

The P.U.R.E. Ministry Project: What, Why, Where and When?

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Zachariah's Way

Inclusion Fusion

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The P.U.R.E. Ministry Project:

- ❑ I want to talk about something a bit different from the other presentations you're likely to see and hear
- ❑ Most other are talking about how those of us already involved in ministry to special needs can do it better
- ❑ Zachariah's Way and the PURE Ministry Project are trying to convince, inspire, and encourage EVERYBODY ELSE in your church to get involved!
- ❑ We are trying to reach the other 99% - the Christians who aren't even aware of special needs people!
- ❑ Using the word PURE for special needs and disabilities

The “Why” of What We’re Trying to Do:

- Let me first give you a little history about me and how and why our ministry, Zachariah’s Way got started
 - The fact that I am speaking to you today is a direct result of God intervening in my life in the person of a little boy with special needs – my first grandson
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- History
 - Our church experience
 - We just thought every church would be so interested – they weren’t!

The “Why” of What We’re Trying to Do:

- Zachariah’s Way began in 2004
 - All services are free
 - We are small organization
 - No employees – just volunteers
 - Preaching, speaking, and training special needs ministry in churches
 - First book, “Disability Ministry Information for Dummies” with material from Dr. Jim Pierson
 - 2 free DVD’s
 - ***Zachariah’s Way***
 - ***If you could see Jesus through my eyes***
 - New book out later this year
 - ***Divine Appointment: The Disappearing and the Invisible***
 - Sequel to ***Divine Appointment: The Disappearing and the Invisible***
 - ***No Longer Invisible*** will be out in 2012

The Reason For Zachariah's Way and the P.U.R.E. Ministry Project:

- ▣ Relationship of Zachariah's Way and PURE Ministry
 - Zachariah's Way is who we are – our ministry
 - The PURE Ministry Project is our main ministry focus
- ▣ All that we are doing is, we believe, is
 - What Jesus did when He was on this earth
 - How He spent His time
 - With whom He spent His time
 - What we as Christians are to be doing

Biblical Foundation – What I share when I speak in churches

- Luke 14:12-14 - Then He also said to him who invited Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. **But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed,** because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just."
- Matthew 25:34-40 - Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungry, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? **And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.**

Biblical Foundation – What I share when I speak in churches

- John 9:1-3 - And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: **but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.**
- A WARNING - Mark 10:13-16 - And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, **he was much displeased**, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

A Funny Thing Began to Happen:

- I started noticing people turning me off when I mentioned the words “special needs” or “disabilities”
- How are we going to reach them if they won't listen?
- Everybody is not going to be a special needs mother, father, granddaddy, etc.
- It was about this time that I was asked to speak to parents and caregivers at Eagle Eyrie
 - Virginia Baptist Adult Special Needs Retreat experience
- God started working on my heart about PURE

A New Terminology is Needed:

- ❑ We are not naïve: terminology will not change people hearts, but it will cause them to at least listen!
- ❑ We are not the government: changing the name of a street or school doesn't correct problems
- ❑ **Conventional, traditional terms have negative connotation**
 - **Special Needs**
 - Sounds perfectly innocent doesn't it? But how would you like to constantly and solely being referred to and identified as having "special needs"?
 - Try going into a new church, approaching the visitor table, and asking, "As you can see, though I am married, 62 years old, and have grandchildren, I am bald. Do you have any classes for bald people or for families with bald people?" Ridiculous?
 - Not if you're a PURE person – this is your and your family's life.
 - **Disability**
 - Ditto for special needs, except here the person is also identified being less than "able" – whatever that means and even worse than having "special" needs!
 - Our common response is "we are all disabled in some way". Though this is a true statement, we all do have one or more types of minor imperfections (big ears, small hands, large nose, etc.) as we like to call it, our words sound very shallow to a true PURE person with a real disability.
 - We may have made the statement to somehow to identify with our PURE friend, but it really just doesn't work. Our minor physical imperfection just can't compare with cerebral palsy, birth defects, etc.
 - **Developmentally Delayed**
 - Yes, we understand that one's development in certain living areas may be delayed when compared to the "normal" person, but do we really need to identify people solely and forever by this apparent fact?
 - Does this mean that PURE people are to be forever looked down upon simply because in certain areas of their lives they may never be considered "normal"?
 - If so, we're all in trouble because NONE of us are "normal"!

Specific Diagnosis (Autism, Down's etc.)

- It is hard to believe we can be so cruel and insensitive in our modern society, but many times we are not content in identifying PURE people with broad, negative terms like those above.
- No, we go further and actually call the person by their diagnosis.
- “There is that little autistic boy” and “she’s the mother of the Downs girl in our neighbourhood” are typical, common, and accepted as perfectly normal descriptions of PURE people.
- We’ll say these kinds of things in front of PURE people and not believe that it is wrong or offensive.
- Our thinking is that they don’t understand that they are being called something offensive and hurtful; but they do and our faulty thinking is hurtful in itself.
- Let’s put ourselves in their shoes: how would like to be called “there goes the man with the bad case of psoriasis” or “let me help you, I know you have haemorrhoids”!? Silly, unrealistic? Not if you’re a PURE person or family it isn’t.

