

Singleness

The world expects all people to pair off, and considers singleness as abnormal. Too often, the church is guilty of a 'couples-only' mentality which sees singleness as a malady requiring treatment, a condition that needs a remedy. But the Bible definitely views singleness in a different light. What is the Bible's view on singleness?

1) The Bible exalts marriage as good (Hebrews 13:4; Proverbs 18:22). The Bible also exalts singleness as good (I Cor 7:7-8). In certain cases, such as Paul's, singleness is preferable to marriage (I Cor 7:7).

2) Marriage is not the final destiny of any human (Mark 12:25) Singleness will not be a disadvantage in eternity, nor marriage an advantage.

3) Jesus was himself single, yet perfect.

Objection: Didn't God did pronounce man without Eve as 'not good' (Genesis 2:18)?

Answer: this does not have to refer to marriage-companionship. It can refer to companionship in general. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)

While God has decided that some will be single, that does not mean that they must be solitary.

4) Singleness occurs in five ways:

- 1) Unmarried (never previously married)
- 2) Never married through God's design (Matthew 19:12)
- 3) Never married by choice (Matthew 19:12; 1 Cor 9:5)
- 4) Divorced
- 5) Widowed

5) In the first case, we must always keep in mind that God is sovereign over who gets married and who doesn't (Mk 10:9).

6) In the second, we recognise that God gifts some with the ability to go without sexual fulfilment, or to have greater than average self-restraint, so as to focus on wholeheartedly serving God. (I Cor 7:7-9, Matthew 19:11-12).

7) In the third case, singleness can be an opportunity for single-minded ministry (not guilt-tripped into over-exhaustive ministry) (I Cor 7:32-36). Those who make this choice are reminded by Christ that what we give up for the kingdom is repaid to us. (Mark 10:29-30).

When single, you must guard your heart on two fronts:

- 1) Sexual temptation. There is a strong temptation in our world to seek sexual fulfilment outside of marriage.
- 2) Loneliness. Seeing others who are married or paired off can cause a deep longing for that yourself. It is not wrong to desire companionship, but beware of it becoming an idol which crowds out Christ. Remember His promises to not allow your testing to be greater than you can bear, and that His grace will be sufficient. Trust Him to meet all your needs and rest in Him.