

Chapter 9: Happy Being Single

Philippians 4:12-13

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

The apostle Paul's words speak about having an attitude of gratitude and contentment in whatever state of life we find ourselves in. I really believe we can apply these words to the subject of being single.

What You Shouldn't Do When You Are 'Single'

1. Don't focus on being single as a negative! If you focus on what you haven't got, you will start to feel sorry for yourself and you will miss seeing the good things which you do have right now.
2. Don't expect marriage to solve all your problems. Who you are when you are single is who you will be when you are married. Marriage won't change everything, it won't change who you are. Only you, with God's help, can change who you are.
3. Don't look at guys/girls that you meet, as potential and non-potential. Be respectful and friendly to everyone and keep an open mind.
4. Don't be jealous when others find a partner, but rejoice with them. This is what good friends do.

Romans 12:15

Rejoice with those who rejoice; and mourn with those who mourn.

5. Don't isolate yourself! Don't be stuck in your own circle of comfort (friends). Don't compare yourself with others. God has a different plan for all of us.
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7. Don't be in such a hurry to change your circumstances that you rush blindly into a relationship without giving it the necessary consideration. It is better to be single than in a relationship you later regret.

Proverbs 21:9 NIV

Better to live on a corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife (or husband).

Your Questions

Question 1

Is it good for a man/woman to remain single?

Answer 1

1 Corinthians 7:1-2,7

(Verse 1-2)

Now for the matters you wrote about: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman (remain celibate)." But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband ...

(Verse 7)

I wish that all of you were as I am (single). But each of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.

It seems this question was being asked back in the day ... and the answer is simple; it is both good to be married and it's also good to remain single. The question for you is – are you physically able to live all your life without sexual intimacy? If trying to live without it leads you into immorality, then its better that you marry. It seems that to be single or married is a gift, you don't have to try too hard to receive a gift, you either have it or you don't, you're either able or not able.

Question 2

Is masturbation an option for single Christian guys/girls?

Answer 2

There is nothing in the Bible that addresses the subject of masturbation. However the Bible does address the subject of how we use our imagination.

Matthew 5:27-28

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman (man) lustfully has already committed adultery with her (him) in his (her) heart.

To look at someone lustfully requires imagination. And what Jesus is saying here is that we will be held responsible for how we use our imagination. It is my personal opinion that masturbation is ok as long as it does not break the limitations set out for us by this scripture. That means, you can't drop an image of someone that you know into the framework of your imagination, nor can you use pornography. Some people might say 'that's impossible!' If you feel that way, then masturbation is not for you.

Question 3

I'm in my late 30s and not married. What do you think of internet matchmaking services?

Answer 3

Keep your options open but be wary of Internet matchmaking services. If you're set on this option, be careful of sharing personal information – like home and work address – and always meet in public places. Unfortunately, there are predators using these services too, and some of them could be dangerous. It might seem like an easy search you can make from the comfort of your own home, but at some point you will need to meet in person. People on the Internet are rehearsed and on their best behavior. You don't really know what they're like until you meet and see them in different settings and how they interact with other people etc.

On closer observation, some people in their late 30's have turned down expressions of interest from people they know in the real world, because they feel: they're not cool or well dressed enough, or don't earn enough money, etc. Interestingly, the Internet matches might equally fall short of expectations (except you don't know it yet). We must also acknowledge the destructive role of pornography when it comes to setting unrealistic expectations.

Our advice is to give the people you know a chance. Those who married early, married someone who wasn't particularly cool or well dressed, and probably didn't earn a lot of money, but married them anyway because they were confident about the person's character and saw potential. They were prepared to work together on the things that could improve or change. In our opinion, look for someone who has character, potential, flexibility, and is open to change.

Tips for Singles

1. Focus on what you do have now and on building a strong foundation in the following areas:

- Relationship with God and People
- Serving Others
- Journaling and Prayer
- Joyfulness
- Character
- Work/Career
- Finance

Be the best that you can be in these areas, so that you can attract the best partner.

2. Focus on others! This is the right motivation. This is the motivation that God blesses.

James 4:2-3

You desire but you do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

It is not about you and what you can get from a relationship but it's about giving the best that you can give to someone else. So start practicing while you are still single. Be the best, so you can give the best.

3. Like who you are – have a healthy self esteem. Know your creator, know that you are his masterpiece, and know that his work is marvelous – YOU.

Psalms 139:13-14 (NKJV)

For you formed my inward parts; you covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are your works, and that my soul knows full well.

4. Break out of your circle of friends. Have a plan to meet new people, regardless of what age, background, or nationality.

5. Journaling and simple prayer will help you recognize God's will and plan for your life. God's plans for you are good and better than you can imagine. So prepare to receive the plans God has for you.

Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

6. Be dependent on God, not on people. People are not perfect and they can't live up to all your expectations or satisfy all your emotional needs. If you're looking for someone to do that you'll be disappointed and risk scaring them away when they realize there's no way to satisfy you. So turn to God for what you need. His love is perfect and always satisfies.

7. See pornography as an enemy. It has the power to prevent people from entering into a lasting relationship. It does this by providing an instant sexual substitute, and setting unrealistic expectations. In real life, nothing happens instantly, and people are not perfectly staged to meet your desires. In real life, we have to collaborate, negotiate, communicate, and dare I say it, sacrifice. But having someone to share your life with is so fulfilling and enjoyable, it's worth all the effort.

Here are some strategies to fight pornography:

- Recognize you are tempted and set boundaries.
- Find someone you can talk to and who will hold you accountable at a determined frequency.
- Download a program on your phone and computer to filter out any pornographic images.
- Check reviews and ratings on movies before you watch them.
- Keep praying and don't feel condemned if you have moments of weakness. Just get right back to reinforcing your boundaries.

8. Enjoy being 'Single'. In the scheme of a person's whole life, the single part is relatively short. Make the most of it.

Question

What do you enjoy about being single?