

## NURTURE THE MOTHERLESS

***James 1:27 This is pure and undefiled spiritual service in the sight of our God and Father, to take care of orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.***

In this land of the free and home of the brave:

8% of homes in USA are without a mother                      24% without a father

85% of all children that exhibit behavioral disorders come from fatherless or motherless homes (Source: Center for Disease Control)

90% of all homeless and runaway children are from fatherless or motherless homes (Source: U.S. D.H.H.S., Bureau of the Census)

71% of all high school dropouts come from fatherless or motherless homes (Source: National Principals Association Report on the State of High Schools.

75% of all adolescent patients in chemical abuse centers come from fatherless or motherless homes (Source: Rainbows for all God's Children.)

**Almost 1/3 of homes in USA are one parent homes; 40% are blended families with a step-parent**

Since the late 50's with the era of no fault divorce, the divorce rate has remained at 50%. This causes the children in these homes to live without a parent or in the case of remarriage, to live with a step-parent. The destruction of Divine Institutions of marriage & family has caused the children from these marriages to be mentally unhealthy, often carrying a great deal of false OM beliefs about self, relationships and life itself. The loss of a parent, especially a mother to death or divorce leaves a big hole in a child's human development, leading to many emotional and behavior problems as adults.

### **1. The Impact of a mother on her children**

**Prov 6:20** – mother is a teacher, helps her babies learn basic life skills; corrects & instructs

**Prov 31:26** *she speaks with wisdom & faithful instruction is on her tongue*

- A mother's bond with her baby teaches the baby that love exists & is available to him/her
- Women are uniquely designed to give love in the form of compassion & tenderness
- Mothers teach through play, through daily living, developing habits & patterns of behavior

**Child:** becomes aware of the existence of love, warmth, compassion & help for living out life. Mother's patience & tenderness allows the child to fail repeatedly without being chastised; she encourages him/her to get up and go again.

- Child learns a sense of self value & importance from his mother's loving eyes – values self
- Male child is given a pattern for relating to the opposite sex that will last his lifetime
- Female child is given a pattern of thinking & behaving for how a woman should live her life

**Prov 31:28** – her husband & children praise her because she has been such a blessing to them

## **2. Children raised without a mother are left with developmental holes in their hearts.**

Article: Travis Norwood: The Loudest Silence I ever Heard

**Reactive Attachment Disorder** of infancy or early childhood. Reactive attachment disorder is a problem in which a child is not able to easily form a normal or loving relationship with others. It is considered to be a result of not forming an attachment to any specific caregiver when very young.

- Child enters life as a blank slate, knowing nothing, having experienced nothing
- Feels the need for love, warmth, attention, affection – cries out for someone to meet needs
- If there is no one to respond (especially a mother) the child passes through this bonding & attaching phase without experiencing any love or affection.
- Having passed this critical phase without having had these needs met, the child will conclude that there is no such thing as affectionate love – incapable of bonding with a spouse or kids
- So far, the field of psychology has deemed these problems as permanent & insolvable.
- Only Christ can open the shut door of an empty heart that hungers for he knows not what.

## **3. USA is filled with children who have been abandoned, neglected, abused & used – need Christ.**

**Jam 1:27** – talking to pompous hearers of the word who had not yet become doers of God's will. A time of extreme hardship in Israel (Paul took up an offering) where children had been taken from Christian parents and made orphans. Real spiritual service is to give nurture to those in distress – widows & orphans with no one to provide or protect them from the religious evil of the day.

**1 John 3:18** Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

## **4. How do we Nurture the Motherless?**

- a. Pray for them – ask God to send their needs along with the gospel
- b. Look around your neighborhood, school, church, etc – look for kids who are in need and give them a moment of your time, encourage them, give them the gospel, find out about their living situation.
- c. Support established Christian ministries to orphans – Alabama Baptist Children's Home
- d. Be a foster parent or adopt an orphan.