

Adopting 6 Children – How Did It Happen? (Very Short Version of a long and detailed saga)

In 1988 my wife (Tammy) and I married. Within a year we started trying to have children. For several years we tried, cried when we could not conceive and cried when we saw baby in a restaurant. I can remember my wife sobbing as she banged on my chest crying, "Why is God doing this to us?"

After nine years of infertility we decided to adopt internationally. We interviewed many adoption agencies and chose Nightlight Christian Adoptions. In February of 1998 we adopted a little boy and girl (Ivan and Ksenia) from St. Petersburg Russia. It was an amazing trip. While we were leaving our new daughter's orphanage quite a few of the orphans were literally, hanging on me yelling, "Papa." It changed me forever.

Less than a year later we adopted a six month old girl from the same orphanage that our son was raised in. We were done. Our family was complete until...My parents and I decided to take a humanitarian trip back to St. Petersburg Russia with donations from members of our congregation and local stores. Long story short, while I was in a Wal-Mart store my cell phone rang. It was Ron Stoddart, the Executive Director of Nightlight Christian Adoptions. He knew that we were traveling back to Russia and he "just mentioned" that there was a little two year old boy that was turned down by a few American families for adoption. His eyes were crossed in that culture someone with crossed eyes is considered "mentally deficient." I told Ron, "no" as we had just arrived back from adopting our little girl a few months earlier. There's a funny story here but I will get to the bottom line. I asked how old the boy was. Ron checked his birth date. It was May 4, 1999. I was shocked!! I said, "Ron, that's Lindsay's (the little girl was had adopted a few months earlier) birthday. LONG story short we ended up adopting the little boy with crossed eyes and named him Timothy. We were; NOW, complete...four kids...that are enough UNTIL...

Some time later my wife and I decided to sponsor and advertise an Adoption Information meeting less than an hour from our house. LONG STORY SHORT...few people showed up but Ron Stoddart had flown in. Of course, he brought his photo album of children waiting to be adopted. As my wife I am flipped through the album WITH NO INTEREST IN ADOPTING ANY MORE CHILDREN, we kept coming back to a little tiny girl with crossed eyes. I got some emotional I had to walk out of the hotel room where we were looking at the album and cry...I didn't know why but there was something about this little girl was took our breath away.

Several months later we flew to Minsk Belarus and adopted the little girl Irina. While in country, as we were in the orphanage director's office, she casually mentioned that the little girl (who we named Juliana) had an older sister in another orphanage whose name was Svetlana. OH NO...how could this happen!! Adoption agencies ALWAYS know if there are other siblings as they want them to be adopted together. I thought. I said, "Let's go see her." LONG STORY SHORT...we wound up adopted her too several months later.

In 2007, Juliana (the little girl from Minsk) was smitten with cancer. She, with the help of tons of prayers and great doctors beat the cancer. Now, in 2011 the cancer has returned. She is trying to beat it as I type this story.

There are so many more details, videos and other pieces to this story. Juliana's website can be found at <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/julianacarver>

Six children? I would have never imagined it but if we would have gotten pregnant our children would not be living in a Christian home and Juliana, surely, would not be alive today.

Thank you,
John Carver
www.johnwcarver.com