

**DAY**



**THE  
GLOBAL  
NEED**

# EMILY'S STORY

## SCRIPTURE FOCUS: PSALM 10:14,17-18

Emily learned about the needs of orphans on a trip to Haiti when she was 11 years old. There, she made new friends—many her age—who did not have the love, protection, and security of a family that many of us take for granted. And Emily promised to carry their stories with her.

When Emily returned home to the U.S., her heart had changed forever. She felt a passion to do something that would make a difference. She prayed about her response, and she challenged her parents, Mary Beth and Steven Curtis Chapman, to pray about what it would look like for their family to make a difference in the lives of waiting children. Emily and her family's faith journey eventually led to the adoption of Emily's three sisters and also served as the catalyst to her parents founding Show Hope. In a way, the impact of that trip in Emily's life resulted in you reading this sentence as you consider how your gifts and talents might also make a difference in the lives of waiting children.

All those years ago in Haiti, God knew exactly what he was doing. He knew the stories Emily carried home with her would continue to send ripples of hope into a waiting and watching world. God planted a seed in someone in the same place you are now in life—a student—and it ignited something larger than anyone could have ever dreamed.

## THE GLOBAL NEED

As we begin this journey, it's helpful to understand the gravity of the situation. There are an estimated 15 million children in the world who have lost both parents. Many children who have been orphaned encounter significant early challenges and traumas related to malnutrition, abuse, neglect, and/or unaddressed medical needs.

Just as it's necessary to understand the scope of the need, it's equally important to not let the overwhelming size of the need discourage you from taking action. Instead, let it move you to make a difference. Each number represents a face and a name—a unique story God is telling in the life of a child. God doesn't ask us to individually solve the whole world's problems, but he does invite us into his work, to experience his love in new ways, and to enter into the journey with him in caring for waiting children.

## PRAYERFUL REFLECTION

As you think about the 15 million children who have lost both parents, what comes to your mind and heart?

Before we move forward, it's important to consider how you plan to stay engaged with your group and this devotional over the next few days. What might make it challenging to take a break from social or other forms of media?



God used Emily's life and gave her a passion that would extend beyond her and her family. Perhaps there has been a time in your own life when God planted a seed of change and impact. How have you tended to that seed?

- ✦ The need is great. Allow this prayer from the early church to guide you.

*Lord, as you will, and as you know, have mercy.*

Repeat this prayer throughout the day, and carefully look for places in your life where God may be creating space for you to step into adoption advocacy and orphan care.

## ACTIVE REFLECTION

The need isn't just far away—it also exists in your very own community. Today, there are more than 400,000 children being cared for in the U.S. foster care system. More than 125,000 of those children have had parental rights terminated and are in need of the permanency of a family through adoption.

How do you feel when you read these statistics? What can you do to help? It can be as simple as starting a conversation with your friends and family, sharing the knowledge you have gained so far.

- ✦ To learn more about how to care for the needs of children currently in foster care and how you can get involved right now, consider making an appointment with a caseworker from your local social services agency. There are often opportunities to volunteer for events or gather supplies to help children as they transition into the care of social services.
- ✦ How can you come alongside families in your church who have been impacted by adoption or foster care? How can you get involved with outreach ministries that focus on the needs of children?