

JOURNEYS

STORIES FROM THE STREETS AND BEYOND



LITTLE FOOTPRINTS
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



LOVING HOUSTON
ADOPTION AGENCY



Our adoption story began several years ago and 2000 miles away from Houston. We were living in Southern California with our six children, no humidity, no bugs and incredible weather! God began to speak to us about adoption. Our family prayed daily for the little boy we knew God was going to add to our circle. Out of obedience to God's promptings we moved our family to Houston, to humidity, to bugs and to weather we couldn't even understand. Maybe we'd meet our little guy in H-town. We heard about Loving Houston, a great ministry/agency who helps families and kids find each other. We often wondered about our little guy and when we would meet him. Little did we know that while we were learning all the ins and outs of adoption, not too far away, our son was born. We told Loving Houston we only wanted to adopt because fostering seemed too painful and we were trying to protect the eight hearts involved from being hurt.

WHAT'S TWO WEEKS?

Two months after we finished our paperwork, our three oldest children left for college in Georgia, all at once and fifteen hours away. We dropped them off at college, and it was on the long, sad drive home, somewhere outside of New Orleans, that we received a call from Kim Dale, Director of LHAA, saying "We have a situation." She asked if we would be willing to provide respite care for a little boy for just two weeks. We agreed because "Two weeks wouldn't be too bad. How attached can you get in two weeks?"

LOVE DEEPLY, LOVE LOOSELY

Well, we fell in love with the little guy we call Dawson and worked diligently to become a licensed foster home so that we could foster him for as long as he needed. His situation was difficult and his future with us was uncertain because his birth mom placed him with Loving Houston voluntarily, which meant that she could ask for him back. We didn't fully realize how painful these back and forth episodes would be. The first was for 27 days. He was out there somewhere.... we continued to pray for his safety. After nearly a month, he returned to us. When we picked him up we noticed his little spark was gone, and it broke our hearts. But, after lots of love, hugs and red raspberries, his sweet little self returned, things were back to normal, and he was thriving. We were no longer thinking about the price of uncertainty and the cost of loving little ones for whatever time you're given. After a number of times going back and forth, birth mom decided she wanted him back for good, our hearts were broken again. It was



difficult to learn to love deeply and love loosely.

STUNNED BY A CHANGE OF EVENTS

As we painfully prepared to return him one final time, we got word that birth mom was pregnant and had unexpectedly and suddenly decided to sign her rights over to the agency, allowing us to adopt Dawson. We were honestly stunned by this God-sized change of events. The difficulties, the heartache, the struggles all faded away as we realized that God had answered our family's prayers. The agency pursued adoption with attorney's, a private investigator and agency staff getting everything in order. We were consumed with securing his adoption once and for all.

GOD DOUBLED OUR BLESSING

Then on, October 30, our case worker called again and told us that Dawson's half sister had been born and at ten-days old needed a place to stay. We quickly agreed to be that place. This time we knew what to expect, and after five months she did go back, and it was painful. But after only two weeks away, Emerson returned to our home, and only four weeks after that we were asked if we would be willing to adopt Emerson and keep her with her brother. It was the easiest yes for us, and we celebrated how God had doubled our blessing.

ETERNAL DIFFERENCE

Our journey, like so many others, has not been an easy one. We have loved greatly, grieved deeply and we have grown stronger and more dependent upon a prayer answering God who hasn't forgotten His promise to be a loving Father to the fatherless. What a great way to make an eternal difference with our temporary lives.

*"Rescue those being led away to death, hold back those staggering towards the slaughter."
-Proverbs 24:11*

