

GOD'S WORD TO THE UNMARRIED

Single, Sanctified & Sold-Out for Christ: 1 Corinthians 7:32-35

The 2014 U.S. Census estimates that more than half of Americans (54%) between the ages of 18 to 49 are single. If we look at the demographics of our own church, we have a significant number of single adults represented in our congregation. Being single in Christ is one of the greatest blessings a believer could ever enjoy outside of his or her salvation. Every single Christian should have this slogan deeply impressed in his or her own heart: *"I am single, sanctified and sold-out for Christ!"* In his first letter to the Corinthian church, the Apostle Paul gives necessary counsel to the single, unmarried believers. As we consider the privilege, pursuit and priority of singleness, we will learn how God's Word prizes biblical singleness as a unique gift and calling from the Lord to be lived out and enjoyed for His glory.

1. *A single Christian is free from* _____.

One of the immense blessings and privileges of singleness is its unique freedom from marital concerns and responsibilities (1 Cor. 7:32-34). A single Christian is spared from the common obligations, cares, problems and troubles of marriage. A married believer has dual and divided concern which is to please the Lord and to please and meet the earthly needs of his spouse and family. Those who are single in Christ have but one singular concern: how to please and honor the Lord. The unmarried believer must then be totally spent for Jesus and the cause of His kingdom so as not to waste and squander this unique and precious season of singleness.

2. *A single Christian must focus on pursuing* _____.

The Apostle Paul also specifies what pleasing the Lord entails for a single believer. Honoring the Lord entails pursuing holiness in both body and spirit (1 Cor. 7:34). The holiness that God demands involves the entire person. Hence, our body and soul must be separate from sin and wholly consecrated unto the Lord. In the pursuit of personal holiness, the single Christians wrestle and battle with certain struggles such as sexual temptations, selfish desires and the feeling of loneliness (1 Cor. 6:18-20; 7:9; 1 Thess. 4:3-7; Phil. 2:3-4). To be single and sanctified in Christ is essentially to be satisfied in Christ!

3. *A single Christian must be fully* _____.

As a believer who is free from marital and concerns and who is focused on pursuing personal holiness, the single Christian's priority must be his or her full and undistracted devotion to the Lord (1 Cor. 7:35). The picture that Paul has in mind is a servant who constantly sits beside the Lord, ready, waiting and willing to serve Him unreservedly at His call and beckon. No one and nothing should stop those who are single in Christ from giving their life, time, energy and resources to serve the Lord and the cause of His gospel (Phil. 1:21; Acts 20:24; 1 Cor. 15:58). Such is the example of our Lord and Savior Jesus who in His earthly life was single, sanctified, satisfied and sold-out for God!
