

CHRISTIAN SINGLENESS SERIES

PROLOGUE: SUBMISSION TO THE WORD OF GOD
MATTHEW 7:24-27

- I. Need: There are many single people at our church; yet how should one live as a single individual? What is God's view of singleness? Whatever the answer is, it's important that one submits to the Word of God
- II. Introduction:
 - a. Two similar situation
 - b. Two different foundation
 - c. Two totally different results
- III. Lesson: Practice the Word of God so that one's Christian faith survive
 - a. Obeying the Word of God is wise (v.24-25)
 - b. Disobeying the Word of God is foolish (v.26-27)
- IV. Obeying the Word of God is wise (v.24-25)
 - a. Proof
 - V. 24= "Everyone who hears the word of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."
 - i. Note the comparison.
 - 1. Doer of the Word = Wise man
 - 2. Practice the word =Built house on the rock
 - V. 25= "The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock."
 - ii. Situation
 - 1. "The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house;" (v.25a)
 - iii. Result
 - 1. "yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock." (v.25b)
 - 2. Survive all the situation
 - b. Picture: Walter L. who walks upright and is single and is blessed by God.
 - c. Practice: Will you submit to God's Word and practice them in the area of singleness?
- V. Disobeying the Word of God is foolish (v.26-27)
 - a. Proof
 - 26= "But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand."
 - i. Note the comparison.
 - 1. One who does not do the Word = Foolish man
 - 2. Not practice the Word =Built house on the sand
 - V. 27= "The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."
 - ii. Situation

1. “The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house;” (v.27a)
 2. Note: Similar to the earlier scenario
 - iii. Result
 1. “and it fell with a great crash.” (v.27b)
 2. Survive all the situation
- b. Picture: It changes and it warps people if you do not live according to God’s principle
- c. Practice: Ask yourself, are you living a life that is disobedient to the Word of God?

PART II: THE GOODNESS OF BEING SINGLE

- I. Introduction
 - a. Defined: Singleness is the state of an individual in which the person is not in a relationship with anyone that can be defined as marriage, dating or courtship.
 - b. Situation: People today can think being single could not be a good thing.
 - c. Need: The following will attempt to demonstrate that being single is not in of itself a bad thing.
 - d. Being single can also be a good thing.
- II. Goodness of being single
 - a. Singleness allows an individual to have a single mind focus.
 - i. Point: Life is so much simpler when it's just you.
 - ii. Proof: *"but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife,³⁴ and his interests are divided. The woman who is unmarried, and the virgin, is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how she may please her husband."* (1st Corinthians 7:33-34)
 - iii. Explanation
 - 1. One who is married and a Christian has to be concern with pleasing God, and on top of that **verse 33** says one married also is concern with pleasing the spouse as well.
 - 2. In contrast to that, **verse 34** tells us the one who is unmarried and virgin only has a single mind focus to please Christ.
 - iv. Picture: Some people just can't juggle two things, and this ensure that God can allow them focus on God with a singularly focused condition.
 - v. Practice: Your faith has to be more important than even a relationship; if God allows you to be single to allow you to focus on God by having your life so much more simpler, than praise God.
 - b. Singleness is a gift of God
 - i. Point: If you are single, being single is a gift which God gave to you.
 - ii. Proof: *"Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner, and another in that. But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is ^(C)good for them if they remain ^(D)even as I."* (1st Corinthians 7:7-8)
 - iii. Explanation
 - 1. Context is talking about believers.
 - 2. Note the above that Paul in **verse 8** that it's good to remain unmarried.
 - 3. Note that in **verse 7**, each individual has a gift from God concerning this matter of being single or married.
 - 4. **Verse 7** implies that being single is also a gift from God!

iv. Practice

1. What do you understand a gift to be? Describe it.
2. What is the New Testament understanding of gift?
 - a. Not only for yourself, but to serve others.
 - b. That's Paul's theme throughout the entire epistle to the Corinthians!
3. Which means that being single for a Christian is not about living for yourself, but still for others.
4. In other words, for the Christian, being "single" is not an pass to live like a wreck and apart from being in a community. It's not about living a life lonely and becoming weird. Use your singleness as a gift from God to bless others!
5. It also means that those in the church who are married or in a relationship don't view a single Christian as weird or strange, but as a gift to the Church!

