

What's the Least I Can Believe and Still be a Christian?
A Guide to What Matters Most
by Martin Thielen

Part I: Ten Things Christians *Don't* Need to Believe

Chapter Nine – God Loves Straight People but not Gay People

Scripture:

I Corinthians 13:12 – *For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.*

First approach – non-welcoming and non-affirming

- Refer to several biblical passages that condemn homosexual practice
- Sometimes elevate homosexuality as a “worse” sin than others
- Sometimes makes claims that are beyond scripture: ie – “gay people will not go to heaven”

Second approach – welcoming and affirming

- There are more in the bible about loving and welcoming others than about homosexual behavior
- Not unlike slavery and role of women, what the bible says about homosexuality was specific to its context

Third approach – welcoming and non-affirming

- Current (although highly debated) position of many mainline churches

Questions?

- Should gay people be ordained as ministers? As elders?
- Should the church bless or perform homosexual unions?
- Can denominations exist with differing opinions / practices?

Bottom Line:

All persons, including homosexual persons, are welcome in God's church. Beyond that, however, mainline churches are not of one mind on this issue.

Notes:

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Chapter Ten – It's Okay for Christians to be Judgmental and Obnoxious

Scripture:

Matthew 7:1 – *Do not judge, so that you may not be judged.*

What impact does the behavior of another have on you? On your church?

How does Jesus treat the Pharisees? What is his advice for them?

Bottom Line:

True Christians leave judgment to God.