

CAUSE OF THE FATHERLESS

The truth is, “caring for the vulnerable among us isn’t a new idea; it’s a Biblical idea.

Key verse:

Isaiah 1:17 - Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow

Supporting Verses

Proverbs 31:8 - *Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute.*

James 1:27- *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*

How can we begin the process of biblically pursuing the call to foster care and care for the vulnerable?

LEARN (Learn) what God’s Word has to say about caring for the least among us?

Isaiah 1:17 - **Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow**

ASSESS (Defend) How Can we respond and defend the cause of the most vulnerable?

Isaiah 1:17 - **Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow**

- **What is the need?** Talk to your local child welfare agency about the needs in your community. Connecting with your local agencies will begin to break down any barriers between the local Church and local child welfare.
- **What do we already have?** Take a look at the current programs in your church. Can any of those programs be easily adapted to meet the needs of the local foster care community? Things such as parenting classes, addiction recovery classes, clothing closets and feeding programs could be made available. Offer your church’s facility to child welfare to be used for supervised visits or foster care classes. What is already in your church?

- **Who do we already have?** You may not know it, but you probably have people in your church who are (1) currently fostering or have adopted or (2) would be interested in getting involved if the church offered something.

SHARE (Plead) what you've learned with others! Connect with us for information and resources that can help you get the word out. Healthy ministries are communicated from the pulpit and implemented from the pews.

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ENCOURAGE (Take Up) your congregation to join you in stepping out in faith to minister to the vulnerable of our communities. God is in the broken places, let us join Him where he is working.

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PRAYER (Seek) should be our first response, not our last resort. Every great move of God begins with prayer. What is HIS heart for justice how is HE calling us to put it in to action?

CLOSING. Caring for the least among is not easy or convenient, but we do it joyfully because we ourselves have experienced the hope and joy of someone caring for us, and experiencing the adoption of our Heavenly Father. (Romans 8:15)!

We were lonely and destitute when God, through Jesus Christ, brought us into His family. We became sons and daughters and were given an inheritance! So this mandate, this "pure religion" James talks about, is merely taking the unmerited love we have received and giving it to the world.

NOTES:

While the initial purpose of this message is to encourage foster care, there are many works of compassion that God calls his church to. This message is meant to be adapted to use for the larger call to care for the least among us.

I leave the illustrations up to the speaker so that they can apply the message to the context and culture of their congregation

Verses to possibly use in this message:

- Deuteronomy 10:18 - *He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing*
- James 1:27- *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*
- Romans 8:15-17 - **15** *The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."* **16** *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.* **17** *Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory*
- Isaiah 1:17 - *Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow*
- Micah 6:8 - *He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God*
- Psalm 68:5-6 - *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*
- Exodus 2:10 - *When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses,^[a] saying, "I drew him out of the water."*

Psalm 68:5-6 God sets the lonely in families, he leads out the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.