c. For the kingdom of God

- i. Proof: *"The disciples said to Him, "If the relationship of the man with his wife is like this, it is better not to marry." ¹¹But He said to them, "^(J)Not all men can accept this statement, but ^(K)only those to whom it has been given. ¹²"For there are eunuchs who were born that way from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men; and there are also eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to accept this, let him accept it."* (Matthew 19:10-12)

ii. Explanation

1. Background to this section of Scripture is Jesus teaching about divorce.
2. His disciples reacted and realize that given the strictness of the Law, it is better not to marry" (v.10b)
3. Jesus then said in **verse 11** that not everyone can accept this statement, and acknowledge that there are some who for the sake of the kingdom of God (v.12)

iii. Picture:

1. There is a man who conducts music at Grace Community Church, and he has chosen to be single!

iv. Practice

1. Not everyone could accept this teaching, but it is true that for the good of the kingdom of God, that one chooses singleness. Because of the good that the one pursue for God's kingdom, this singleness devoted to the Lord is good!

d. Being single for the Gospel's sake

i. Proof:

1. *"Do we not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles and the ^(B)brothers of the Lord and ^(C)Cephas?"* (1 Corinthians 9:5)

2. “But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is ^(A)good for them if they remain ^(B)even as I.” (1 Corinthians 7:8)
3. “But I have ^(A)used none of these things And I am not writing these things so that it will be done so in my case; for it would be better for me to die than have any man make ^(B)my boast an empty one. ¹⁶For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for ^(C)I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach ^(D)the gospel.” (1 Corinthians 9:15-16)

ii. Explanation

1. Paul had a right to marry, among other things (1 Corinthians 9:5)
2. Yet he choose not to be married (1 Corinthians 7:8), and even called it a good thing!
3. He choose not to take advantage of his right of being married (1 Corinthians 9:15), because of the compulsion to preach the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:16)

iii. Picture:

1. So many single women entering missions today, even more than single men!

iv. Practice

1. This is singleness for a purpose.
2. If there are so many going to hell, and you can do something about it, and it cause you to be single, will you count that the gospel’s all worth it?

e. To spare any future spouse from your sin

i. Proof: (Read 1 Samuel 25:2-38)

ii. Explanation

1. Foolish and evil in his dealing (v.3, 10-11)
2. NOTE: Even his name means foolish!
3. Ruin was heading towards Nabal (v.13), and it was explained why in v. 16
4. You want to be a Nabal in someone’s else’s lives

iii. Practice

1. Resort in your hearts to meditate on the truth that Christ was single, and singleness is not a bad thing.
2. Go to Jesus for your comfort, He is your high priest (Hebrews 2:17)

f. Jesus was also single

i. Explanation

1. Jesus was perfect and without sin
2. Yet, he was single!
3. Therefore, singleness can not be a bad thing
4. We ourselves have met people and said, “Man I feel sorry for his or her spouse, that person is better off single!”

ii. Practice

1. Consider what areas the Lord might be working in your life
 2. Be sanctified, grow in Christ and God's wisdom!
- g. Being single in light of God's Sovereignty
- i. Proof: *"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose"* (**Romans 8:28**)
 - ii. Explanation
 1. God is in control of all circumstances
 2. Since He is in control of all circumstances, He causes all things, including the season of singleness, to work together for the good of those who love God.
 - iii. Practice
 1. That means accepting that God is allowing you to be single for one's good!
 2. This should be the hope one holds on to, and have the peace that comes from God by trusting in Him and what He is doing.
 3. It also calls us to grow more in God's grace.
 4. Yet, God's sovereignty must also be balanced with human responsibility (**1 Corinthians 7:17**)
 5. Therefore, the next section will consider our responsibility of what God wants from us in our singleness.

