

provide an ongoing monthly community service project with the Department of Child Services (DCS).

On the 3rd Saturday of each month we meet at 10:00am at the DCS offices located at 1201 South Alma School Road (on the SE corner of Alma School and Southern Ave.

We typically spend about an hour or so cleaning the family visitation rooms and the toys that the children play with while they are there.

Please join us and be a part of this blessing we bring to these children, to their families and to the tireless workers at DCS.

Foster Care Teens Personal Care Items

1 Youth is continuing to collect "Personal Care Items" for the teens in foster care throughout the year. Items for both male and female teens are being collected in the two bins just outside our youth room. These items will be sorted into personal bags and given to DCS to be distributed to teens who may not even have their own tooth brush or comb.

Whenever you're out shopping for your own personal care items such as soap, deodorant, tooth paste, feminine hygiene items or when you see the "travel size" shampoo, mouthwash, etc., pick up a few extra items and drop them in the bins.

Help share God's love

others we don't know or don't like without a thought.

We talked about how identifying people by a label can also make them seem less human or inferior. Their label takes away their identity as a person and makes them just a thing which can make it easier to not care what happens to them or sometimes to even hate them.

We discussed how labeling people has been used countless times in history to divide and control people or to make a certain group of people seem less human. Labeling is also used to get some groups to actually hate other groups, sometimes violently, based on nothing other than the label society as given them.

We were reminded that as Children of God, we are the "light of the world" and in **Matthew 5:14-16**, are commanded by Jesus to "let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in Heaven."

We then looked at how Jesus reacted to the labels that society used to label people in His time. We looked at how Jesus didn't see Matthew as a lowly Tax Collector, He didn't see an 'adulterous' woman, did not consider the woman at the well to be "Samaritan". He didn't see the Centurion as a "Roman" or the countless sinners, crippled, blind, lepers, as the labels they had been given.

Jesus saw them all, regardless of their label, with equal goodness as Children of God and treated them as such.

We then had the students label themselves as a "Child of God" and said that is the **ONLY** label they should use to identify themselves as it is how God labels us and is the **ONLY** label that really matters.

We then talked about our perceptions of being a Child of God and said it was very easy to see that if we identified not only ourselves but **EVERYONE** as a Child of God, it would not only help us to live a Christ-Like life, it would also help us to shine our light before others.

This goes for our actions and conversations with friends and family as well as in Social Media and with total strangers and especially for our "Self-Talk" about ourselves.

Identifying yourself as a Child of God means that you don't have to pay any attention to the labels that others put on you. You know you are unconditionally loved, valued, awesome, fearless, precious, smart, kind, good, forgiving, etc. and most of all, you know in your heart that you are worth dying for.

We said that when we see others as God does, as a 'Child of God', we immediately change our perception of them. We

by letting these teens know that somebody really does care about them.

also can change their perception of themselves to help build them up. Plus the people nearby who "see our good deeds" may change their perception of others as well. We really do have the power to change our world, one encounter at a time.

Labeling people can make them easier to hate or make them easier to love...the choice is always yours.

Watch for our next event here!

We are planning on putting together some Friday, movie nights in the coming year and possibly looking into some different Christian concerts or events.

Let us know what movies, concerts, or events you would be interested in.

Bible verses referenced in this lesson: Matthew 5:14-16, Matthew 9:9-11, John 8:1-11, John 4:9-10, Ephesians 4:29

Let us know if you have any questions.

Have a blessed Week,

Chris & Michelle Miller
1 Youth Ministry