

God's Call to Pray for This Crisis

I remember the girl who said to me, "I wish I had a normal life."

Her words pierced me through. It was a legitimate wish. Her life *wasn't* normal, and I could convince neither her nor myself that it was.

Instead of a home, she lived in a facility. I'd seen her room—the one that she'd sarcastically referred to as her jail cell. And to be fair to her, it did look like one—composed of nothing but a small bed and four concrete walls.

But this was no jail, in the literal sense, as you or I would think of it.

This was a residence for foster kids who were waiting for available and willing foster families. This place, with its bare concrete walls and florescent lights, caught some of the foster system's "overflow." And here she lived—longing for a normal life, longing for a home, longing for a family.

"I wish you had a normal life too," I told her, after a few moments of silence together.

A crisis permeates America. This young girl is just one face, one life, one story—among 400,000 displaced children in this nation.

And compounding the crisis is the unsettling reality that though they live only some minutes' drive away, these who long for "normal" are unseen by most. They are unheard by most. And many of us have maybe not even known that they exist.

In 2013, about 255,000 children entered into foster care. Averaged out, that's about 700 abused and neglected kids entering the system every single day—*today even*. But we aren't even blinking ... because the governmental care of our children has become culturally normal.

But this should not feel normal to our hearts.

Church, we need to weep.

We need to fall on our faces before the God of heaven, before the God who is a Father to the fatherless—and ask Him to have mercy on a nation, to shift a broken culture, to restore a generation suffering under abuse and neglect and fatherlessness.

We need to pray.

What if we arose on their behalf? What if we really prayed? What would happen in the lives of children?

And what would happen in the heart of God's church?

For 40 weeks, we are going to sow prayers into a dry and broken generation.

Many of us will sow tears.

And the unfolding years ahead will show and tell of our prayers' fruit.

Church, let's pray.

God has joined His name to these children. Oh, that He would pull us into the burden of His heart for them.

Will you pray for them?

How are we, scattered across the nation, going to do this in unity? It's simple:

- **Each week for 40 weeks, I will be sending out a point of focus for our prayers.** Come find me on Instagram or the new Facebook public page to see our prayer focuses *every week, beginning March 29*. Pray in your secret place with the Lord, pray as a family, pray with friends or with your church's small group—however you want to pray, let's just pray. Let's truly engage with God's heart over these children.
- **Also, join in with Jon and me each Friday at 10 a.m. (CST) during our weekly prayer meeting for the fatherless.** Over 1,000 are already joining in via web each week. Understandably, you might not be able to join us for each one, but take part as often as you can (via live stream or archives).

We are going to link arms and pray for a fatherless generation, to stand as their intercessors, to be a voice for these who have no voice.

JOIN IN.