PART III: CONTENTMENT IN BEING SINGLE

- I. The issue of loneliness today
 - a. It is an issue with us today.
 - b. Loneliness as a problem in general
 - i. Proof: From a BBC article: *“Across all ages one in 10 people in the UK often feel lonely, the Mental Health Foundation has found, a state which can impact upon one's physical health. The charity highlights the decline of community and a growing focus on work.”*¹
 - c. Loneliness is a problem with the old
 - i. Proof: From a BBC article: *“The changing nature of the family, with fewer children who themselves often move away, has increased the prospect of elderly isolation. This has also become more likely as a result of longer life expectancies, the report noted. But neighbourhoods have also changed, with the local services such as post offices that tended to form the heart of old communities on the decline.”*²
 - d. Loneliness is a problem across gender lines
 - i. Proof: Not just the perception of men's problem, it's also true for women: *“The report also found gender differences, with more women than men reporting loneliness, and more likely to feel depressed as a result. It highlighted the fact that the proportion of people living alone, both male and female, had doubled between 1972 and 2008.”*³
 - e. Loneliness is perhaps even more of a problem with the young
 - i. Proof: *“The Lonely Society report described the generational differences uncovered in its survey as “striking”. Nearly 60% of those aged between 18 to 34 questioned spoke of feeling lonely often or sometimes, compared to 35% of those aged over 55.”*⁴
 - f. An Internet world has also fueled problems
 - i. Proof: From a BBC article: *“New technology meanwhile may be both a boon and a burden, the report suggested... But there are also concerns that technology is being used as a replacement for genuine human interaction. Nearly a third of young people questioned for the report said they spent too much time communicating with friends and families online when they should see them in person. Whether this has any genuine biological impact is unclear, but it has been suggested that physical presence is needed for the hormone oxytocin to be released - believed to be*

¹ Clare Murphy, “Young More Lonely than the Old,” BBC News, May 25, 2010. From <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/8701763.stm>.

² Clare Murphy, “Young More Lonely than the Old,” BBC News, May 25, 2010. From <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/8701763.stm>.

³ Clare Murphy, “Young More Lonely than the Old,” BBC News, May 25, 2010. From <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/8701763.stm>.

⁴ Clare Murphy, “Young More Lonely than the Old,” BBC News, May 25, 2010. From <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/8701763.stm>.

*the chemical process underpinning the relationship between social contact and healthy hearts. Sarah Brennan, head of the charity YoungMinds, said: "The young people we work with tell us that talking to hundreds of people on social networks is not like having a real relationship and when they are using these sites they are often alone in their bedrooms. "Loneliness is a big problem which we need to start to tackle. In the last few years our communities have broken down and become atomised. We need to foster these relationships again and invest in our young people's wellbeing so that they have somewhere to go or to turn to when they are feeling lonely."*⁵

- g. Conclusion: While realizing the limitation of surveys and psychological studies, and acknowledging that this study is based on a British population, yet given the parallel to American society it is striking and shows the need to address the issue of loneliness and being content in singleness.

II. Principle 1: Finding ultimate joy in the LORD

a. Proof:

- i. God is a believer's exceeding joy: *"Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy; And upon the lyre I shall praise You, O God, my God."* (Psalm 43:4)
- ii. The joy of the LORD is what God does
 1. As part of the fruit of the Spirit: *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness"* (Galatians 5:22)

iii. It's a command to find joy in the LORD:

1. Note: There is a sense where finding joy in the LORD is also a human responsibility.
2. *"Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous ones; And shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart."* (Psalm 32:11)
 - a. Context is a psalm that talks about the blessing of being forgiven!
 - b. In other words, the joy experience in the Lord is in the context of being forgiven one's sin.
3. *"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!"* (Philippians 4:4)
 - a. This was stated right after **verse 3**, which talks about those who struggle in the cause of the Gospel.
 - b. Clearly, in the midst of struggle, a believer is commanded to find joy in the LORD!

- b. Picture: It is a thing that I know Walter (Andrew's friend) lives out.

- c. Practice: How do we get joy in the LORD?

⁵ Clare Murphy, "Young More Lonely than the Old," BBC News, May 25, 2010. From <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/8701763.stm>.

