

// HOW YOU CAN RESPOND

// PRAY

- Pray for the children who are in orphanages and foster homes while awaiting a “forever family.”
- Pray about becoming a “forever family” for a child who needs a loving home (Jas. 1:27).

// ACT

- Become familiar with the adoption process by visiting Christian adoption agency Web sites.
- Learn about opportunities to become a foster family for children whose parental rights have not been terminated.
- Ask your church to begin a ministry that would promote adoption and foster parenting and support adoptive and foster families.

// BE TRANSFORMED

• Adoption is the only chance some children have to become part of a loving, healthy earthly family. Yet the reality is that without Christ, we are on our own. God provided a way for us to become a member of His family—Jesus Christ.

// HOW CAN YOU KNOW JESUS CHRIST?

- Realize you are not in control of your future. Admit that you are a sinner (Isa. 64:6; Rom. 3:23).
- Understand that God loves us, even in our sinful state (Rom. 5:8). He desires we turn away from our sin (Mark 1:15).
- Believe that Jesus is Lord (Rom. 10:9-10, 13). Eternal life is a gift; we cannot earn it (Eph. 2:8-9). Know that once you trust in Jesus, nothing can break your relationship with Him (John 10:28-29).

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Cover photo: James Hastings in the Guangzhou airport. He was 4 years old when he was adopted from China.

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Living Your Values Out Loud

“You are a helper of the fatherless.”
(Psalm 10:14)



ADOPTION: A PICTURE OF GOD'S LOVE

God Himself has modeled adoption by adopting us into His family and giving us all the rights that entails.

The Old Testament has much to say about the importance of family and the responsibility to care for the vulnerable members of the community. The New Testament church specifically was commanded to—and commended for—helping orphans and widows.

It's a problem that should engage us today, for Scripture is full of commands for followers of Christ to care for the fatherless. Also, God Himself has modeled adoption by adopting us into His family and giving us all the rights that entails. We are joint heirs with the Son of God.

Children's homes and orphanages around the world, including the U.S., are full of children who crave the love and security of a strong, Christ-honoring family. There is a

need within every person to be connected, to be loved, and to be acknowledged. For those without a "forever family," the needs are great, and Christians have a unique obligation to care for them.

Chris and Carol Crain answered that call when they traveled to Taiwan to bring home their daughter, Lauren. Dwayne and Marla Hastings have journeyed to China twice to bring home first Gracee, then James (pictured on the cover).

John Mark and Angie Yeats stayed in the United States to adopt their four children, Briley, Cadie, Sean, and Jackson. Others have provided a "forever family" for children in their own communities.

There is an erroneous belief that adoption is a topic only for couples who have

decided they want to give an orphan a home. While we should seek God's will to discover if we should adopt or be foster parents, we also should prayerfully and financially support those who are called to adopt or foster a child as well as the young women facing crisis pregnancies and single motherhood.

Human life at any age and in any circumstance is precious. Admittedly, at times we may be guilty of focusing our pro-life energies on the unborn to the exclusion of the already born. Yet the sanctity of human life ethic declares that human life of all ages is made in the image of God and worthy of our greatest care.

WHY DID YOU ADOPT?

Wanted to provide a permanent home for a child

81%

Wanted to expand family

69%

Infertility

52%

Wanted sibling for a child

24%

Had adopted child's sibling

7%

Related to child prior to adoption

7%

Had already formed a bond/loved the child

4%

CHECK IT OUT!

According to the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse, the total cost of adopting varies widely, to upwards of \$40,000. The wide range reflects a multitude of factors including the type of adoption, the type of placement agency or facilitator, and the child's age and circumstances.

The good news is there are many organizations that are willing to help defray your expenses. They have varying requirements: some work with families who live in certain states or families who want to adopt from a particular country; others work with families looking for a special needs child. Some work within religious denominations; others work with families who want to adopt a child from foster care. And once you've made the decision to adopt, your agency will be able to assist you in making the adventure affordable.

The funds might be there for the asking—check it out!