



INTRODUCTION

Part 4 - Singleness

There are a lot of opinions these days about marriage, family and singleness—opinions that are often contradictory and unhelpful.

In this series, *Family Matters*, we will be looking at various Bible passages to help us understand God's design and plan for some of the most significant relationships we will ever have.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Can you think of an example where you wanted something for yourself, but it wasn't the best that you have it? Why do you think we sometimes want things that aren't the best for us?
2. Do you think marriage is "good" for everyone? Explain your answer.
3. Why do you think our society puts so much pressure on singles to be married? Why is this a problem?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 7:32-35. What do you think Paul is trying to communicate in these verses?
5. What do you think it means to be devoted to the Lord? In what ways can marriage be a distraction from devotion to the Lord? Can our marriages also serve to strengthen our relationship with God? Explain your answer.
6. Read 1 Corinthians 7:33-34 (again) and 1 Peter 2:11. Why is it important that we be holy in both body and spirit?
7. A missionary by the name of Rhena Taylor has written, "Being single has meant that I am free to take risks that I might not take were I a mother or I had a family dependent on me." What do you think she means by this?
8. Read Psalm 37:4 and Psalm 34:10. How can we learn to trust God more with our lives?
9. How do you think the church should treat singles?

APPLICATION

"When are you going to get married?"

We've all witnessed it. We've all heard this question in some form. Maybe you were the one that asked it, but with good intentions in mind. Whether it was directed at you or someone you know, most people have experienced it.

It's difficult to escape the norms that have developed around marriage, and the negativity associated with being single. Because we're "supposed to be" married by a certain age, some people may rush into a marriage when they aren't emotionally, spiritually, or mentally ready. Societal ideals convey that marriage is what makes you whole, fulfilled, and happy. What we may fail to realize is that happiness should not depend on our circumstances. We don't need another person to make us whole. Marriage does not guarantee happiness, and it's not the main goal to achieve in life—it's simply a part of one's existence.

Singleness and marriage are each gifts in and of themselves. Both hold joys and hardships, and one is not better than the other. While one is right for you, it may not be for someone else. Every person has a different path to follow, and no two people have the same journey. In the end, Jesus has a plan for all of us. While your heart may desire certain things, place faith in Him and know that His plan is what's best for you.

KEY VERSES

- 1 Corinthians 7:7-9
- 1 Corinthians 7:32-35
- Psalm 37:4
- Psalm 34:10