

Research paper on westborough baptist church

[Religion](#), [God](#)



Arguably, the world we live in is getting stranger each an everyday. People have turned religion to be a scapegoat in condemning and justifying evil in the world. On a perspective of a veteran military, WBC (Westborough Baptist church) is one of a kind. The recent stand of Westborough Baptist church on thanking God for dead soldiers in the war front is a devastating and immoral act, especially to the families and the state that lose their loved ones in protecting the entire America. The church certainly, is known for picketing various funerals functions of American soldiers who never survived in Iraq warfront. Additionally, they picket and demonstrate at funeral events of homosexuals. In fact, some of their views and claims are justified by the religious books and law, but the way they demonstrate is unjustified and will remain unfair, especially to military officers who go to war. Generally, according to me their views are narrow minded, and stereotype (Gerstenfeld 30).

Westborough Baptist church (WBC) a small anti-Semitic, virulently homophobic group that stages numerous protests in the United States. Most of their protests target funerals of military soldiers killed in Iraq and homosexual. Generally, they believe in doing so they are doing what The Bible says, but in real sense, they are subverting what is God's law. The church goes to an extend of desecrating American flag during their demonstrations. Westborough Baptist church is believed by many people in the world to be a hate group, whose actions and beliefs destabilize the peace and unity. Actually, Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), as well as Anti-Defamation League monitors most of their actions stiffly (Overbeck, W., & Belmas, 54).

The Westborough Baptist Church (WBC) is an independent group based in Topeka Kansas, in United States. On 27 November in the year 1955, the church went public and took to the stage to perform their first Sunday service. It started as a family affair, headed by Fred Phelps and his family. Since 1991, the church has boldly and continuously protested against homosexuality, as well as military funerals. They first crackdown homosexual activities at Gage Park located northwest of their church (Gerstenfeld 35). Their main goal in picketing funerals of homosexuals and military soldiers is to receive much attention from the media. The Westborough Baptist church conventions and associations are not affiliated at all, to any recognized Baptist issues. Phelps and WBC describe themselves all followers of Calvinist and primitive Baptist principles, but the conventional Primitive Baptists rebuff the affiliation (Farmer 43).

Phelps Waldron Fred, Sr. is the founder and leader of the Westborough Baptist Church. He was born on 13 November 1929, in Meridian, Mississippi. He was the eldest brother to Catherine Idallete Johnston. Actually, Phelps is an American pastor; founder of a law firm namely Phelps Charter, disbarred lawyer, as well as a former activist of civil rights. Phelps is well known in United States, for his slogan use against homosexuality, and other sinful people. The main slogan of Westborough Baptist Church is that God hate fags (Overbeck & Belmas 60). In America, those who support gay freedom and rights have blamed Phelps for producing violence-inspiring speeches and anti-gay propaganda. Nate Phelps, isolated son of Phelps Fred, believes the behaviors of his father in hurting the world, stared way back when he use to physically abuse and emotionally abuse his children and wife (Holland 23).

The recent events of Phelps are in conjunction with the followers of Westborough Baptist Church. For example, in 2001 statistics shows that WBC (Westborough Baptist Church) in the last 10 years had held approximately 40 protests a week. Possibly, WBC puts much of their concerns on their Biblical and Gods believe, and do not care on the laws of the nation. Additionally, the church is very inhuman because they do not care about the feelings of the members of family who lose their loved ones in Iraq war (Farmer 44). Mostly, WBC is well known when it comes to picketing events, as well as funeral places, especially those of military, pro Jews and homosexuals (Holland 28). In the 21st century, the activities and protests of the church have fully-fledged to encompass organizations, churches, gay as well as lesbian events.

The Westborough Baptist church believes, when a soldier dies in war, it is a punishment from the almighty God to American people for supporting homosexuals. This is not a Christian and Godly way, people of God should be sorry for such events rather than celebrating. For, example, in the course of 1998 Shepherd Mathew died because he was beaten by the followers of the Westborough Baptist church, after accepting that he was a homosexual and supported homosexuality. Instead of apologizing for killing him, the members of the church advanced in their fight against homosexuality by launching protests in Shepherd Mathew's murderers' trials as well as funeral. During this period, they went online and established a website alleging that Mathew was in hell burning, because of being a homosexual on earth (Gerstenfeld 50).

The church enjoys getting attention from the media. Apart from picketing,

media attention is the most appropriate way of spreading their religious and political beliefs. In fact, with the improvement of technology Westborough church is going global; they are utilizing internet and other social sites, such as facebook and twitter in selling their views to the world. Just like other radical groups and politicians, Phelps is good at getting media and public attention. In United States, it is close to obvious that all funerals events for military officers who perish in Iraq war are picketed. According to them, it is easier for a liar to enter the Kingdom of God, but a gay will never. As per some religion, there are no small or bigger sins; we are all sinners in the eyes of God. Therefore, Westborough Baptist Church has no right of judging homosexuality, as well as justifying the death of soldiers; everyone is a sinner, them inclusive (Holland 46).

In the history of the world, there are many military, government, and military issues that when mixed, can lead to disastrous outcome. The military men in Iraq are not happy about the beliefs of WBC on the way they justify their death. With time, this situation can lead to disastrous incidences between the government, religious groups, and military. Some of this events in the past include IRA activity, 9/11, London and Madrid bombings, bloody Queen Mary of England, as well as persecution of Christians. Critically, when religious differences and intolerance go beyond its limits, it gains monetary, government and military power leading to misery and suffering. Millions have died, and Westborough hate activities, especially on justification of soldier's death are a time bomb in the society, and United States (Farmer 45).

