's eating with sinners and other ones, which I didn't include, of Christ talking alone with a woman at the well or the prostitute who anointed his feet with perfume, and how this scandalized the Pharisees who thought, There's no way you can be with sinners like this and be a holy man. And the implication here is that Christ did these things and so the real challenge for us is, when we are confronted by issues, like attending a transgender wedding, that we need to, as he said, take the risk and do those things and not be pharisaical.

Here's the account of Jesus eating with sinners. Matthew 9:9. *As Jesus went on from there, He saw a man called Matthew, sitting in the tax collector's booth; and He said to him, Follow me! And Matthew got up and followed Him. Then it happened that as Jesus was reclining at the table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were dining with Jesus and His disciples. They wanted to come and see who this Jesus was.* This wasn't an inherently sinful event, it was a meal. And these men wanted to come and see who Jesus was. After all, one of their own, Matthew, had just become a disciple of Jesus. Verse 11. *When the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, "Why is your teacher eating with the tax collectors and sinners?" But when Jesus heard this, He said, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick.*

But go and learn what this means: I desire compassion, and not sacrifice, for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners. And to this, I think every Christian should say, Amen! We are called to go out and try to reach the lost with the gospel. Having a meal at a home where there's nothing inherently sinful going on is very different than going to a transgender wedding, which at its core, is God rejecting as it celebrates a depraved relationship and completely perverts the idea of marriage being as Christ loves His own church. There's no comparison here. But this is the crux of the argument that Alistair Begg is trying to make. Attend a transgender wedding, because Christ engaged with sinners as well. All right, just one more soundbite before we get to the conversation with Justin Peters.

Audio Sound Bite: Pastor Alistair Begg 27:06

So here's the challenge. How do you honor God, obey His Word, and treat your neighbors and your friends and your family members who have decided to go down this wrong path. Some people have decided the way to handle it is by admonition. So you just simply stand up and keep telling them, this is terrible, this is terrible, this is terrible. Some people have decided, we just won't say anything

at all. Just let it go. Who cares? You know, it's a big world, people do different things. Neither is a possibility for a Bible believing Christian. We are to treat with honor those who view us with hatred.

Now understand that this grandchild was an enemy of the gospel, an enemy really in the family circle by dint of her lifestyle. An enemy. And Jesus says, you're supposed to love your enemies. We can disagree over whether I give that grandmother good advice or not. Not everybody on the pastoral team thinks I gave very good advice. And as I said, you know, on another occasion with a different person in a different context, the advice may be very different.

But at least let's acknowledge the fact that what we're doing is we're wrestling with biblical principle. And when principle for let's say, holiness of life comes up against the principle of love for your enemy, how are you going to put that together? You got a problem with the grandmother showing up sitting on the front row, in a context that she absolutely despises? And sitting on her lap, nicely wrapped with beautiful paper, and a bow around it is her gift. The gift of a Bible for a granddaughter she knows has no interest in the Bible.

But because she believes that the entrance of God's Word brings light, she is prepared to trust the Holy Spirit to do the work. What happens to homosexual people in my experience, "is that they are either reviled, or they are affirmed." The Christian has to say, We will not treat you in either of those ways. And the reason that we can't revile you is the same reason why we can't affirm you. Because of the Bible. Because of God's love. Because of his grace. Because of his goodness.

Host: David Wheaton 29:32

Of course, this is true. Christians should not revile or affirm homosexuals, or transvestites. But there are many options for faithful Christians between reviling or affirming homosexuals and transvestites without attending their sinful ceremonies. How about telling this granddaughter how much you love her, giving her that Bible and saying, you will get together with her three days a week if she'd like, but your love for God does not allow me to attend a ceremony that dishonors my God. The assumption that attending a ceremony that dishonors God is going to show your love and going to win them to Christ is a wrong assumption. Sometimes God uses a rebuke to change the heart of a hardened sinner. Sometimes God uses our kindness to bring someone to saving faith. But kindness can be shown without attending a God dishonouring ceremony.

Alistair Begg has put himself in a difficult situation. And I'm assuming he knows this. Homosexuals and transvestites won't be satisfied that he's willing to attend their ceremonies, but not affirm them in their sin. Would Begg advise using preferred pronouns to show love now,? That's what they will

demand. Will he allow a transgender wedding in his church to a granddaughter of a member to show their love and not to appear critical and judgmental? They won't stop until they are celebrated. Remember in the Bible in Sodom, they pounded at Lots door, and even struck with blindness by the angels who were there, it says, They wearied themselves trying to find the doorway. Even being struck blind didn't keep them from trying to get into Lot's house.

