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## How Should a Dad Talk to His Children about Attending Their Mom's Same-Sex Wedding?

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### #STRask - Stand to Reason

Questions about how a dad should talk to his children about attending their mom's same-sex wedding, how a veterinarian should respond if someone who suffers from species confusion asks for medical care, and how to manage anger when arguing for the lives of the unborn.

\* How should a dad talk to his children (ages eleven, nine, and seven) about attending their mom's same-sex wedding?

\* How should a veterinarian respond if someone who suffers from species confusion asks him to provide medical care?

\* Greg says if you get angry in an argument, you've already lost, but I get so angry when I think about the evil of abortion. How do I balance this anger with the desire to argue for the lives of the unborn?

## Transcript

Welcome to Stand to Reason's hashtag, S-T-R-A-S-C-R-S-C-Podcast. I'm going to give you first billing. This is Greg Coco.

That is Amy Hall. Yes. Alright, Greg, let's get right into this.

This first question comes from Jonathan. How would the dad talk to kids age 11, 9, and 7 about going to a same-sex wedding of their mom who has chosen that lifestyle? They would know that marriage is between one man. They would know that marriage is between one man and one woman for one lifetime, but the wedding would be on when their mom has the kids.

The wedding would be on... The wedding would happen when the mom has the kids, so the kids will go to the wedding. So what should he say to them? Well, I guess I need to know more of what they already know about this. If this is a Christian family, as he

communicated these things to... He says they would know that marriage is between one man and one woman for one lifetime.

Okay, so they already have this understanding, even though they know their mom is not living consistent with that. First, let me say, this is really a challenging, difficult circumstance for this family, isn't it? I mean, for dad, have three children with a woman who then leaves him and the other man is a woman, kind of thing, so to speak. That's heart-wrenching, and it's got to be really hard.

And I don't know how the children are managing this, but I guess what I'd want to reinforce with the kids, because this is one of those circumstances where I think it is a reasonable exception regarding attending the service, because of all of the very complex family dynamics that are involved, and especially you have these children that are... They're attending, in this case, as members of the family and as children of the mother, not as those who are, in a certain sense, contributing to the rejoicing in the relationship that's being celebrated there. So I just think this is a little different category. So I would say probably two things here.

One is that dad should reinforce the standard to them. We understand the culture's going this way, but this isn't God's way, and it's not even strange to put it this way. It's not even nature's way.

So it isn't like we're kind of enforcing a religious idea onto these kids and having them to believe it. This is the way, as I've said before, the world is structured, reality is structured. This is just not the way the world is supposed to operate kind of thing.

So I would want to reinforce that in a gentle way, reinforce the idea without keeping condemnation on mom, because you really want to avoid that, because mom is still mom and the parent of these children. And the other thing I'd really want to reinforce with them is the importance of treating mom and everybody else involved in this with respect. So because, as I said, mom is still mom for them.

And I think it's really important that they honor their mother, even though they are not improving of this relationship. And it's going to be difficult, and too, as time plays out, how these familial relationships are going to be expressed, specifically because of this problem and the nature of this intertwined, this kind of in an odd way blended family that they're now living with. So it's not going to be easy, and I don't know.

I'd have the right call every single time. But I would just offer these two thoughts, make sure the kids still have their heads on straight about what's right before Father God and Mother Nature, so to speak, and also that they're committed to be respectful of everyone that's involved here, not just mom. This is such a cold situation.

And I think it might even be worth helping them see that the biggest tragedy here is that

she's walking away from Jesus. I mean, I'm assuming if I mean, I guess I can't assume this, but if they were living as a family going to church and professing faith in Jesus and now she's turned away to do this, that is the biggest problem here. And so it might be worth saying to the kids, look, this is what we're praying for, and it's okay to be sad about this, but I agree, Greg, they have to still respect the mom.

And I also want to point out, you know, we said before, you shouldn't attend a same sex wedding, and we've given all the reasons for that. We've talked about that at length. When you are a child and you're obeying your parents, you're in a situation where I would not say they are sinning by being obedient and going when the mother is taking them.

And the reason I say that is because we have two conflicting, competing values, right? And in fact, we actually see there's a passage, and I can't remember exactly where it is at the moment, but there's a passage about rules for making vows. And one of the rules, and this isn't the Mosaic covenant, one of the rules is if a daughter makes a, I think it's a daughter makes a vow that is foolish, but she makes the vow to God. The father finds out and he says, no, you know, you can't go through with that.

Then she is supposed to respect him and not go through with it, even though she made the vow, and she's not supposed to break it. And it actually says that the father then bears the guilt of that. So then he has to get some sort of sacrifice or something.

He bears the guilt. So what I see there is that, and obviously if the parent was asking you to do something evil, you wouldn't do it. But there are certain situations where you're obedient and it might involve doing something that you would not have chosen to do, but you're not guilty for it.

