

## A Biblical View of Singleness

### **I. Three categories of singles:**

- A. Singles who have never married.
- B. Singles who have married but whose partner has died.
- C. Singles who are married but separated or divorced.

### **II. Categories of never married singles:**

- A. Sincere Servant Singles - Singles by choice.
  - 1. Choose singleness as a lifestyle to increase the scope of their influence for Christ.
  - 2. Those who Jesus refers to in Matthew 19 and who Paul is talking about in I Corinthians 7.
- B. Social Situation Singles - Single by circumstance.
  - 1. Caring for sick/invalid parents.
  - 2. Small hometown with little or no opportunity.
  - 3. Small clique of the same sex and thus interact little with those of the opposite sex.
  - 4. Extreme doctrine of fatalism and thus skeptical that it will ever happen.
  - 5. Lack of self confidence/self-esteem and therefore unsure of self with others.
  - 6. Shy/bashful and tending toward being a loner.
  - 7. Perfectionistic (unrealistic standards) - no one is good enough.
  - 8. Physical or emotional handicap which presents barriers.
  - 9. Afraid of sex and parenthood.
  - 10. Afraid of imperfect marriage and divorce.
- C. Self-Centered Secular Singles - Singles by selfish desire.
  - 1. Focus on personal fulfillment.
  - 2. Focus on their own life.
  - 3. Despise whatever competes for their time, space, and pleasure (e.g., a husband, a wife, a baby, a home and its responsibilities.)
  - 4. Worship of independence.

Jesus said:

Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. For even the Son of man did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many. - *Mark 10:42-45.*

### **III. A Defense of Singleness.**

- A. Attitude problems:
  - Improper attitudes toward singles.
    - 1. Criticism - singleness is wrong.
    - 2. Contempt - singleness is unworthy.
    - 3. Suspicion - singleness is strange and unnatural.

4. Fear - singleness is mysterious.

Improper attitudes of singles.

1. Frustration - I'm behind schedule.
2. Self-Pity - I'm undesirable.
3. Selfishness - I'm not interested.

B. Singles in the Bible who made a difference:

*Old Testament*

Joseph  
Dinah  
Isaac  
Miriam  
Naomi  
Elijah & Elisha  
Jeremiah  
Daniel

*New Testament*

Anna  
Paul  
Jesus  
John the Baptist  
possibly Mary, Martha

C. Singleness defended by Jesus: Matthew 19: 9-12.

Singleness is a noble estate.

D. Singleness defended by Paul: I Corinthians 7:7-8; 25-35.

Singleness is a valuable estate.

Some considerations:

1. If two people are passionate toward one another they should separate or marry rather than sweat out singleness or commit sexual immorality.
2. Paul's defense of singleness carries with it the understanding that the single person will be involved in some form of ministry (the Lord's affairs) whether public or private, professional or laity.

Conclusions:

1. Singleness is a noble estate, defended by Jesus/Paul.
2. Important contributions have been made by singles in both the Old Testament and the New Testament eras.
3. Attitudes toward singles, e.g., criticism, suspicion, fear, should be viewed as improper, and dealt with accordingly.
4. Attitudes of singles such as frustration, self pity, and selfishness should be viewed as improper, and dealt with accordingly.
5. Singleness allows for narrowing of purpose and responsibility/marriage broadens purpose and responsibility.

Questions to ask...

1. What am I doing to maximize the strengths of my singleness?
2. What are my life goals?
3. If I want to be married, what am I doing to be the right person in order for God to provide the right partner? Is there something God would have me change in my approach to the issue?
4. How would I respond if it began to appear that God's will was for me to remain single for life? Am I serious about my commitment to His will no matter what?