

## The Josiah Project Needs-based Ministries

We are now entering the stage of the Josiah Project where we transition from observers of a man named Josiah, who made a difference in the face of a dying nation, to a people that also are willing to make a difference in our dying nation. Over the next few lessons, we will be opening our hearts and minds to some possible ministries that can further define us in our role as the Josiahs of our community, our state, our nation and our world. Before us is a great opportunity to make a difference to those that are perishing and those that are at risk among us. Do not waste a good crisis is the motto of this last phase of the Josiah Project.

### Ministry Opportunity #1: Reaching out to the Homosexual Community Part One) Dealing with the Myths and the Truths of Homosexuality

#### Myth) Homosexuality is genetic!

- Despite what you may have heard from the Media, homosexuality has never been proven to be genetic. Let me repeat that...**HOMOSEXUALITY HAS NEVER BEEN PROVEN TO BE GENETIC.** For more than 30 years our culture has been bombarded with false and misleading information in an effort to force others into accepting homosexuality as genetic. They want you to think it is no different than being born male or female, black or white, Asian or Indian. It is a lie and must not go unchallenged. If you were to go to any genetic testing center in the world and ask to be gene tested to see if you were homosexual, there would be nothing that they can offer, for there has been no “Gay Gene” discovered. It is a myth!

#### Truth) The biblical and scientific evidence does indicate that homosexuality is acquired behavior.

- The Bible teaches us that from the beginning it was God’s design for it to be one man and one woman for life.
  - He made them male and female. -Gen 1:27 And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.
  - He said to pro-create. -Gen 1:28 And God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."
  - He sanctified their sexual relations. -Gen 2:24 For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.
  - Other passages in Romans 1 and 1 Corinthians 6 also confirm that homosexuality is a lifestyle choice made through deep-seeded emotions, not genetic.
- More often than not, the “genetic evidence” offered by liberal and often gay researchers also prove that homosexuality is behavior-driven.
  - Identical Twins Study: This was a study that compared identical twins to non-identical twins and siblings. They found that 52% of the time if one identical twin was gay, then the other would be gay. When compared to

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non-identical twins and adopted children, the rates dropped to 22% and 11% respectively. The New York Times put a front page study concluding that this proves that homosexuality is genetic. Upon cross-examination of the data, the conclusion was that it proved that it was behavior, for identical twins are genetically identical. To be of genetic origin, they would have to be 100% gay. The higher rate of “gayness” can be attributed to the fact that identical twins are often dressed alike, treated alike and go through the same family troubles at the same time. If one twin witnessed instability in a family at a certain point of their life, the other one would have been through the same. Of course the follow-up conclusion was put somewhere in the back of section B.

- Statistics continually point to environment rather than genetics.
  - The homosexuality rate is much more prevalent in cities than rural areas.
  - 46% of gay men were molested as compared to 7% of heterosexual men.
  - Many studies confirm that the majority of male homosexuals and lesbians did not have close relationships with their fathers and mothers respectively.
  - In May of 2000, the American Psychiatric Association issued a fact sheet stating that “..there are no replicated scientific studies supporting a specific biological etiology for homosexuality.”
- This is important to understand because most people who struggle with homosexuality share the same experience, often noticing their same-sex attraction at a young age. They will say something like, “Ever since I was young I have felt this way. I never felt like I fit into the realm of heterosexuality.” To deny this would be completely dishonest and at odds of ever reaching their heart for Christ.
- Behavior is a powerful force in every person’s life. It begins from the moment of birth and is often firmly established by the age of five. When someone says they always felt that way, we must accept that as true for it is as far back as they can remember.

### Myth) If one does not accept homosexuality, then he or she is a homophobe.

- That is not true. The definition of a homophobe is *a person who fears or hates homosexuals and homosexuality (Dictionary.com)*. Just because a person might not agree with a lifestyle does not mean they fear or hate homosexuals. What the scriptures call love and concern has been often interpreted to be homophobia.

### Truth) Homophobia does exist.

- Despite the conviction of our words, we cannot deny that there are people out there that do fear and even hate homosexuals. You can see it in the violent actions, condescending words and intimidating picket signs. That behavior is not condoned by the scriptures or Christ. Anyone stating otherwise needs to be condemned as not representing Christ, but of human nature.
- To be fair to the Christian population we must also conclude that there is some “Christophobia” coming from the gay populace as witnessed by the militant

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homosexuals storming churches and intimidating the faithful. Whenever mankind exercises free thought, we risk that bad phobias can and will occur. We tend to paint everyone with worst brush we can find, for that is human nature.

