

CALLED TO ADOPTION: THE NEED FOR CHRISTIAN ADOPTION



"In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Acts 20:35

In the United States, the media and popular entertainment shows have glorified teen pregnancy. Our government is pouring out millions of dollars to support single and young mothers. However, staggering statistics have recently been released about teen parents.

- 80% of teen moms are on welfare.
- Over 50% of children raised by teen moms are reported to Child Protective Services.
- Only 1.5% of teen mothers graduate from college by age 30. And only 40% graduate from high school!
- Children raised without a father are twice as likely to quit school and four times as likely to need behavioral help.
- Children of teen parents are three times more likely to become teen parents themselves.

Internationally, the news about orphans is even worse.

- 5,760 children become orphans every day.
- Every 15 seconds, a child in Africa becomes an orphan due to AIDS.
- Worldwide, there are over 143 million children in orphanages right now.
- 10 to 15% of children raised in Eastern European orphanages commit suicide before the age of 18.
- Every 2.2 seconds, an orphan ages out of the system with no family and no home.
- In Russia, of those who age out, 60% of girls become prostitutes, 70% of boys will become hardened criminals.

As Christians, we believe the design God intended for families is optimal for children. Clearly, the statistics reflect that raising children in institutions yields disastrous results. These children are not receiving love and security, nor are they being taught self-discipline and control. More disheartening is that they likely have never heard the beautiful message of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Adoption is not only about building a family, but is also building the family of Christ. Just as we are adopted into God's family, so, too, are we called as Christians to help these children and expand Christ's territory.

Is It Time to Answer the Call?

Many feel led to adoption or a call to help others through adoption. If you question, "Why us? Why now?," maybe the better question is, "Why not?"

Remember Jonah? He was called by God and ignored His commands because they weren't immediately comfortable. Maybe adoption seems too expensive or too difficult. Perhaps the timing doesn't seem right. Maybe you are putting it off until after the holidays, next year, or after the next milestone birthday.

Take time in God's presence to discern His will for you. If you are feeling God calling you to adopt, explore your options. Learn about the types of adoption and the choices you have. Your time spent may be to fulfill an adoption plan yourself, or it may simply be so that you are armed with accurate knowledge about Christian adoption so that you are equipped to help others.

As we go through each day, sharing His love with others, there are few ways to touch people for a lifetime. Adopting a child into our lives, our hearts, and His heavenly kingdom is actively changing a life for our lifetime and for eternity.

His plans may not be for you to adopt, but rather your actions may still fulfill His plans for a child. He may need you as an instrument to affect the lives of others.

Answering Your Questions

I feel God is calling me to become a mother again through adoption. I would especially like to adopt a child who doesn't have parents, such as through the foster system or even international adoption. My husband doesn't agree, though. He says God is calling us to be the best parents we can be to the three children we have been blessed with. Do you have any advice when a couple is conflicted about God's will for their lives?

Jesus told us in Mark 3:25 that, "If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand." After God, your marriage and family must be the top priority in your life. Adoption should be a decision that the entire family embraces.

Continue to pray about this, and pray for God's will to be made evident to both you and your husband. In fact, I would encourage you to pray together about adoption and children in need. You may find God softens your husband's heart, or you may find He changes your vision. Either way, you need to be united in your steps to adoption for the child's sake.

As you take time in prayer, talk with your husband openly and honestly about your family. You may find his hesitation is something not related to adoption at all. Perhaps he is worried about the additional cost of raising another child, or maybe he just wishes he had more alone time with you!

There are other ways you can aid and assist children in need of loving homes. Consider starting an adoption ministry in your church to bring awareness to the need and raise funds to help support those who have been called to adoption. This is an active role that many women are pursuing as they realize that the call to adoption is not to adopt a child into their family, but rather to lift up and support others who are building their families through the miracle of adoption.