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further

**Loving the LGBTQ  
No Matter What**

Love. No Matter What  
Rick Long  
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Proverbs 19:11 (TPT)

A wise person demonstrates patience, for mercy means holding your tongue. When you are insulted, be quick to forgive and forget it, for you are virtuous when you overlook an offense.  
(Memorize)

The first group of people that Christians have not done well with is the LGBTQ community. Perhaps more than any other group, these people have been ostracized and condemned by the Christian community because of their lifestyle. We often have treated them much the same way lepers were treated during Jesus' time: we avoid any contact with them just in case what they "have" is contagious. Their view of Christians and Christianity can be summed up in a few words: judgmental, condemning, unaccepting. As we saw in last week's lesson, this is wrong. We should be seen as the most accepting group of people on earth because we have been accepted by God, not because we are so righteous, but simply because we had the great fortune to hear the gospel. People of the LGBTQ community are just like us: people who need Christ and who need love.

**OPEN YOUR GROUP WITH A PRAYER. THIS IS ONLY A GUIDE –  
SELECT THE POINTS YOU WANT TO DISCUSS.**

**1.** Why do you think that oftentimes Christians respond so militantly to the LGBTQ community? How do you think we should react to these people? Do you think that if we treat them in a loving way it communicates that we accept their lifestyle as being acceptable to God? How do you think God views them? Talk about ways that you can disagree with a person about their lifestyle because it violates scripture and yet at the same time communicate love and acceptance.

Matthew 7:2-5 (PassionNTPsa)

For you'll be judged by the same standard that you've used to judge others. The measurement you use on them will be used on you. Why would you focus on the flaw in someone else's life and yet fail to notice the glaring flaws of your own? How could you say to your friend, 'Let me show you where you're wrong,' when you're guilty of even more? You're being hypercritical and a hypocrite! First acknowledge your own 'blind spots' and deal with them, and then you'll be capable of dealing with the 'blind spot' of your friend.

**2.** One of the main complaints about Christians by those who disagree with us is that we are "holier than thou" hypocrites. Based on what this passage says, why would that be? What attitude do we communicate as Christians that causes people to think this way?

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What attitude should we communicate that would remove this perception? Is there anyone in your life that has this perception of you? What can you do to change this perception?

**3.** Many of the views that we hold we inherited from our parents or the people that we hang around. What were the views toward the LGBTQ community that you were influenced by in the environment you grew up? Were they Biblical or not? Can you trace the way you feel about these people to how you were raised?

**4.** One of the statements that many in the LGBTQ community often say is “God created me this way, I was born like this.” Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not? Read the following passages and discuss what you believe they are saying: Romans 1:26-28; 1 Corinthians 6:9,10; Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. How does the Bible classify homosexual actions? Is there any difference between homosexuality as a sin and any other sin?

Answer – Whenever the Bible talks about homosexual actions, it is listed with other sexually oriented sins, so it is a sin. It is not said to be any worse than any other sin as far as God is concerned. Is there a genetic factor involved? Possibly, just like there are genetic factors involved in alcoholism, in certain individuals. Yet getting drunk is a sin (Eph. 5:18) and is forbidden. We sin because we are born with a sinful nature inherited from Adam and Eve, but to say that God creates these predispositions toward a certain kind of sin is incorrect. To say that these sins are worse than others is also incorrect. The impact of some sins is more obvious in society than others, but they are all sin.

**5.** Pastor Rick talked about three things we can do to show love to the LGBTQ community, what were they? Which one do you have the most problem doing when it comes to people of this community?

Answer – The three things Pastor Rick said we should do are: 1. Listen to their story without contempt; 2. Learn to accept them right where they are; and 3. Leave holy transformation to God alone.

### **MAKING IT PRACTICAL (OPTIONAL)**

Below are some practical exercises to help you show love to those of the LGBTQ community.

**Level 1 Challenge:** Do you know people who are gay? If so, invite them out for coffee or a meal and just listen to them, what their story is, how they see things. Let them know you are a Christian and although you may not agree that their lifestyle choices, you still like them and accept them. Make sure you let them know you are no better than they are; you are just forgiven.

**Level 2 Challenge:** If you have displayed anger or been hostile at any time to a member of the LGBTQ community, ask God to forgive you and if you have contact with that person, ask for their forgiveness. This is the only way you could ever reach these individuals with the gospel, which is what they need.

**Level 3 Challenge:** As a group, volunteer at an organization that assists the gay community.

## Preparing to Lead Your Group

**PRAY** for insight as you begin to prepare for leading your group. Ask for God's wisdom, that the Holy Spirit will be the teacher and that you will be God's instrument to lead the group to greater understanding and a willingness to commit to becoming more like God. Prayer should be your primary source of personal preparation for leading your group.

**PONDER YOUR PROGRESS** after each session and at the end of a series. Reflect on what went well and what did not. Re-evaluation is key to your growth as a leader. Consider whether your plan is being effective in moving the group to greater understanding and commitment.

## Using This Sermon Discussion Guide

- Going Further is a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. We have designed it so it can be completed easily within 30-45 minutes. As the discussion leader, you should preview and evaluate the questions based on the needs of your group. Decide in advance what is more important to focus on, should time not allow for the entire lesson.
- Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group.
- Personal applications are essential for growth and should be included in every discussion. When discussing how they will apply principles, group members may state very general goals such as, "I need to spend more time in prayer." It is important for you to help people make goals that are very specific and commit to specific plans of action by asking, for example, "How are you going to begin?" An example is to get up 25 minutes earlier each morning, spend 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.
- Your goal as the leader is to bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their needs for personal life change. Ultimately, as part of your accountability to the group, you want to commit to personal life change.
- Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessing of success.