So before we get to Justin Peters, just a reminder to continue to pray for Alistair Begg. He says he doesn't have to repent, but God has His ways of bringing us to repentance. Begg started a hot fire here, perhaps not intentionally, and I'm sure he's feeling the burn. And if not everybody on his pastoral team thinks he gave good advice like he just said, one wonders what his future will be at the church. Divided elder boards lead to divided churches. We'll take a short break. Up next is Justin Peters, preacher and evangelist to offer some further comments on this situation with Alistair Begg. I'm David Wheaton.

Host: David Wheaton 34:14

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.

Preacher and evangelist Justin Peters joins us for the rest of the program to talk about the situation with Alistair Begg. There was a lot in that message, Justin, but as you heard it, what were some of the main things that stuck in your mind hearing Alistair Begg respond to all the criticism that has come his way?

Guest: Justin Peters 34:50

David, thank you so much for having me back on. Yes, I did listen to the sermon. Listened to it twice actually, last night and took some notes. His main text was Luke 15. He talked about the one lost sheep and the woman with 10 silver coins, but the emphasis was primarily on the prodigal son. David, I'm sad to say he took scripture way out of context, way out of context.

I mean, some of the things he said were right, in and of themselves, but the overall point that he was trying to justify the advice that he gave to this grandmother is not at all, not even tangentially supported by the text. He focused, as I said, primarily on the prodigal son that we should show love in hopes that the prodigal son will return. But David, that is not love. You cannot celebrate something that God calls an abomination. In fact, someone put up a statement on Twitter earlier

today and I saw it and I was like, this is so good. His name is Colin. In reference to what we're talking about he said, We want the prodigal home, repentant, safe, which is why we don't take him a housewarming gift for his pigsty. That's so well said and so succinct. You can't use an unbiblical means to bring someone to the Lord. God has not only ordained the end, but he's also ordained the means to the end. His ordained means to his ordained end, is preaching the gospel, speaking the truth in love, not celebrating something that is wicked and is an abomination. Even giving a gift in honor of that.

I have no doubt that Alistair Begg's intentions are good. I have no reason to doubt him when he says that his intentions were to save the relationship between this grandmother and her granddaughter. I have no doubt that was his heart in it. But how far do you take this out? Taken into his logical conclusion, if you're going to give a gift in honor of a trans wedding, which is no wedding at all,

If you're going to do that, do you also give a gift if this homosexual trans couple decides that they want to adopt a child, do you throw them a baby shower? Do you give them a gift in honor of them raising a child in a home that is full of sexual deviancy and robbing that child of a mother and a father? Do you celebrate that? And if not, why not? So that's where the logic takes you.

I was really hoping and praying, David, that Alistair would come out and say, you know, I've rethought this. I've gotten counsel from a multitude of counselors, and I realize I was wrong, this was bad advice. But he didn't. He doubled down, he tripled down and even said that those who were criticizing him, compared us to Pharisees. We're legalists, we're Pharisees, we don't have love, we don't understand nuance. Sadly, David, it was a train wreck.

Host: David Wheaton 38:05

He created a dichotomy here though, Justin. It was either you are compassionate like Jesus, again, he didn't draw the lines, as you were mentioning that, what would be appropriate? How far do you go to try to reach out? Do you participate and engage in and give a gift to an inherently sinful ceremony, or do you draw the line a little bit before that and have them over for dinner? There's lots of other things you could do in between, before involving yourself in something that is inherently dishonoring to God. Talk about the other side of this that brings them into saving faith, not just purely compassion.

Guest: Justin Peters 38:06

It's a false dichotomy, David, to say that somehow love and truth are opposed to one another, or even love and law are opposed to one another. We're to speak the truth in love. Ephesians 4:15.

Speaking the truth in love does not mean we water down the truth. That doesn't mean we dilute it. It doesn't mean we apologize for it. It means just what it says. We are to speak the truth, the full truth. We're just not to be jerks about it. So the most loving thing you can do for someone is to tell them the truth. Jesus did indeed.

This is one of the problems with Begg's sermon. Yes, He ate with tax collectors and sinners. But He did that to reach them with the gospel, to confront them in their sin, as He did all throughout His ministry, as He did with the Pharisees, as He did with Zacchaeus. He confronted sinners in their sin, called them to repentance. He did not affirm them in their sin, and He certainly did not give His approval, not even a tacit approval to anything that is inherently dishonorable before God. Exhibit A: A homosexual wedding or anything like that. He would never have countenance that.

