

# Why I Can't Perform a Same-Sex Wedding

*Go ahead: Call me intolerant. I still believe the church must protect the marriage altar.*

This past Saturday I stood on a church stage in Gainesville, Fla., and performed a wedding in front of 100 guests. The bride, Christina, was stunning in her billowing white gown. The groom, A.J., was beaming with delight. Tears flowed freely during the ceremony—especially during communion when a talented singing duo performed “The Prayer,” the wedding anthem made popular by Celine Dion and Andrea Bocelli.

Thankfully there were no awkward moments—no fainting groomsmen, lost rings, squawking loud speakers or candles lighting dresses on fire. It was a picture-perfect moment in June, the month we’ve come to know as ideal for weddings even though summers in Florida are sweltering. I was grateful that I made it through my sermon without crying—since weddings involving friends or family can choke me up.

**“Marriage is a holy institution, and the church should keep it that way regardless of where our culture ends up drifting on this issue.”**

Later that evening, after the decorations were taken down, the rose petals were swept up and the leftover wedding cake was in the freezer, I had some time to ponder the words I spoke to A.J. and Christina when they stood at that altar. I realized why my voice cracked a few times during my sermon. It was because I could feel God’s presence in that church. He was smiling on this occasion.

Wedding ceremonies can come in all shapes, sizes and

styles—but in essence they are meant to recreate a scene from the second chapter of Genesis, when God took the woman from man's side and united male and female as one. Without the aid of candles and Italian love songs, God preached the first wedding sermon. The Scripture says: "For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh" (Gen. 2:24, NASB).

That verse provides the biblical pattern for gender, sexuality and family relationships. It has been programmed into the DNA of the human race. Yet today a growing number of people who dismiss the Bible as myth are demanding that our culture exchange God's fundamental truths for a lie. And some mainline churches, swayed by secularist pressure, are opening their altars for same-sex weddings because they don't want to be viewed as intolerant prudes.

While the debate rages over whether states should sanction gay marriage (we can argue about that later), we Christians must cling to three key principles revealed in the first chapters of Genesis:

**1. God's nature is revealed through male and female.** The true God created men and women because both genders together reflect His image. God's full glory is not evident through men alone, or through women alone. Both are required. That's why Genesis 1:27 says: "So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them" (NLT).

It is for this reason that gay marriage is totally inconsistent with Christian morality. It is, in essence, a rejection of God's authority as Creator. It is an affront to His holy image. For two men or two women to marry and pretend to enjoy God's blessing on their sexual union is to rebel against created order and to establish an alternative culture without Him.

**2. God's kingdom is advanced through heterosexual unions.** The Genesis account clearly states that the family consists of a father and a mother (see 2:24). For thousands of years this is how the human race has been perpetuated. It has only been in recent decades that the homosexual community has promoted the acceptance of gay adoption or artificial insemination. And while gay activists may argue convincingly that they can offer compassion and love to children, the Christian community cannot bend heaven's rules to sanction gay or lesbian families. To do so would be another direct attack on the image of God.

**3. Marriage was always intended to be monogamous.** It's also important to note that Christian morality, at its core, is based on the concept of a committed, faithful, one-man/one-woman relationship. Even though many men in the Bible had multiple wives, the Scriptures never say God endorsed their behavior. Polygamy was never His plan.

Many secularists mock Christians today because, in some sad cases, the same preachers who angrily oppose gay marriage have girlfriends on the side. I would have to agree that a married preacher who is sleeping with his secretary is just as guilty as a man who is involved in a gay affair. In both instances, God's original standard in Genesis has been violated. We need to move past the hypocritical idea that homosexual sin is worse than heterosexual sin. We shouldn't try to excuse either.

Our culture is seeking to redefine marriage in our generation—and they are enlisting politicians to help them. Just last week President Obama wowed many of his supporters by announcing that the month of June—everyone's favorite month for weddings—is now Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month. It's sad that our nation's leader—who is modeling faithful marriage—caved in to the pressure to applaud something that God calls an abomination.

Biblical marriage is not two men or two women; neither is it one man and four women (which Islamic law allows), a man and a child or three men and a baby. Marriage is a holy institution, and the church should keep it that way regardless of where our culture ends up drifting on this issue, or what people are allowed to do in a city courthouse. The Christian community must stand on the side of truth, not in a murky middle ground of compromise.

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