

RIVERS CROSSING COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Discussion Guide
October 18, 2015



The Ideal Family – Week #4

INTRODUCTION:

1. Nearly everyone knows someone who has adopted a child or has been adopted themselves. As you think about those people, take the time to share with the group about how adoption has affected the families or individuals you know.

DIVE IN:

1. There are lots of passages of scripture that help us understand God's heart for the fatherless. Paul referenced a few of them in his message. Read the passages below and then discuss the questions that follow:

"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 word."
James 1:27

"The helpless put their trust in you. You are the defender of orphans. . . . Lord, you know the hopes of the helpless. Surely you will listen to their cries and comfort them. You will bring justice to the orphans and the oppressed, so people can no longer terrify them."
Psalm 10:14, 17-18

"Father to the fatherless, defender of widows – this is God, whose dwelling is holy. God places the lonely in families; he sets the prisoners free and gives them joy."
Psalm 68:5-6

"So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father."
Romans 8:15

"God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure."
Ephesians 1:5

2. It can be easy to see adoption and foster care as a fertility solution or a social issue rather than a spiritual choice. Before Sunday's message did you have an understanding of God's heart for the fatherless? If not, how did the message change your perspective on who God is?
3. Have you ever viewed your salvation as an intentional adoption from God into His family? You've been chosen, accepted into His family, and called His own. As you think about earthly adoption, how does this change your understanding of your own status as a child of God?

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4. Not everyone is called to adopt. It's OK. We are, however, all created in God's image and should therefore reflect His character. How can you begin to intentionally develop a heart for the fatherless whether you adopt or not? How do you practically begin to live that out in your day to day life?
5. For many, the reason is simply that life is too busy, kids are already too much, house is too small, bank account too sparse... excuses abound for reasons not to help. What are the challenges you face (or excuses you make) to beginning to live out having a heart for the fatherless?
6. If you feel called to adopt or to foster, what's God calling you to do to prepare for that? What's stopping you from pursuing it now? If you're not called to adopt or foster, how can you come alongside those that are to help them?

NOW WHAT:

1. What part of this week's message has had the greatest impact on you? What truth(s) has God taught you through the message and our group discussion?
2. What do you need to do with that truth this week to become a fully engaged follower of Jesus?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- Safe Families for Children - safe-families.org/
- Show Hope – A Movement to care for Orphans - showhope.org/
- How to Adopt - howtoadopt.org
- *Adopted for Life: The Priority of Adoption for Christian Families and Churches*
- Russell D. Moore