So you cannot draw a parallel between eating with tax collectors and sinners and attending a homosexual wedding because when you attend a "homosexual wedding," you're giving your tacit approval to it. I put up a video about this on my YouTube channel. I said the only way, the only way that I could ever in good conscience attend a ceremony like this would be if I knew with 1,000% certainty that there would be a time in the service where the pastor would say something to the effect of, if there's anyone here who has any reason that these two should not be joined in holy matrimony, speak now or forever hold your peace. At that point, I would stand up and say, I object, here's why I object. This is not a wedding, this is an abomination, and I would open air preach the gospel, and then I would be escorted out, I'm quite confident.

So you cannot go and sit there and give your approval with your silence, which is what that is, and even giving a gift on top of that, that makes matters worse. So the most loving thing you can do is to confront someone in their sin. As Christians, we should not expect lost people to act like anything but what they are. Lost. So I don't expect an unregenerate person, a homosexual, to act like a Christian. I could not attend that ceremony. But could I talk with those people before and even after? Of course, yes, I would talk with them to lovingly give them the gospel. I don't hold lost people to the same behavioral or moral standards that we as Christians are held to. You don't have to dishonor God and go against scripture, which is what this would be.

If you attend a homosexual wedding, you are violating scripture. You do not have to do that to have an avenue to present the gospel. You don't have to go to a nude club or something like that, to have opportunities to share the gospel. All you have to do is walk out your front door to find someone who's lost and you share the gospel with them.

Host: David Wheaton 41:55

I think that's the whole point. No one would have said anything if Pastor Begg had advised his grandmother to say, you know, I think you should invite your granddaughter over even with her transgender partner, go to dinner with them, invite them to church, get together with them every Friday, no one would have said one word about it. It has everything to do with participating, being there as a witness to this ungodly ceremony. That is, I think, where the line needs to be drawn.

If you think about it, you and I and other believers and Alistair Begg are all about showing compassion for the lost and preaching the gospel. People need to be saved. We remember our old life and we needed to hear the gospel, we needed to be saved. He was willing to go about four more steps. So in other words, you and I, Justin, I think we're on the same page here, we wouldn't go into the ceremony, we would not go. And Alistair is willing to go further than that into it, into a situation where the ramifications, I think, become really difficult once you do that. You already alluded to this.

You mentioned the one regarding should you then as a Christian grandmother be celebrating going to the baby shower when they adopt a child? Really obvious one that I think should be mentioned as if it is compassionate, Justin, to attend this ceremony for an individual Christian, to show compassion and to show kindness and to prove that you're not judgmental and critical and so forth, isn't it just logical to say well, then Christian churches should actually host these ceremonies to show that they are loving, and that they're not critical and judgmental. Because after all, you get this couple into a church, they're going to hear the gospel there. How can that be a bad thing? I mean, you can see where once you crossed the Rubicon, the line, it opens all sorts of other things up and isn't that really just the point of what's going to happen now? I fear, I feel badly for Alistair Begg because I think he's going to be inundated constantly now, a weak spot's been sensed, and that's going to be capitalized on by those who are in the "gay affirming world."

Guest: Justin Peters 44:11

That's right. In fact, David, you're 100% right. Where do you draw the line? The camel's nose is under the tent. In fact, just this morning, actually a few minutes before you called me, Matthew Vines is a "homosexual pastor," calls himself a pastor, but he's a homosexual. He has a tweet from this morning. He says Alistair Begg, a non affirming pastor recently encouraged a grandmother to attend her granddaughter's same sex wedding as a way to show Christ's love. I'm grateful that despite significant backlash, Begg has chosen to stand by his advice this week.

Okay, David, Exhibit A. Here is Matthew Vines, he is the tip of the spear trying to introduce an affirming position in regards to homosexuality within the evangelical church. This is a guy who believes in the deity of Christ. Yes he does. Believes in the deity of Christ. Believes in the Bible as the Word of God. Calls himself an evangelical, is just an affirming evangelical. And so he's written this book entitled, *God and the Gay Christian*. He's trying to make homosexuality acceptable within evangelical ranks. Sadly, he's had enormous success at it. And here he is, Exhibit A, exactly what we're talking about. This is why it's so dangerous. You have a homosexual pastor now, praising Alistair Begg.

Host: David Wheaton 45:40

Justin, we know. I've been seeing this movement for a long time. Tolerance is not their goal. They already have that in our society, just tolerating that they can exist and do what they want to do in the privacy of their home. They must have affirmation. And even beyond that, they must have participation from everyone now. We see that even with the children, the drag shows and so forth. And anyone who dissents by the way, must be punished. But how do you see Begg's position impacting the younger generation of Christians?

