

# How This Adopted Girl Turned Abandonment Into Hope

The task of finding homes for the 150 million orphaned children in the world today—by UNICEF’s count—is daunting, if not overwhelming. But one former orphan is determined to take on the challenge by fighting to help families adopt those discarded children—with her voice.

Laura-Valentine Lock was adopted from China three months after her mother abandoned her as an infant. Now she is 18 years old and has already raised tens of thousands of dollars to help more than 10 families afford adoption.

“Adoption is such a great tie with our relationship with the Lord,” says the teen and founder of Laura-Valentine Ministries. “I was adopted twice: I was adopted into my earthly home, but when I accepted Christ I was adopted into the kingdom of God.”

After a mission trip to an Ugandan orphanage during her freshman year in high school, Lock began to struggle with her own abandonment and feelings of guilt that she had been adopted while so many children were still left without homes.

The release of her debut album, *My Sweet Home*, was nearing, so she threw a Sweet 16/Album Release party in which she asked attendees to bring love offerings instead of gifts. The money that was raised helped a Christian family adopt a child from the Ugandan orphanage she had visited. Since then, her mission has been to help get more kids adopted.

All of the proceeds from her music and merchandise go toward this cause. Following the release of Lock’s second album, *Right About Now*, her ministry held a sweepstakes, and on Nov. 2—Orphan Sunday—last year, it gave away \$20,000 to a Christian family to cover their adoption expenses.

“Doing this makes me feel alive,” Lock says. “It makes me feel like it’s no wonder God brought me out of that poverty. He does have a plan. ... God has given me so many blessings, and my walk with Him is getting stronger and stronger. He just does incredible things that I can’t fathom.”

Laura-Valentine’s father, Ken Lock, says his daughter’s ministry is unique because of her background.

“There are other people out there that sing and perform and raise money for adoptions, but I’m not aware of anybody that’s been an orphan themselves that is doing this. ... It’s where her heart is and her passion.”

In addition to her ministry and music, Laura-Valentine attends Lipscomb University in Nashville, where she is majoring in communications.