

# December 3, 2023 Giving Sunday / Advent Sermon Outline

## NOTE: NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

*This sermon outline is meant to help you present a biblically faithful and life-applicable message. We encourage you to insert and illustrate examples from within your own community and church.*

## GOD'S LOVE AND THE CALL TO CARE FOR ORPHANS

### Introduction

- The profound reality of God's concern for the marginalized.
- Highlighting the crisis of orphans and foster care in the modern era.

### I. Understanding God's Heart for the Orphan

#### Scriptural Insights:

- **Psalm 68:5:** God as a "father to the fatherless."
- **James 1:27:** "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world."
- **Deuteronomy 10:18:** He "executes justice for the fatherless and the widow."

#### Christological Significance:

- Jesus, God's Son, entered the world as a vulnerable child, aligning himself with the weakest among us.
- **Matthew 18:5:** "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me."

#### Gospel Reflection

- In salvation, we are adopted by God (Romans 8:15).
- We were spiritual orphans, but God loved us, sought us out, and gave us a forever family.

### II. The "For Now Families" and the "Forever Families"

#### For Now Families

- The beauty of transitional love.
- Like God's sustaining grace, these families provide temporary safety, security, and love.
- **Hosea 14:3:** "In you the orphan finds mercy."



## Forever Families

- The reflection of God's eternal love.
- Adoption as a powerful metaphor of the Gospel.
- **Ephesians 1:5:** "He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will."

## Challenges & Triumphs

- Sharing real-life stories of foster and adoptive families, underscoring the profound joys and challenges they encounter.
- God's redemptive work in tough situations.

## III. The Call to Action

### Personal Response

- Reflect on how you can be involved. Not everyone is called to foster or adopt, but all are called to care.
- Supporting families who do, prayer, advocacy, mentoring, etc.

### Church's Role

- How can the church become a community that supports, aids, and encourages those who take on this mission?
- **Acts 20:35:** "In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"
- **Call to action:** Special collection this week to benefit our state chapter of America's Kids Belong which works to help kids in foster care experience the gift of belonging in loving foster and adoptive homes (to be adapted based on nature of collaboration).

### Gospel Implication

- As receivers of God's love, we should be conduits of that love to others, especially the vulnerable.
- **1 John 3:17:** "If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?"

## Conclusion

- Reiterating the Gospel message: We were orphans, now we are children of God.
- Emphasizing the transformative power of love, both in temporary and permanent settings.
- A call to open our hearts, homes, and hands to the orphaned, following in the footsteps of Christ through gifts of our time and treasure.

## Prayer

- For the orphans and vulnerable children.
- For families stepping into foster and adoption.
- For the church to rise up and embrace its mission to reflect God's love to the fatherless.

