

Is Being Single a Sin? a Curse? a Blessing? / Church of the Open Bible / 06.05.16

Introduction: About _____% of our adults are single [never married, widowed, separated, divorced]. In our society, it's about 50% of adults.

Is it ok to be single? In the Mosaic Law, God promised none of the people would be _____ if Israel remained faithful to God [Deuteronomy 7.14]. People often took this as a personal promise [Proverbs 18.22] and God did sometimes apply it to individuals.

This promise does not apply to us, because we are under the _____ Covenant, which replaced the Mosaic Covenant when Jesus died on the cross. So our singleness or barrenness is not proof of God's curse.

Even in Israel under the Mosaic Covenant, single people such as the prophet _____, Ruth, and Joseph were valuable to God and for God. Jesus, Anna, John the Baptist, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus all lived as single people in that society.

When we are _____, there will be no marriage as we know it [Matthew 22.29-30]. So singleness is more the future norm than is marriage.

Paul thought celibacy and singleness in our time period could be a _____ from God to empower our ministry [1 Corinthians 7.7-9].

Advantages: Better to be single than _____ to someone you do not like [Proverbs 27.15-16].

_____ taught that some people were called to remain single and celibate for the sake of the kingdom [Matthew 19.10-12].

Paul said the single person can remain concerned about the things of _____, rather than being caught up in the cares of marriage and the world [1 Corinthians 7.32-35]. This is true for ministry, worship, giving. It also is true for personal decisions, such as how much you invest into your career, how to organize the house, how to spend your free time.

Some singles are excited to meet new people, go on _____, or sleep alone.

Disadvantages: Two of the most cited disadvantages are _____ and celibacy.

Even without considering our sex-saturated society, celibacy is difficult, requiring _____ not to act or think lustfully [Matthew 5.28], common sense to avoid temptation [1 Corinthians 6.18], and discipline to do what is necessary to not give in to lust [1 Corinthians 10.13].

Singles can miss having a _____ in life, financial efficiencies, and other aspects of being a couple.

- Church Response:** 1. Include single people in _____ – _____ fellowships.
2. Invite single people to _____ events and holiday activities.
3. Invite single people to sit with you at _____. Talk to them before and after.
4. Form genuine _____ with single people. Get to know them, pray for them, call them once in a while.
5. Provide a _____, especially for single parents. Tell them to call on you if they need help.
6. Avoid making _____ about their lives which are not scripturally accurate.
7. Don't hold out _____ as the only good outcome. Avoid intrusive questions.
8. Don't try to comfort or preach to singles even with good _____, unless they want to talk about it. They might not be receptive while they are hurting.

Attitudes: If you enjoy being single, live the _____ life, give yourself more fully to adventure, growth, and ministry than you could otherwise.

If you suffer being single, learn from how _____ saw God's perspective in his suffering [Philippians 1.12-14] and even learned to rejoice in his situation [Philippians 4.4].

Consider also the examples of Ruth and Joseph, who responded to trials [including _____], by walking with God and trusting God, rather than wallowing in their sorrows or coping in worldly ways.

_____ was an old widow, apparently useless to society, with nothing worldly to live for, but she found a way to serve God and was rewarded with seeing her Messiah-savior as a baby [Luke 2.36-37].

Look to _____ to meet your emotional needs, not your future spouse. Don't expect your spouse to fix you or your life when you have not bothered to get healthy yourself. Take the opportunity you have while single, to get right with God, get healthy in every way, get your life in order, so that when God is ready to bless you, you will be ready to receive it!

Trust in God to bless you [Proverbs 3.5-6]: pray, live right, trust God with the _____. Don't look for some magic dating formula.

Accept that singleness is no more _____ or unbearable than other hardships people face, such as handicaps, poverty, oppression, barrenness, or imprisonment for the gospel. Learn to rejoice and be thankful regardless, remaining dependent on God to empower you [1 Thessalonians 5.16-18].

Pastor Will says the number one cause of divorce is marrying the _____ person. Be patient and wait on God. Focus now on becoming and remaining emotionally, spiritually, intellectually, and physically healthy, on living by faith and obedience, in an intimate relationship with God, and on making the most of whatever life situation you have right now. If you still hope to marry, trust God to bring the right spouse at the right time; be patient. And know all along that you are important to God and to this church, regardless of your marital status.