So they don't have to feel guilty about going, and that might be important for them to know. Well, this is based on a very solid, defensible biblical notion that morality is offered in scripture in a hierarchy. That is, there are some things that are greater than others, that some sins that are worse than others, some acts of goodness that are better than others.

And this comports with common sense, but Jesus, excuse me, Jesus makes this claim a number of times. One with Pilate, the person who delivered me over to you has the greater sin. So all sin is sin in the sense that all sin is wrong before God, but that doesn't mean that all sin is the same magnitude.

And when you are in circumstances where you have what's called a moral dilemma, you have two choices, and in isolation both of the choices would be wrong, you have to do the greater good. Okay, so let's, in the case of this, you know, the children going to an event like this, where we would normally say encourage people to celebrate a trans wedding or a same-sex wedding or whatever. At the same time, you have the kids have

an obligation to honor mom.

And even if she's, she's a lesbian now, she still deserves honor from her children. So you could stay home and, in a certain sense, abide by the principle of not celebrating something on righteousness, but dishonor mom, or you could honor mom, but then not abide by that principle. So that's the dilemma.

It's one or the other. And the way to break the tie, so to speak, is to reflect on which one is the greater good. And that's how you can break.

And when you do that, you're actually doing a good thing rather than a bad thing. You're doing the greater good, not the so-called lesser evil. And I would also say, I think my answer would be different if they were adult children.

I mean, these are children who are 11, 9, and 7. They really don't have a choice here. If it was an adult child, I don't think I would advise going. So that is also, there are a lot of things.

These questions are so complicated. And the questions I get about various situations, I cannot believe how complicated things are. And as Christians, we need to think through this, and we're going to mess up, especially as we're trying to figure all these things out at the beginning, when things, you know, this is only in the last 10 years we've been having to think about this.

So have grace for yourself, have grace for others. It's very difficult to figure out what the right thing is to do. So there was something else I wanted to say.

I'm glad you ended up on the note of grace though, at least so far, whether you add something to it. Because that really is something that Scott too, envelop the engagement. Yeah, yeah.

Well, I can't remember what else I was going to say, but... Must have been alone. God's safety. Alright, let's go on to the second question.

This one comes from Ryan. In a recent podcast, Greg addressed an article on species confusion and logical slippery slope. I'm a veterinarian.

I'm licensed to provide medical care to animals, not humans. Carry us on your thoughts of how to handle a currently hypothetical request from a self-identifying animal for care. A self-identified... Someone who identifies... I don't know that this would ever happen.

They call them... No, they call them furies. They're different forms of this. It's funny because this was like 20 years ago, I used this as a parody.

And then warned that the problem with using a parody is that the parodies become true. And they're not parodies anymore. They're features of reality where people would

believe they're animals.

And this is what we're talking about here. I guess I'm still not entirely clear on the question though. As a veterinarian, is he obliged to treat? Obviously he's not.

But what should he say to someone who... If that were to happen? I mean, we can't really rule everything out. Well, if I were... Look, I've got... I don't have my computer in front of me, but here I've got a... Somebody sent me. It was probably Frank Turic sent me this little meme, right? It's a photo... It's like a picture of like a 1950s mom and her daughter.

And they're making peanut butter jelly sandwiches, and she's got her apron on, and they're in the kitchen. And I mean, it's so old and quaint. And then it's called gender clarity is the title.

And the little girl says, and they call out, the little girl says, Mom, I think I'm a boy. And mom's call out says, well, you're not. That's it.

It's like there was a time when we all had common sense about all these things, and it's great. And so, but I think that this is inappropriate. The inappropriate kind of response in these kind of circumstances.

Well, you're not. You're not a boy. Oh, okay.

So now when you're dealing with this, if I were a veterinarian and someone came in thinking they were a cat or a dog or something and had to have this cared for, fly a veterinarian, I would say, well, you're not a cat. You're a human being. You need to go to see a doctor.

I mean, it's not tricky. Luckily, the law and the culture hasn't made this one tricky yet. So you're able to just say flat out and... But I don't even know.

Look at you. Animals require different... The veterinarians are not medical or not people doctors. They're animal doctors.

It's a different field because... But men require different medical treatment than women, and that hasn't stopped it. Right. But this is a huge problem.

I mean, my son was near a nurse, and I just talked to another nurse this weekend, and she said, I'm having all these trouble. And how do I navigate this? I said, this isn't like a cultural issue. This is a public health issue.

You've got to give care to the human individual that needs your help medically. You can't play all these games, you know? Anyway, yeah, but it's gotten crazy. I understand that.

And this is where I would just... I wouldn't even try to be clever. I would just say, well,

you're not. Good answer, great.

But not ingraciously, but just better factly. Well, you're not. Okay.

All right. I'm sorry to do this, but I'm going back to the previous question because I remembered what I was going to say. Oh, okay.

I apologize, everyone. If you go back in time, five minutes go. All right.

