

“Labels”

A Devotion for Children's Ministry Volunteers
Children's Ministry Magazine

Supplies: Two name tags and a marker for each person.

SAY: It's been said that the power to name is ultimate power. The first command from God to Adam was to name the creatures of God's creation. “Labeling” is one of the ways we name.

I'm going to give you a chance to consider some of the ways you've let others identify you and ways you've identified yourself. To do that, you'll use a name tag and marker.

I'd like you to think about “good enough” and “not good enough.” Which one have you been labeled as? What does the quality of your volunteering make you feel like people would say about your label? Write that on your name tag. (Allow time.)

Now think about how you measure up spiritually. Consider whether you've allowed others to set your value based on whether you're a strong or weak Christian. Write what you feel others would say about you—how they would label you. (Allow time.)

Another way people label others is whether you're a success or failure in ministry. What would others say? Write on your label what they say. (Allow time.)

Look at your name label. That's how you see yourself—and how others see you. (Pause)

Now right where you're at...put on your label. (Pause.)

Maybe it's what others have said about you...or even what you think about yourself...that's making this so uncomfortable. Because somehow...some way...you know that what's on your label isn't everything about you. It's not who you really are. It can't be the truth.

And it isn't.

Because it isn't true, take off your label and throw it away! Just throw it as far away from you as you can because it's not who you are! (Allow time.)

We're going to give you some time now to consider what God thinks of you. This is a time just between you and God. As you hear the things that God says about

you in Scripture, allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you what God's label is for you. God may impress you with one or many labels. We'll keep these labels going as you quietly talk to God. When God speaks a label to you, write that on your nametag.

Listen to what God thinks of you:

"You Are the Branch" (John 15:5)

You are God's very special branch, and no matter what you—or others—might think, these things are true about you through faith in Jesus. (Pause.)

"You are dead to sin and alive to God" (Romans 6:11)

When you struggle with being good or bad, know that as a child of God, you are dead to sin and alive to God. (Pause.)

"You are blessed with every spiritual blessing" (Ephesians 1:3)

When you're trying to figure out if you're a success or failure, know that as a child of God, you've received every spiritual blessing. (Pause.)

"You are fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14)

When you wrestle with your physical appearance, know that as a child of God, you are made in God's image, as a special and unique creation, fearfully and wonderfully made. (Pause.)

"You'll have all the riches of Christ" (Philippians 4:19)

When money gets in the way of seeing yourself for what you really are, know that as a child of God, God will supply you with all of God's wonderful riches through Christ. (Pause.)

"There is no condemnation in Christ" (Romans 8:1)

And no matter how good—or not so good—you do at work or at home, know that as a child of God, God doesn't judge you like some people may. (Pause.)

"I am a child of God" (Galatians 3:26)

It's a wonderful, incredible thing to know that you're a child of God—connected to God through Jesus Christ. It changes everything about us—even the way we sometimes see ourselves. (Pause.)

You don't have to live in your labels of the past, of other people's ideas about you...or your own hurtful ideas about yourself. Because *you* are named, indeed labeled, by God.

Now, take the label you've made and put it on. Let's pray: "God, thank you for naming us as *yours*. Help us to let go of the labels that others and ourselves have placed on us. Help us to embrace the names you have for us. In Jesus's name, amen."

Copyright © 2012 by Group Publishing, Inc. Permission to copy for local church use only. All rights reserved.