

Do Something – Community Group Notes – 11/13/2016

My prayer for us and our time within our Community Groups this week is that we connect with the desire of CFC in becoming more missional as a body of Christ. This topic is multifaceted and full of complexity. Take the time with your CG to walk through the scripture and discuss their implications. Given peoples varied experiences with foster care and adoption be sensitive to the fact that not every journey is the same. I have helped and observed dozens of families within various stages of adoption and know that God's grace is ever present to help fill in the gaps where we are weak.

The call to action can be a deeply personal journey. As such, give space for God to move while you discuss and reflect. This is about engaging a hurting world, not making anyone guilty. As a group, start with prayer asking God to give you a sensitivity to the various things that could come up in the discussion.

Praying that we may grow deeper together,
Ilya Tlumach, Elder

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. James 1:27 (NIV)

It is the heart of God that we care for widows and orphans in their distress. Caring for orphans is a reflection of what God has done for you and me. We were vulnerable and helpless, and orphans are vulnerable and helpless.

1. Explore these verses about God's heart for the orphan: What do these passages tell you about God's heart?
 - a. Give justice to the poor and the orphan; uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute. Psalm 82:3 (NLT)
 - b. Every third year you must offer a special tithe of your crops. In this year of the special tithe you must give your tithes to the Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows, so that they will have enough to eat in your towns. Deuteronomy 26:12 (NLT)
 - c. Cursed is anyone who denies justice to foreigners, orphans, or widows. Deuteronomy 27:19 (NLT)
 - d. Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you. James 1:27 (NLT)
2. Adoption is missional. God wants us to love orphans the way he has loved us, and to help them discover the love of Christ. What would it take for you to align your heart with God's heart for orphans and vulnerable children?
3. Psalm 68:6 NIV says; "God sets the lonely in families". How does he do that? What might your role be in his plan?
4. **Putting it into Practice**
 - a. The most vital thing you can do is not only open your heart, not only open your eyes, and not only open your mind, but probably the most radical thing that you

and I can do is to open our homes. At the heart of this idea of putting children into families is this incredibly audacious idea that God has adopted us.

- a.i. The Bible says, “Don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves” (James 1:22 NLT).
- a.ii. You are the hands and feet of Jesus. What can you, your family, or your Community Group do to reach out to an orphan or vulnerable child?
- b. In what ways can your Community Group reach out to orphans or at-risk youth in your community? In what ways can you join others serving and caring for the orphans and at-risk youth globally?

b.i. Potential Ideas

b.i.1. Pray for the plight of orphans and at-risk youth (in your community, globally).

b.i.2. Support an upcoming CFC Orphan Care Ministry outreach or learn more about what’s going on and how you can help.

b.i.3. Help support a family who is adopting/fostering.

b.i.4. Adopt or foster a child.

5. Prayer Direction

- a. Thank God for adopting us as his children.
- b. Pray that God will align your hearts with his heart for orphans.
- c. Pray that God will bring orphans and vulnerable children into families, provide for their needs, and draw them to himself.
- d. Ask God to direct you to your next step, individually and as a group. Ask him to protect your heart so that any response to this message will not come out of misguided guilt, but from an overflow of God’s love for you.