

- ✍ We've spent considerable time talking about the blueprints of a happy home. It's been good and needed given the situation of culture and the condition of the institution of marriage. But this also raises several questions such as: "Do I have to be married to be happy?, Do I have to have a spouse to be fulfilled?" "Does the verse that says, "It is not good that man should be alone" mean that I'm out of the will of God being single?"
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1. Is singleness a disease that needs to be cured?

- ✓ Singleness is not a disease, crime, social injustice, disability, or anything of the like. In fact, according to the Bible, singleness is a good thing, and, in certain cases a better or preferred thing over marriage. Think with me a second about the famous single people in the Bible: Elijah, Amos, Jeremiah, Jonah, John the Baptist, Barnabas, Paul, and Jesus! Yet we tend to make singleness out to be something not desirable like some kind of condition that we have to fix. We parents push our kids toward marriage as if there is nothing else for them. Actually, if we will make a careful study of the Bible we will see that every parent should be making the case for singleness just as much as being married. God created marriage in a perfect world, but things are far from that now, likewise the institution of marriage and a married life is not always the best way for a person given the times we live in.

2. I would like to make a case for singleness.

- ✓ Paul wrote to a society and culture that did not hold singleness in high regard. Most of that society practiced arranged marriages. Marriage was obligatory in the Jewish culture, if a man did not marry and have children he was referred to as one who had slain his posterity. What Paul says in chapter 7 of 1st Corinthians flew in the face of the culture of that day. 1st Corinthians 7:7; 7:8; 7:26; 7:40, if something is good, it means it has value, so Paul is saying that singleness is valuable.

3. The Value of Singleness:

- 1) Singleness has value because it is a spiritual gift, 1st Corinthians 7:7. We hear of the gifts of prophecy, tongues, service, administration, encouragement, teaching, etc., but what about the gift of singleness? Are not all God's gifts good? We need to be careful here because it isn't just singleness we are referring to but celibacy, many remain unmarried but are definitely not celibate, that is not the single life the Bible calls a gift! Singleness was one the gifts Paul used to bless the New Testament Church. He was mobile (one can move easier than two); he could live on a shoestring; he had no family to slow him down in ministry. Matthew 19:10-12, is not being single for the kingdom of God valuable? "But I want to get married!" Fine!, that is also a gift from God.
 - 2) Singleness streamlines a person to handle the troubles of our day. 1st Corinthians 7:26 "present distress" is a very real thing; persecution of Christians was a very serious thing in that day and on the rise in our day. Persecution is bad enough if it is just directed at you, but if you have a spouse or children it is far worse. Recently Christians were being killed wholesale in places like Sudan, I doubt that they are thinking much about dating and marriage in places like that! Also, the present distress of a world that needs to know Christ, there may be no time for marriage and family. 1st Corinthians 7:28, everybody has trouble, but single people have less, no widowhood, no divorce, no stress of bringing up children. There is also the whole sin factor, it's hard enough being a sinner living with yourself, when you're married with a family your sin effects a lot more people. Marriage does not solve all problems, in fact, it can create problems. You've heard the statistic that married people live longer than single people, it isn't true, it just seems longer! It is true that there are less pressures for singles.
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- 3) Singleness has some advantages considering the shortness of life. The fact is, Jesus could return for His church at any time. Our lives could be over any day because He doesn't promise us tomorrow. A single person is able to be more easily focused on the realities of a short life. A married person has the responsibilities of taking care of their spouse and children and saving for their future. A single person does not have those concerns and can be more easily focused on the Lord's kingdom. 1st Corinthians 7:29, Paul is not contradicting what the Bible teaches about marriage, but he is contradicting the social rules of his day and of ours where we tend to honor marriage above Scripture. Being concerned about nice homes, cars, jobs, clothes, vacations, these can distract us from the urgency of the times we live in. A single person has a much easier time pulling up and moving wherever God would have go. It is much easier for a single to deny himself for the sake of the kingdom and for the sake of others. 1st Corinthians 7:32-35, it is easier to give undistracted devotion to the Lord as a single person. 1st Corinthians 7:29-31, our world is passing away; we have an urgent call to reach our world for the sake of Christ.

We cannot, whether single or married, mourning, or celebrating, wealthy or poor, be distracted or allow ourselves to be misled from our call and our devotion to Christ.