- Story: Once while on a NYC subway with my children, while starting a simple friendly conversation with a lesbian, I was yelled at and actually threatened. She and her lover actually followed us for a two blocks, calling me a stupid idiot and threatening violence. My children and I were dumfounded, not knowing how a simple greeting could bring this about. I finally understood their behavior when seeing my reflection in store window a few minutes later. I was wearing a shirt that proudly displayed the words, "Victory in Christ". I am persuaded that they were "Christophobic" from something that happened in the "name of Christ" prior to our meeting.
- Make no mistake, just as "homophobia" exists, so also does "Christophobia".

### Myth) Homosexuality is the unpardonable sin.

- 1 Cor 6:9-11 Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor {the} covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.
- Notice that Paul was writing to Corinthian Christians, not the people of the world. The Corinthian church was filled with recovered fornicators, idol worshippers, adulterers, thieves, drunkards, rebels, cheaters and yes even homosexuals. They fled their immorality and sought refuge in the blood of Christ. They were washed, sanctified and justified in His name. To say that homosexuality was the unpardonable sin would be to speak a lie. If that is your thought, get rid of it.

### Truth) There are tens of thousands of homosexuals that have changed their preferences and behavior for the cause of Christ.

- Countless personal accounts of men and women who were entrenched in the grips of homosexuality have successfully and joyfully turned their hearts and minds to celibacy or a heterosexual relationship as prescribed by God. The radical gay population would not want you to know this, but it is true. They will say that these former-homosexuals were never gay or are living a lie, but their joy and happiness says differently.

#### Story:

Matt Lieberman was a deaf ten-year old boy on a swim team in Kentucky when he noticed that he was attracted to the other boys on the team. He feared that it would be a terrible life ahead for him because this was simply not right. He was born deaf and often was not included in the family discussions do to lack of communication skills. He never really had a good relationship with his father because he was always busy with work and traveling. The depth of his relationship boiled down to the purchasing of gifts and

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shopping. He never really knew how to say “I love you.” His mother was a dominant, religious woman who was really in charge of the family.

Communicating with deaf people takes patience, for learning sign language is not easy. Typically it comes easier for females, often leaving the males not having close relationships. This was Matt Lieberman’s case, for his relationship with his father and brothers were superficial. Matt was never great at sports, but his father really loved them, often going to the other kids events. He now believes these were the foremost factors in his gayness, constantly seeking male companionship.

Throughout school, he hung around the girls and began to develop a love for drama. He developed a love for design art and landscaping. The other boys began calling him fag and sissy, only further enforcing what he already felt inside. This continued all through school.

In 1991, he was enrolled in Gallaudet University (an all-deaf college in DC). He majored in a deaf-drama program and felt genuinely accepted and while there began to act on his homosexual feelings. Though he knew it was wrong, it felt right and it seemed to level these roller coaster feelings that he held inside. Not long after he came out of the closet and no longer hid his intentions to his classmates. By 1992 his parents found out of his new status when he was busted while underage drinking in a gay bar. His dad simply yelled out, “Get a girlfriend!” He did not understand like usual.

Being heavily involved in the gay lifestyle throughout college, he graduated and planned to move to California to pursue his career and further embrace homosexuality. This all continued until September 21, 1996 when he was invited to a Deaf Christian Retreat. While there he saw an ASL drama on Jesus Christ and it touched him deeply. For the first time in his language he saw the love of Christ and felt a great need to leave the lifestyle, which he did. He made a decision that night to stop his sinful life and serve Christ.

He dropped his plans to move to California and began the process of repentance. Through years of struggle, encouragement and education, this man eventually went to preaching school and now ministers to other homosexuals that want to change for the sake of Christ.

### Myth) Homosexuality is a viable lifestyle to heterosexuality.

- Hollywood would have you believe that being gay is the “in” thing without consequence. The homosexuals and lesbians of television and the media world are all healthy, drug-free and filled with joy. Of course this must be the reason they are called gay, right?

### Truth) Homosexuality is anything but a rewarding lifestyle choice.

- The statistics would seem to indicate this, for alcohol use, drug use, suicide and violence is very much more prevalent in that community.
  - A few years ago I had a conversation with a young lady who was a self-proclaimed lesbian. She sported a shiner over her right eye and told me that her girlfriend gave that to her. When we talked about the high rate of

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suicide among that population, she told me that by the time she was eighteen, four of her lesbian friends had already committed suicide.

- In another conversation a woman told me that she had four friends under the age of twenty-five that were dying of AIDS.
- Sexually transmitted disease and depression is also common.
  - Study after study confirms that that average life expectancy of a male homosexual in the US is barely over forty years of age. This is more than 30 years short of the average heterosexual.
  - They are the most educated group in the culture concerning safe-sex, yet face an extraordinary amount of unique outbreaks of AIDS, herpes, venereal diseases and a plethora of infections.
- Hollywood did not discuss this part of the equation, making the sympathetic and admired television gay lifestyle glorious. The truth is nowhere near their perception.