One last thing I want to say about this. About the wedding. About the wedding and the kids.

The kids. Talk to the kids and the wife, maybe, or the ex-wife, all together and say, look, are there any things that you as a child don't feel comfortable doing that you don't want to be asked to do? Oh, that's great. Say, you know, be a flower girl or whatever it is.

Because I don't think they should be forced to, you know, going, attending is one thing. They're with her. She's going to take them.

But I think they should be asked about what they're not willing to do in the wedding. And that's going to be hard because obviously the mom is going to pressure them. So this might be something you have to do altogether or you talk to them.

Yeah, I'm especially where dad is the protector of this particular point, you know. And so, and this obviously creates the potential for more conflict, but the whole idea is that mom and dad protect the kids. That's the whole idea here.

And, you know, it would be very unfortunate if mom were going to press an issue for herself that would compromise the kids comfort. Yeah, you should not force them to go against their conscience. And I think the mother will respect that, I hope.

But anyway, I wanted to throw that out there because I think that is important. That's good. Okay, next question.

Greg, this one comes from Amber. I get so angry when I think about the evil of abortion. I know Greg says if you get angry in an argument, you've already lost.

How do I balance this anger with the desire to argue for the lives of the unborn? Well, I just gave a talk last night in Anchorage, Alaska on the abortion issue and showed both the videos that we often show. The first one of a embryoscopy of a live nine-week gestation child and then a short video of dead children that were the consequence of abortion. And it's horrifying.

It's so horrifying. I mean, it's hard not to get angry. I should say not to feel appropriate anger about what's being done.

That doesn't, to me, that's a separate issue from how you engage. And if you engage in an angry way, it's just not going to be productive usually. I guess there can be exceptions to that, but one has to be really careful.

I mean, even think of Jesus. Jesus got really angry and he cleared the money changers and all that. Righteous anger.

And what happened after that? They plotted a killing. So even in Jesus' case, there were consequences for what he did. And this is, so this is where you have to be very careful with that.

People who are angry are not persuasive usually. People who are angry at, let's say Christians who are, it's a general rule, but I'm just giving the players here. If you're a pro-lifer in this case and gets angry, you're not going to be persuasive to others.

If you're not angry, but others get really angry at what you say, it's likely that you won't be persuasive to them either. Now, that's not a hard and fast rule because people will fight back really hard against things that are getting at them. And that, you know, me thinks Stau-Dus per test too much, you know, Shakespeare.

You know, when people overreact, sometimes that's an indicator that something's actually getting in and they're trying to defend against it. But I guess the simple point I would make here with Amber is that your anger regarding this is completely justifiable, completely justified. But if you allow that hostility and anger to spill over into conversations, you're going to lose your capability to be persuasive.

You can still treat the issue as a weighty issue. And, I mean, I think Wilberforce, you know, talked about slavery and graphic terms, and he worked hard to persuade people regarding slavery, and eventually did, but it took him his whole lifetime to end the slave trade. And then after that to end slavery, there were two separate issues.

And he was vigorous in the way he defended things. And people did get mad at him, you know, but I guess there, in my mind, there's a difference between intensity and vigor on the one hand in making your case and anger on the other hand. And I think the anger part, if it bleeds into the point, it has a poisonous effect on persuasiveness.

And it might help to direct it in the right direction. So if you're passionate about saving the unborn, direct that passion towards, and your anger towards abortion, rather than the person you're talking to. And this might be where you can help, where you can, if you're having trouble controlling your anger, this might help you direct it in a way that won't be so off-putting.

If you can think, I'm not going to direct this towards this one person who knows how they've been involved with abortion in the past, just because they believe the wrong thing and they've been deceived, direct your passion towards the actual saving the

unborn. And it's okay to be passionate about that and say, you know, but try not to be hostile towards the person you're actually speaking to. So that might help you direct it in the right way.

The second thing I would say is I've found that, because I can remember, like, when I was in high school, I would get very angry just thinking about abortion. But the more prepared I was to make an argument, the more I was able to not feel that... Manage it, man. Yes, to manage it.

So the more prepared you are, I think the less you will have to deal with outbursts or hostility towards the person you're talking to, because some of that comes from frustration because they're disagreeing with you. And you don't know how to respond? Yes. Effectively, right? I got it.

So, and the last thing we can do is just remember what it says in 2 Timothy, the Lord's bondservant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all able to teach patient when wronged with gentleness, correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance, leading to the knowledge of the truth, and may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will. They're held captive by him to do his will. And so, direct your passion towards the evil itself, not towards the person, and hopefully you can go from there.

I hope that helps Amber, and thank you, Jonathan Ryan, for your questions. We love hearing from you. You can send us your question on X with the hashtag STRAsk or go to our website at [str.org](http://str.org). We look forward to hearing from you.

This is Amy Hall and Greg Coco for Stand to Reason.