There are many things in the world that describes what type of a person or group you are. WBC slogans are very inappropriate, unethical, and

unscriptural. Dwayne Hastings, director of communication for SBC (Southern Baptist convention) asserts that, the WBC use inappropriate slogans in spreading their propagandas. As per the Bible, God does not hate his people, but Westborough Baptist church believes God hate homosexual (Holland 74).

Veterans in the United States are the most affected people. Hence, they have always supported those who are against the believes and unethical actions of WBC followers. For example, Snyder admitted that he could have done much if it were not for the support of the veterans, marines, and active-duty soldiers (Gerstenfeld 71). Albert Snyder is a resident of Pennsylvania and a father to a deceased soldier. He went to Court to protest against the intrusion of his son's funeral by Westborough Baptist church. The church caused emotional as well as physical damage during the picket. He advocated for severe punishment for the punitive action of the church, to prevent future pickets.

The religious beliefs of the Westborough Baptist church are associated to Calvinism five points. The leader of WBC says that they believe in, the unconditional election doctrines, certain people are elected by God for salvation purposes, others are on earth for limited atonement, and god died for those He elected. All other religions, which do not believe in such doctrines will burn in hell, and are condemned on earth. This believes are barbaric and does not hold any facts (Holland 90). The WBC church views consider members of most religions in the world to be like devil worship. Such religious groups include Islam and Roman Catholics. Furthermore, they believe that all other churches and religious groups that support

homosexuality are specifically preparing their followers to hell. On my opinion, the WBC is not a Christian group. A devoted and good Christian would not use abusive language, hate other people, or emotionally hurt people, Christians pray for sinners, and encourage them to be good people. Occurrence of natural disaster is believed by many to be beyond our scope. This is not the case among Westborough Baptist church followers, terrorist attacks and act on natural disaster take place because God is hungry with human race. Hence, this is a way of initiating judgment, as well as punishment on the world full of wickedness. After the terrorist attack, in the 9/11, Westborough Baptist Church followers went to the streets celebrating how God had laid his hand of the sinful nation. They were happy to see how many lives were lost during the attack. This is an inhumane action even in the eyes of the wicked man. The occurrence of such misfortunes is a communication from god, whose intention is to see America and all other sinful nations lose their people and soldiers. During the demonstration, they carried offensive and extremely hurting slogans such as “ Thank God for 9/11)”, “ God Hates Fags,” “ Fags Go to Hell,” as well as “ Thank God for Dead troops” (Overback & Belmas 102).

The events and activities of WBC group have resulted to uncountable lawsuits. This means that the group is not doing interesting things.

Conversably, many WBC followers are convicts of assaults, battery, as well as disorderly conduct. For example, in the course of 1995, Benjamin Phelps spitted on blameless passersby, and he was convicted for the offense, this happened in one of the picketing. This actually do not show any characteristics of a Christian and humane individual. To respond to such

offence and unlawful acts, Kansas law authorities passed a regulation and laws that illegalized such action and picketing in diverse events. The members of Westborough Baptist Church target public figures, famous people, as well as public functions in order to gain maximum and wide coverage from the media.

Apart from targeting military and homosexual funerals, WBC laid a lot of protest against famous denominations in the world, particularly the Jews. Furthermore, they are the first to support abortion, war against terror, as well as homosexuality. According to the church, the people who killed the savior of the world are Jews and Israelites, terming them the most evil people in the globe. In 1996, Phelps and other followers staged a demonstration at the famous Holocaust Memorial in U. S. The Westborough Baptist church take the memorial to be unholy avenue, were Gods punishment took place. They claimed that American taxes were spending in maintaining and building unholy places. Veterans and those who lost their loved ones during the fateful day, feel hurt, and emotionally disturbed on the actions of the church.

The commander in chief in United States has been under numerous critics from the WBC. The WBC argues that Obama is antichrist, during his campaigns he was pro-homosexuality and same sex marriage. Margie Phelps went to an extend of quoting the Book of Revelation, putting that the nations in the globe will stride out on Israel, and the United states president Barrack Obama will be the leader (Gerstenfeld 65). Up to date, WBC is against Obama's leadership and presidency. Steve Jobs is one of the famous innovator and inventor in the technological sector. The Westborough Baptist

Church use technology to make public their believes and picketing events. Currently, they have developed many websites, and utilized the social networks to communicate to the world and its followers. The church is too ironical, in that they announced their picketing event in Steve Jobs funeral, using iPhone. They claimed that Steve Jobs supported gay marriages and homosexuality. Fred Phelps daughter, publicized the picket on Steve Jobs funeral using his own product, the iPhone. The move is very ironical and realistic.

In my opinion the church do things that are unethical and unbiblical in the society. The laws too protect them. The WBC is well equipped technologically and professionally. They have a group of learned and professional lawyers, who are very conversant with the law. During court cases, involving WBC members, the lawyers put up strong defense, even if they are wrong. Pickets carried out by the church are offensively indented, provoking people to a point of no return, at last causing violence. When the public retaliate against them, they move swiftly to courts, claiming compensation for the attack. The funds received from compensation and litigation is used in managing and running WBC. In most cases, they win the cases with the help of the law as well as their experienced professional lawyers (Gerstenfeld 87).

Conclusively, the activities, and beliefs of Westborough Baptist Church are against the norms, and ethics of society. Their main arguments are based on few things such as homosexuality. The laws that have been amended are not enough, for example, the Indiana and the Illinois bill on pickets do not eliminate the impacts of WBC activities. The church has no right of inducing hatred among people, and celebrating the death of others. Veterans and

active soldiers should be respected because they are serving the nation. Their death in the course of duty should be appreciated, given a respectful sendoff, and their families given a peaceful time to mourn. The issue of judging homosexuality should be left to God. Even if it morally and Biblically wrong, the church should use descent and respectable ways in opposing the act.

Work cited

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