### Myth) All gays are the same.

- It seems that what most of us know about the gay population is of the radical nature. That is simply not true. In the publication God's Grace and the Homosexual Next Door, this topic comes up. They discuss that there are three types of gays.
  1. The Militant: These are the gays that are extremely close-minded toward God and open to try nearly anything to promote their lifestyle. These are also the hardest to reach and often will completely shut you down. The only option is to be kind and move on until something changes in their lives.
  2. The Moderate: These are the gays that do not want to be forceful, but co-existent in the heterosexual population. They are more willing to listen, but not likely to hear because change is not on their mind.
  3. The Repentant: This group is makes up a higher percentage than the Militants or the Moderates. They are called this because they struggle with the guilt of going against what they know to be better. Typically we do not hear much from them because they are extremely quiet, not wanting to be exposed of their struggle. These are the best prospects of that community, if only they had someone to listen and advise.
- To lump all gays in one group would not be wise and only reinforce the myth.

### Truth) We generally are not inclusive to homosexuals.

- How many homosexuals are in your acquaintance circle?
- How many lesbians have you invited to a Bible study?
- How many gays have you had over for a holiday?
- How many homosexuals with AIDS have you visited in the hospital?
- How many gays have you shared the gospel message of Jesus Christ?

Case closed on this point.

With this in mind, I would like to have a greater effort to be the Josiahs that we need to be by reaching out to these forgotten and hurting souls. No matter what ministry efforts

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that we launch toward this, there are five principles that I am persuaded must be included to be successful.

Part Two) Important Principles

1) We must be willing to show our care for them.

Give All Your Service

- There are many Gays that are dying of AIDS as a result of their lifestyle choice. They know how they acquired this most devastating disease and they have had a great deal of time to gain a perspective. A person with AIDS knows that their days are numbered and the emotional pain is unbearable. Can you think of a better person to receive a visit from a couple church members for a prayer, encouragement and perhaps even a meal or two? How dare we not go out of our way to lend a hand to a hurting soul such as this!
  - Heb 12:14 Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.
  - Gal 6:10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.
- Whatever ministerial efforts we have, they must show homosexuals that we truly care about their souls. Whether it be the car ministry or the small-home group studies ministry or any other means to reach out, it must be extended to them.

2) We must communicate a message of divine love.

God Always Yearns for Souls

- How did you react to the message of Jesus prior to your conversion? I hope and pray that you had gained a perspective that God loves every single person that has existed on the planet. We must always keep in mind and communicate that God wants all sinners to be saved, not just a few.
  - 1 Tim 2:4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
  - 2 Pet 3:9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.
- We must continually remind them of God's great love for all people, including homosexuals. God always yearns for Souls.

3) We must center our plan around the message of forgiveness.

Grace As Your Solution

- The research indicates there are a large percentage of homosexuals that know what they are doing is wrong. They have seen the futility of the lifestyle and have been looking for a way out, but fall short.
- I have recently read many dozens of stories of homosexuals that have left the life style to pursue righteousness in Christ. They all have a common theme that they were trapped because they felt they were too bad to do so. We must remind them that as bad as we are, God is good.

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- Eph 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, {it is} the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, that no one should boast.
- Rom 5:21 that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- 1 Tim 1:14 and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are {found} in Christ Jesus.
- We must carry out an effort that stresses that God is willing and able to forgive all sin, including homosexual sins.

4) We must not lose hope.

Greatly Anticipate Yes Statement

- We must never give up the hope that a homosexual will be willing to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ and turn from that way of life. It may take years before some will finally make the decision if at all, but we must not lose hope. If you plant the seeds, the crop will come.
  - 2 Cor 9:6 Now this {I say,} he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully.
  - 2 Tim 4:5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.
- Some of the closest brothers and sisters in Christ are waiting to be converted and you are the proof of that, for God gave you time to say YES. Greatly Anticipate a YES Statement.

5) There must be a plan to keep them from sin.

Give Assistance for Yesterday's Sin

- Just like the recovering alcoholic, the recovering gambler and the recovering liar, the recovering homosexual needs to have a structure in place to avoid reoccurrence of the lifestyle. They will be tempted to go back to their old life and must be encouraged not to do so. In time, many repentant gays go on to joyous lives in Christ.
  - 1Thes 5:14 And we urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all men.
  - Jude 1:22-23 And have mercy on some, who are doubting; 23 save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.
- No matter what ministerial plans we set up, it must keep in mind to give assistance in yesterday's sins. This must be done through study, pray, encouragement, discipline and love, just like all other Christians.