Inclusion:

- Perhaps no more misunderstood (with apologies to all of us listening) term is used in talking about PURE people than the scholarly, innocuous term “inclusion”.
- “Inclusion” is certainly valid in terms of a PURE ministry model for classroom settings, but it has become to mean so much more to most people.
- The great debate in churches even considering ministry to PURE people, especially PURE children, is the entire concept of inclusion.
- The question of inclusion (i.e. mainstreaming of PURE children with “typical” children) in the classroom unfortunately has extended over into all areas of ministry in our churches as it relates to PURE people and their families.
- The PURE children may well be theoretically “included” in the classroom, but for all practical purposes remain totally “un-included” and isolated in every other way in the life of the church.
- And yet, we continue to have this rhetorical debate: should we “include” the PURE person in our normal classrooms, when, in actuality we do very little to include them in the life of our church, our fellowship!
- Can you imagine what would happen if we had this debate about other demographic groups or ministry in our churches?
 - “Since these toddlers aren’t really contributing much to our church and they take up so many resources and time, should we really include them?”
 - -or-
 - “Our senior saints are such trouble, always having to make special provisions for them – in our next deacon/elder meeting we need to take up whether we should include them in our fellowship as we become a more dynamic church”.
- You haven’t heard these type comments in your church lately? No, and you most probably won’t either.
- Yet, even those among us involved in PURE ministry in our churches, self-satisfied and pleased with ourselves that we are really doing “ministry”, continue to focus on classroom models while ignoring the elephant in the room:
 - PURE people and THEIR FAMILIES remain largely isolated and alienated in our fellowships.

A New Terminology: P.U.R.E.

- P (Perfect) - People with disabilities have been created “perfectly” by our loving God just the way He desired and for His purposes just as we all “normal” people are created in His image.
- U (Unique) - Disabled people are unique in their abilities, gifts, needs, blessings, and desires – in every way like us.
- R (Receptive) - Except for those with the most critical and severe issues, PURE people are generally extremely receptive (and responsive) to people who take the time to interact with them.
- E (Eternal) - We can never forget that PURE people have eternal souls - there are no “disabled” souls.

The Birth of the P.U.R.E. Ministry Project:

- Our tagline or slogan
 - ▣ A wakeup call for Christians
 - ▣ Transforming the way we think about disabilities
 - ▣ True ministry is scripturally inspired / based – not just our “obsession”
 - Rom 12:1-2 - I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, **that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.** And be not conformed to this world: but be ye **transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.
 - People will be transformed only by Thinking Differently
- Our “reasonable” service

What is the P.U.R.E. Ministry Project?

- A Nationwide Project to Increase Awareness of and Ministry to People with Disabilities and their Families in our Churches
- A Calling to Christians to Extend our Comfort Zones
- A Movement of God
 - To educate Christians to feel comfortable when interacting with people with disabilities and their families.
 - To encourage Christians to befriend people with disabilities and their families.
 - To train Christians to better minister to people with disabilities and their families.
 - To help churches create and grow vibrant disabilities ministries in their churches to reach people with disabilities and their families in their communities.

Pure Motives are Required:

- ▣ “PURE” is also an appropriate name for this ministry as it relates to the intrinsic motives which drive us to do what we do.
- ▣ Our motives must be PURE when ministering to the PURE

Goals:

- To target and challenge the “average” person sitting on a church pew.
- To equip pastors to confidently proclaim the scriptural commands, needs, and blessings of PURE ministry and to lead their congregations in the assimilation of people with disabilities.
- To replace commonly held myths and stereotypes about “disabilities” ministries with truth and to encourage Christians to think “outside the box” about what ministry to the PURE can be.
- To create a church environment in which PURE people are given opportunity to minister in the church in whatever ways are possible.
- To help create a receptive, accepting, and enriching environment by introducing and implementing the concept of “Total Church Ministry” in our churches.

What, When and Where of the P.U.R.E. Ministry Project?

- ▣ Gov. Sarah Palin is Ambassador of PURE Ministry
- ▣ 1. PURE Celebrations
 - First in Atlanta, June 2011
 - Inspirational events
 - Worship and praise
 - PURE videos
 - Speakers/performers
 - Gov. Sarah Palin
 - Chris Tomlin
 - Kurt and Brenda Warner
 - David Ragan
 - Brent Cochran
 - Next Celebration in Birmingham in April or May in 2012
- ▣ 2. Teaching of PURE Ministry Concepts in Seminaries
- ▣ 3. Emphasis on in-church respite care as initial PURE Ministry in local churches

What Can You Do to Participate?

- Use the word PURE!
- If you are not offering in-church respite care, start it!
 - ▣ Call us, we can help
- Have us come to your church for a PURE ministry seminar
- Attend a PURE Celebration
- Be a host city for a future PURE Celebration
- Churches are missing the blessing of PURE people and their families

Closing:

- ▣ I want to thank you for your time
- ▣ We want to come to your church!
- ▣ We want to help you and your church with your PURE ministry
- ▣ You can call us at 678-318-1929
- ▣ Or web www.zachariahsway.com or www.pureministryproject.com
- ▣ God bless you!