Guest: Justin Peters 46:14

Error always begets more error, right? Sin spreads. Sin metastasizes. It spreads like gangrene. It's never isolated. So the old proverbial statement, give 'em an edge, they'll take a mile. Well, that's what sin will do. And it will absolutely go exactly the direction you're talking about. It will become more and more normalized. In listening to Alistair's sermon from this past Sunday night, he said, "I was concerned about the relationship with her granddaughter." He said, "In a different situation, I may have given a different answer."

That is situational ethics. The truth changes depending upon the situation. That's a page right out of the liberal playbook. I would have to think that Alistair knows that, that we've got to stand on truth regardless of the situation. Then he tried to make an argument. Well, "I'm from Scotland, and I'm not familiar with American fundamentalism." Well, truth doesn't change with your geography. It's not dependent upon latitude and longitude. It's not dependent upon culture. None of this makes any sense. I kept wondering, have you read Matthew chapter 10? Because Jesus speaks to this directly and precisely. He says in Matthew 10:34, "*Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's enemies will be the members of his household.*" David, Jesus told us this would happen. Yes, our stand for Christ,

our fidelity to God's Word may cost us relationships, even relationships within members of our immediate family, it may do that. Jesus told us this. We have to be ready for it.

This is a test, that situation that Alistair was talking about with the grandmother and her granddaughter. That's a test of her faith. That's a test of her fidelity to Scripture. So might it cost her the relationship with her granddaughter? Yes, it very well may. But Jesus told us that this will happen. So this shouldn't surprise any of us. This is exactly what the Bible warns us about and is trying to prepare us for.

So, we don't compromise the truth in hopes of saving a relationship. You stand on the truth. And if it costs you the relationship with your family member, so be it. Is it hard? Yes. Is it painful? Of course it's painful. But we've got to honor Christ before anyone else, and Jesus said also in Luke 14:26, *Anyone who does not hate his own father, mother, wife, sister brothers, his own wife, his own children, even his own life, cannot be my disciple.* We can't pretend like Jesus didn't say these things. He did. He said them for a reason. So we should expect these kinds of tests and that's exactly what it is. It's a test.

Host: David Wheaton 49:25

So well said, Justin. Justin Peters with us today on The Christian Worldview. A preacher and evangelist. justinpeters.org is the website to get connected with his ministry. Our "hatred" for our family, we don't want to hate our family members, but in comparison to how much more we love Jesus Christ, it will appear as hatred to our family members.

Now, we both, and I'll speak for myself personally, love Alistair Begg. He has had a very big impact on my spiritual formation. I've listened to all kinds of messages of him over the years. This actually personally hurts. Because now I think, what do we do with Pastor Alistair Begg going forward? I do not think this negates everything he's ever taught of course. I don't think it even makes him a heretic. I think it's a very wrong position. But we love this man, this preacher, we want him to finish well. But what should listeners be thinking and doing with Alistair Begg now going forward, Justin?

Guest: Justin Peters 50:31

I echo your sentiments. This hurts. This is the kind of stuff I would expect from a Beth Moore or some woke person out there. Not Alistair Begg, and so it hurts. This is a gut punch. But I'll say now, like I said in the video that I did on my YouTube channel, because of this, and especially now, especially now that he has tripled down on his position and flat out said, "I have no reason to repent," he said that directly, "I have nothing to repent of." Because of that I cannot in good conscience recommend

Alistair Begg as a preacher. I could not sit under his preaching. I have benefited from his preaching in years past. And I recognize that he is not saying that homosexuality is not sinful. He believes that it is. This is a big, big fail, David. This is not a minor issue. This is not a naughty offer, you know, we can agree to disagree. This is a basic application of basic Christian doctrine and it's very dangerous advice. It's profoundly unbiblical. I'm not saying he's not a brother. I'm not saying he's lost. Nothing like that. But preachers are held to a very, very high standard, a frighteningly high standard. And because of this, until he repents, I cannot in good conscience recommend him and I could not sit under his preaching.

Host: David Wheaton 51:57

We need to pray for him. I know our listeners and those who follow your ministry will do that Justin, and we so appreciate your comments just really trying to speak truthfully and yet with grace toward this man who has helped so many through his preaching of the Word. So we thank you for your comments today, Justin, and we wish all of God's best and Grace to you and keep standing firm in Christ.

Guest: Justin Peters 52:20

Thank you very much. God bless you, brother.

Host: David Wheaton 52:23

We encourage you to connect with Justin's ministry. His website is, justinpeters.org. 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 nonprofit radio ministry. 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.

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