

We are still collecting "Personal Care Items" for teens in foster care throughout the year. Items for both male and female teens are being collected in the bin 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.

This Week's Bible Verse
John 8:4-11

⁴ "Teacher," they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught in the act of adultery."
⁵ The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?"
⁶ They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. ⁷ They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, "All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!" ⁸ Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust. ⁹ When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. ¹⁰ Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, "Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?" ¹¹ "No, Lord," she said. And Jesus said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more."

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Letting Go Of Your Baggage

Last Sunday we started off by talking about New Year's Resolutions and how more than 80% will fail by the end of the month. We discussed some reasons why our plans fail and the number one reason is that most people don't involve God in the process.

We also discussed all the different excuses we come up with to validate us giving up on our plans before we even start. We said that many of these excuses are caused by **BAGGAGE** that we carry with us throughout our lives, sometimes without even realizing it.

We said that this baggage that we carry is past mistakes, failures, fear, traumatic events, negative words repeated about us, anger or bitterness toward people who do us wrong or who hurt us in the past, etc.

We said that these things cause us to have an emotional response toward them at the moment that they happen. It's okay for us to have these feelings at the time but it's when we hold onto these feelings, holding onto the memory of the event, that causes problems.

Every time we are reminded of the event, we have the same response to it all over again as if it just happened. We carry these feelings of anger, guilt, sadness, fear, etc. with us and they begin to control our thoughts and even our actions holding us back from following God's plan.

The strange thing is that we are not even reacting to the event anymore but to the story of the event in our mind. Sometimes we even start making up new stuff about it to help validate our feelings until we find ourselves actually reacting to something that never even happened at all.

We looked at two of the most common pieces of baggage that hold us back, **Anger & Guilt**. God does not want us to never be angry, even Jesus got angry. But, as Paul tells us in **Ephesians 4:26**, Do Not Stay Angry.

Jesus got angry but He never stayed angry. He got angry, for righteous reasons, addressed the cause of His anger, then let it go and moved on. When we stay angry it becomes baggage that we carry with us and holds us back from experiencing God's plan for us. Guilt is the same as anger but is directed toward ourselves instead.

To let go of both anger or guilt takes forgiveness of others and especially forgiveness of ourselves. We looked at the story of the adulterous woman in **John 8** and saw that Jesus not only did not condemn her but also told her "Go now and leave your life of sin." Basically telling her, I

forgive you now let it go and move on with your life.

We are to forgive others and forgive ourselves as we are forgiven by God through Jesus and then "go". **BE** forgiven, let it go, move on and try to do better next time. We aren't supposed to keep reliving our past sin in our minds and continue condemning ourselves for it over and over.

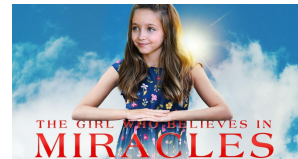
No matter what it is, just give it to God and let it go. Don't allow those feelings to control you anymore and make sure to not take it back. We said that Satan loves to keep reminding us of our past sins but once we give it to Jesus at the cross, we can tell him "nope, I gave that to Jesus and I've been forgiven, move along Satan".

We ended the class by having the students write down any "**baggage**" that they may be carrying and pray for God to help them forgive and let it go. We then shredded the cards so that these things can never be taken back and we are free to "go" and live the life God has for us.

Upcoming Events

First Friday Youth Movie Night

Join us at LWA on February 4th, at 6:30pm
for 1 Youth Movie Night!



The movie will be the 2021 drama,
'The Girl Who Believes In Miracles'.
For youth, grades 7-12, friends and families.
Rated PG

When young Sara hears a preacher say faith can move mountains, she starts praying. Suddenly, people in her town are mysteriously healed - but fame soon takes its toll.

[See Trailer Here](#)

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Connect with us



