



Mark E. Strong
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“No Father, No Father, No Father”

When did you first realize there was a real need for a book like *Church for the Fatherless*?

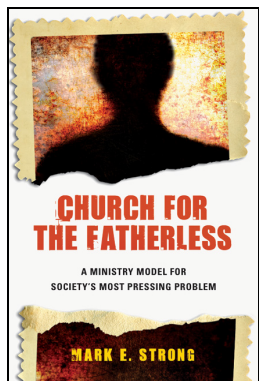
Mark Strong: We were having a leadership meeting at our church and we were concluding with a time of prayer. During the prayer time, I lifted my head up and began to glance around the circle at the thirty or so people holding hands. One by one I glanced at each individual from the youngest to the oldest. Viewing the group, the phrase crossed my mind, “no father, no father, no father.” In that single moment God made me aware of the fact that the majority of the leaders in our church had grown up without the presence of a father in the home for one reason or another. Following that epiphany, through studies and ministry observation, I learned that father absenteeism is a critical problem that is widespread and affects people of all races and socioeconomic backgrounds. Serving as a pastor for twenty-four years, I have seen up close and personal the devastating impact of individuals who have grown up fatherless. My motivation to write the book is to minister to those who have suffered from fatherlessness by equipping the church and other organizations to minister to the needs of the fatherless.

What is the main idea behind *Church for the Fatherless*?

Mark: Simply put, the thesis of my book is that fatherlessness can have and has had a devastating effect on the lives of those affected by it. In addition, the church has a biblical mandate as well as a wonderful opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the millions of fatherless individuals in our nation and the world. Regardless of a church’s size or resources, there is something they can do to minister the love of God the Father to the fatherless. The goal of the book is to equip and inspire churches, organizations and leaders to minister to the fatherless.

Q&A

AUTHOR INTERVIEW



Church for the Fatherless: A Ministry Model for Society's Most Pressing Problem

Available

October 2012

\$15, 192 pages, paper

978-0-8308-3790-8

What do you hope readers take away from your book?

Mark:

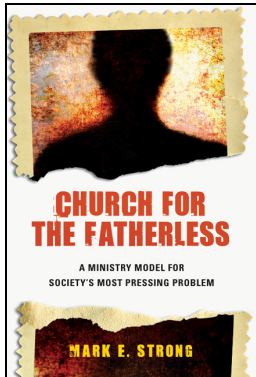
- Fatherlessness is a serious and prevalent issue that can have harmful effects on the lives of individuals.
- An understanding of the biblical mandate to care for the fatherless and a greater understanding of God's heart for the fatherless.
- Though the issue is expansive, you and your church can still make a difference in the life of someone.
- Simple and useful strategies to implement in your life, church and organization to minister to the fatherless.
- Hope and encouragement.

How do you hope *Church for the Fatherless* is used?

Mark: The quest of this book is threefold. First, I want to help you as a pastor or a leader gain a deeper understanding of the problems surrounding the issue of fatherlessness.

Second, I want to share some practical and doable ways your church, ministry or organization can serve the fatherless.

Third, I want to inspire and encourage you to engage in and be a part of God's answer to fill the father void. Together in Christ we can address this critical problem in the lives of the fatherless.



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Fatherlessness Reaches Epidemic Levels

“Tonight, about 40 percent of American children will go to sleep in homes in which their fathers do not live.”

Between 1960 and 1990, the percentage of children living apart from their fathers rose from 17 to 36 percent, and it continues to rise.

The 1990 U.S. Census reported that 48.5 percent of African American homes are headed by single mothers.

“Among teens, only 67 percent live with their biological fathers, compared with the 91 percent who live with their biological mothers. In urban areas, the percentage of teens who live with their fathers drops to only 57 percent.” While mothers typically will not leave their children under any circumstances, 24.7 million children in America live without their biological father.

“Divorce rates have more than doubled in most countries between 1960 and 1990”; according to author Mark Strong, this is one of the most vicious causes of father absenteeism.

Many different factors contribute to the problem of voluntary absenteeism on the part of fathers. Here are several:

- employment issues
- dysfunctional relationship with the child’s mother
- addiction
- welfare policies
- nonmarital commitment
- life frustration
- generational patterns (leaving my children like my dad left me)
- selfishness

—Statistics taken from the introduction and from chapter one, “Father, Where Are You?”