

Should You Attend a “Gay Marriage” If Invited?

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 SAME SEX WEDDING SSA WEDDING
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by Dr. Robert Gagnon, Associate Professor of New Testament at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and author of *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*

Some who accept Jesus’ understanding of marriage as a union of the two halves of the sexual spectrum, male and female, nevertheless think that it is acceptable for Christians to attend a “gay wedding,” not by way of agreement but rather as an act of love. The rationale for such a view is that the offender is more likely to listen when convinced of unconditional love.

While I am sympathetic, I think Scripture gives clear guidelines that this is not an appropriate course of action. Paul’s remarks in 1 Corinthians 8-10 are especially apt. Paul dealt with “strong” believers who wanted to continue visiting the temples of idols as a way of staying connected with unbelievers (the restaurants and health spas of antiquity). They themselves did not believe that idols had any real existence, so what harm could come?

Yet Paul absolutely forbade dining there on two grounds. First, such actions could “stumble” (i.e., precipitate the spiritual downfall of) others with a

weak conscience by sending the message that idol worship wasn't such a big deal (ch. 8). Second, those attending such rituals, at which sacrifices would be made to an idol, were actually offending God by aligning themselves unknowingly with demonic powers (10:14-22).

Earlier, Paul had insisted that the Corinthian church should respond to the case of a fellow believer who was in a sexual relationship with his stepmother by withdrawing from fellowship with the offender, "not even to eat with such a one" (ch. 5). An adultincestuous bond is a close analogy to a homosexual relationship in terms of the severity of the offense and unnaturalness (i.e., sexual involvement with another who is too much of an embodied same).

Jesus reached out to sexual sinners, but at no time did he attend a ritual that celebrated immorality. I am quite sure that Jesus would not have attended such a ritual celebration, not even as a silent observer—unless the purpose in attending was to call people to repentance.

There are other ways of showing love without attending a "gay wedding." What good would I be at a "gay wedding" anyway since I would be visibly weeping my heart out at a ceremony that solemnizes a behavior that puts a loved one at risk of not inheriting God's kingdom?