

May 10, 2010

Dear Friends,

Do you know that there are 4.6 million orphans in Ethiopia alone? Have you heard that *one in six* children in Ethiopia die before age five? What do we do with these statistics? Over and over again in Scripture God commands us to care for the fatherless. And He reminds us that we were orphans once too, but by His grace He adopted us as His sons and daughters!

As most of you know, we believe God has called our family to adopt from Ethiopia. He has been working on our hearts in many ways through the years to get us to this point, but the main way He has spoken to us is through prayer and fasting and reading His Word. The Bible is full of places where God describes Himself as:

“A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families” (Ps. 68:5-6a)

Our heart’s desire is to give some children a “Forever Family.” We have spent the last 9 months gathering the required paperwork and have now sent it all to our agency in Ethiopia. We are requesting siblings: a girl 0-18 months old and a boy 3-6 years old. We know that may not seem like much toward helping the 143 million orphans in the world, but we can help two of them. We also believe in faith that God will multiply that offering and hopefully others will respond to the call to care for orphans in some way as well.

Would you consider praying about what you can do to care for the fatherless? Here are a few ways you could help:

1. Pray and cheer us on! Pray also about starting an orphan ministry in your church or sponsoring a child. God does amazing things when His people pray!
2. Consider partnering with us financially. We have \$20,000 left to pay toward our adoption including visas, travel, and program fees.
 - Make tax-deductible donations through Lifesong (lifesongfororphans.org). **Anything donated between now and June 30, 2010 will be matched up to \$2000 by Lifesong!**
 - We have purchased a puzzle of Africa and for every \$10 donated, we will write your name on the back of a puzzle piece. We will eventually frame it so that our kids can know how many people have given graciously to get them home! You can follow the progress on our website (gowinfamily.com).
 - Order wonderful Fair Trade coffee from a fundraising organization called justlovecoffee.com/gowinfamily. \$5 of every bag of coffee purchased goes toward our adoption and some of the rest goes toward a school they are building at the Ethiopian orphanage where I visited last year. This is not tax-deductible but the proceeds go toward helping orphans.

If you choose to donate funds toward our adoption, please make your check out to **Lifesong for Orphans** with “*preference Gowin #1206 adoption*” in the memo. (See the attached Lifesong letter. In following IRS guidelines, your donation is to Lifesong which retains full discretion over its use, but intends to honor the donor’s suggested use.) **Remember: whatever you donate will be matched. If, for example, you give \$10 for a puzzle piece, you really give \$20!**

Lifesong for Orphans
PO Box 40/202 N. Ford St.
Gridley, IL 61744

Thank you for prayerfully considering partnering with us on this journey. You are helping to paint a beautiful picture of what it means to “do unto the least of these.”

Michael and Suzanne Gowin
gowinfamily.com