

a resource for
orphan
sunday

WWW.orphansunday.org

An Initiative of
The Christian Alliance for Orphans
& The Cry of the Orphan

The Heart of God



W A R M • U P

15 M I N U T E S

- 1.** What was one of the primary things your spouse did during dating or courtship that won your heart?

- 2.** What is your favorite season of the year and why?

- 3.** If you could do anything with a good friend (other than your spouse) for a week, what would it be?

4. What one thing (besides God) would you say you are most passionate about in life?

5. Share one thing you learned from the last session's HomeBuilders Project.



Priority List

Getting to know someone's likes, dislikes, and passions helps us know a little more of that person's heart. In the same way, getting to know God's likes, dislikes, and passions helps us to know His heart.

Consider the following quote from C. Thomas Davis in his book, *Fields of the Fatherless*:

“If you searched the Bible from front to back, you’d find many issues close to God’s heart. But you’d also notice three groups of people coming up again and again.

They appear so many times, in fact, you have to conclude that God mentions them purposely to make sure they are at the top of our priority list.”

Let's take a closer look at these three groups of people.

1. Read the following passages from Scripture:

You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall not afflict any widow or orphan.

—Exodus 22:21-22

For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe. He executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love for the alien by giving him food and clothing.

—Deuteronomy 10:17-18

Thus says the LORD, “Do justice and righteousness, and deliver the one who has been robbed from the power of his oppressor. Also do not mistreat or do violence to the stranger, the orphan, or the widow; and do not shed innocent blood in this place.”

—Jeremiah 22:3

Why do you think God has such a strong concern for widows, orphans, and strangers? What do these three groups have in common?

2. Many of us do not know how it feels to be an orphan or widow. But anyone can relate to the experience of being a stranger or outsider. Choose one of the following scenarios that you may have experienced:

- Attending a new school
- Σ • Starting a new job
- Σ • Driving in an unfamiliar town and trying to find a particular location...after dark
- Σ • Visiting a country where you do not speak the language and you don't know how to get anywhere.

How do you feel in these types of situations? If you can, tell the group about an experience of feeling like a stranger or outsider.

3. What helped you make adjustments so you no longer felt like a stranger?

God's Help

4. One of the words you may have used to describe how you felt in one of the above scenarios is “helpless.” Deuteronomy 24:19-22 describes God’s provision of help for these groups:

“When you reap your harvest in your field and have forgotten a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow, in order that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. When you beat your olive tree, you shall not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow. When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not go over it again; it shall be for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow. You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I am commanding you to do this thing.”

Since God gives us the responsibility to ensure these groups of people are provided for, what are some creative ways that we can leave the sheaves in the field, the olives in the branches, and the grapes on the vine in order to help provide for the needs of these groups?

5. How does Proverbs 23:10-11 describe God as it relates to the orphan?

Do not move the ancient boundary or go into the fields of the fatherless, for their Redeemer is strong; He will plead their case against you.

6. We see examples of “defense” in everything from sports to the court room. What are some words that you generally associate with the word “defend?”

7. Why does a child without a family need “defending”? What are some of the things that can happen to children without parents?

HomeBuilders Principle:

God reserves a special place in His heart for orphans and calls us to help defend and protect them.

Our Adoption

As we saw in the last session, the Bible uses the metaphor of adoption to describe what God has done for us through Christ. Ephesians 1:5 tells us, “He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will ...”

8. What do you think it means that we have been adopted as sons through Jesus Christ?

Why do you think a word like “adoption” is used to describe what happens to us when we come to know Christ?

9. If you know Christ as your Savior and Lord, tell the group what your life was like before God worked in your heart to draw you to Him. In what ways was your life similar to that of an orphan?



Read the following passages:

The fool has said in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; there is no one who does good. The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.

—Psalm 14:1-3

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

—Romans 5:8

1. What criteria did you meet in order for God to be willing to adopt you?

2. What criteria do people often list as they consider who they would adopt?

3. What would have happened if God had used some of these criteria in His decision to adopt us?

HomeBuilders Principle:

God adopts us not because we were the cutest, the smartest, or were at the least risk of failure. Rather, He adopted us despite our dysfunction and failures and undesirable characteristics.

Make a Date

Make a date with your spouse to meet before the next session to complete the HomeBuilders Project. Your leader will ask you to share from this experience.

DATE

TIME

LOCATION

HOMEBUILDERS PROJECT



6 0 M I N U T E S

Individually:

1. Have you thought much before this study about our responsibility as believers to care for orphans, widows, and strangers? Why or why not?

2. In what way does learning about God's heart affect your view of adoption?

As a Couple:

1. Share your answers from the individual section.

2. Look again at the Wrap-Up section of the group session. What are some criteria you have placed on children who you might be willing to adopt? List 3-5 characteristics.

3. If you applied the same standard to fatherless children that God applied to you, how would that change the kind of child you bring into your family?

4. Spend a few minutes in prayer as a couple, asking God to lead in your family regarding any decisions you are making about adoption.

Excerpted from HomeBuilders Couples Series®: Considering Adoption

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