

Free essay on the westboro baptist church

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The Westboro Baptist Church (WBC) refers to an independent church that is profoundly known for its excessive stance on issues related to homosexuality, as well as its protesting events, such as desecrating the flag of America and picketing funerals. Undoubtedly, many people describe the Baptist church as a hate group in society. In fact, it is monitored firmly by SPLC (Southern Poverty Law Center) and Anti-Defamation League, (Gerstenfeld, 2004). The leader of the church is Fred Phelps and typically consists of his entire wider family. The headquarters of the Westboro Baptist church is on the west side of Topeka region. It first publicly performed its first service on the Sunday of 27 November 1955.

The church is not concerned with the laws of the nation, but rather advocating for what they believe in, regardless of its acceptance by the law. In most cases, Westboro church is known for picketing events and places they believe are pro Jews or homosexuals. The activities of the church have grown to encompass lesbian and gay events, organizations, and churches, (Belmas & Overbeck, 2011). According to them, the death of soldiers in the war is a punishment for not repudiating homosexuality in society. Some of the activities are against the law; For example, in the year 1998 the members of the Westboro church beat Matthew Shepherd to death, after admitting he was homosexual. In fact, they went further protesting in Matthew's murder trial and funeral, and even created a website claiming that Matthew was there in hell burning, (Gerstenfeld, 2004).

Additionally, when natural disasters occur, as well as terrorist attacks, members of WBC (Westboro Baptist Church) believe those events occur because God is initiating judgments and punishments on the wicked world.

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After the 9/11 attack, they went into the streets claiming that God's intention was to see America go to a losing battle, to lose most of their soldiers. They hold extremely offensive slogans such as "Thank God for Dead Troops", "God Hates Fags" and "Thank God for 9/11" (Belmas & Overbeck, 2011).

The activities of WBC have mostly resulted to numerous lawsuits. Most of its members are convicted of disorderly conduct and assault, in the year 1995, Benjamin Phelps was convicted for spitting on innocent passerby during the picket event. In response to picketing activities, Kansas authority passed a law that prohibited picketing in different events. Their most target is famous individual, and public figures so as to gain media coverage.

Another activity of Westboro Baptist Church is protesting against other denominations especially the Jews. They believe that the Jews and Israelites killed Jesus Christ, terming them as evil. In 1996, Phelps protested at the Holocaust Memorial in United States, proclaiming that the taxes of American citizens are directed to unholy monument (Gerstenfeld, 2004). To them Jews communities are the loudest in the entire America in favor of abortion and homosexuality. In the due course of protests, Margie Phelps stated that the Book of Revelation, proclaim that nations will stride on Israel, and the person leading them would be President of the United States Barack Obama, who according to them is antichrist. This was the prove that WBC was totally against President Obama.

The church is immensely proud of the media, especially when they cover negative events. Their website also has numerous links of press releases and own publications with frustrating and disturbing images. With the presence

of information technology, the church uses websites to list and publicize their next picketing events. For example, Westboro Baptist Church used iPhone to call for a picket at Steve Jobs funeral. The daughter of church leader Fred Phelps, announced that they will picket the funeral of Steve jobs, claiming that he is teaching the neighbors how to sin. The group does ironical things, for example, during the announcement; she used one of the Steve Jobs products, the iPhone (Belmas & Overbeck, 2011)

The WBC is well equipped in carrying out their activities. They have websites to spread their issues as well as a group of professional lawyers, who understand the law and ready to defend them in court. In most cases, Westboro Baptist pickets with an intention of offensive signage, antagonizing people to extremes, finally causing violence. When violence occurs, WBC takes prompt action by use of experienced lawyers. Most of the funds running the church are received from litigation.

Arguably, Westboro Baptist Church members misinterpret the bible, putting claims that they speak and proclaim in God's name. They do this in a controversial way, because some of the things they do and say does not go hand in hand with the Bible. They only base their argument on few issues such as homosexuality and lesbian. The church views other religion, such as Islam and Catholics, as a pathway to worshipping evil. They state that these other churches preach lies to the people, sending its followers to hell (Belmas & Overbeck, 2011).

References

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