



News media have been pondering a recent Harvard study that found that young people are, well, not so nice.

The study surveyed 10,000 teens at 33 schools across the United States. When asked about their priorities, 48 percent said “achievement.” Thirty percent picked “happiness.” Only 22 percent picked “caring.”

In other words, **kids are more concerned about getting ahead and being happy than being a caring person.** Surprise! Kids have picked up the messages our culture gives them.

The proposed Harvard solution is to provide teens with more opportunities for community service so they can show how much they really care. And, of course, we’ll have to do something about all that parental pressure on kids to get good grades, high-paying jobs and a big house in the suburbs.

No bullying...and be sure to say please and thank you, right? That will raise a new generation of caring adults!

I don’t buy it, because we live in a broken culture that screams distorted values:

- Sex is a means to self-fulfillment and has nothing to do with the welfare of the other person.
- Gay marriage is fine if it makes a person happy, regardless of the consequences for society.
- Creating babies in a test tube or via surrogate mothers is licit because having a child is a right for anyone who can afford it.
- Abortion is great because it eliminates the inconvenience of an unwanted life.

- You really don't have to care about other people because that is what the government nanny state is for.
- You will be successful in life if you have lots of cool stuff, look good, smell good and stay young as long as possible.

Why would a young person be caring (beyond the most superficial "niceness") given what our culture says is important? Why would anyone think that someone raised in a pro-abortion, sexually charged, materialistic nanny state would list "caring" as a high priority?

And this isn't a crisis that will be solved by community service projects and workshops on how bullying makes others feel bad. We've sown immorality and selfishness and we're reaping the result. This won't get fixed quickly.

No, this is going to be a long, hard road of spiritual conversion. It will require us to bring the love of Christ into our culture, evangelizing everywhere and everyone – one soul at a time.