- i. Being in His presence: *“You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.”* (Psalm 16:11)
- ii. Being in His Word: *“Your words were found and I ate them, and Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts.”* (Jeremiah 15:16)
- iii. If you lovingly obey His commandments: *“If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. ¹¹”* *“These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.”* (John 15:10-11)

III. Principle 2: Pursue Holiness

a. Explanation:

- i. This is building upon John 15:10-11 earlier above. Obedience to Christ has been revealed to be so *“that your joy may be made full.”*
- ii. God is sovereign over your state of being single, and while His will is multi-faceted, it is true that in some sense, He wants for you to be sanctified in your singleness.

b. Proof:

- i. He works all things according to His purpose: *“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose”* (Romans 8:28)
 - 1. Note that all things are caused by God *“to work together for good”*
 - 2. This good is defined *“according to His purpose”*
- ii. His purpose follows the counsel of His will: *“also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,”* (Ephesians 1:11)
- iii. His will include your sanctification: *“For this is the will of God, your sanctification...”* (1 Thessalonians 4:3)

c. Picture: (A classmate in Seminary, growing in being more Christ-like in being single and wanting to go to missions to Afghanistan; God used the season of singleness to grow Him deeply)

d. Practice: Put off self, put on Christ likeness

- i. Ask the question, “Do I truly believe God’s promise that pursuing holiness leads to full joy?”
- ii. Ask the question: “What is God teaching me right now in my life?”
- iii. Actively read, study, meditate on the Scriptures, ask others, plan and work on those areas one need to be sanctified in.

IV. Principle 3: Fellowship with the Body of Christ

a. Explanation: Even during singleness, God never intended believers to be alone. Actively fellowshiping with the body of Christ is important for singles.

- b. Proof:
- i. The church is not just one member, but many: *“For the body is not one member, but many.”* (1 Corinthians 12:14)
 - ii. Singles are important to the church
 1. Singles often seem as weaker or less honorable members, but this means the need for conscious honor for the less “honorable” members.
 2. This is the principle taught by Paul: *“On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; ²³and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, ²⁴whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, ²⁵so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.”* (1 Corinthians 12:22-26)
 - iii. You are part of the family (household) of God: *“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household...”* (Ephesians 2:19)
- c. Picture: (The example of Walter and his decision of what would be a good girlfriend)
- d. Practice:
- i. For singles
 1. If you are a member of the body of Christ, live up truly to being a member of the church, rather than date it
 2. If you are part of God’s family, treat those at church like your family members: *“Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers, ²the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity.”* (1st Timothy 5:1-2)
 3. Make sure you make your primary friends in the church, rather than be driven to make friends with the world, for *“do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility towards God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”* (James 4:4)
 4. Practice these steps on being content in singleness in the context of the church
 - a. Keep yourself accountable to others
 - b. Strive towards Godliness with other singles
 - c. Share with others God’s faithfulness in your singleness and encourage others to being godly contentment in singleness

ii. For couples:

1. See singles as important in the church, and not just a group who are means to an end.
2. Incorporate singles in your ministry and fellowship with them as well!
3. Realize how important that for some, church is all that some people have in terms of a community and family; this should mean more love and compassion on your part.
4. Share with them the materials here on being content.

PART IV: GOD'S REQUIREMENT FOR SINGLES

- I. Introduction
 - a. It is important to note that some of God's requirements for singles are also applicable to those who are no longer single.
 - b. In this section, some of God's general requirement that is applicable to all will be considered especially when they are relevant to those who are single.
- II. Requirement #1: Please the Lord
 - a. Pleasing the Lord is an actual requirement that the Bible mentioned singles are obligated to do: "*But I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord*" (1st Corinthians 7:32)
 - i. In the Greek, the verb "*please*" is subjunctive which means that it is an issue of the will and human volition.
 - ii. Believers who are unmarried are to live a life of trying to figure out how he or she may please the Lord.
 - iii. This requirement is indeed radical: For to live a life to please the Lord means changing one's entire life's goal and purpose!
 - b. Pleasing the Lord is required in everything we do

"so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;" (Colossians 1:10)

 - i. Pleasing the Lord is all encompassing: "*, to please Him in all respects*"
 - ii. What does pleasing the Lord mean? It means "*that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord*"
 - c. How does one please the Lord?

Principle: One can please the Lord, by doing what pleases Him!

 - i. Faith is required

"And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6)

 1. The necessity of faith in pleasing God: "*And without faith it is impossible to please Him,*"
 2. What is the content of a faith that is pleasing to God?
 - a. A faith that believes that the God of the Bible exists: the believer "*must believe that He is*"
 - b. A faith that believes that God is personal, responsive and just: "*He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.*"
 - c. The result: It is a faith that leads one to become one "*who comes to God*"
 - ii. Experiencing the results of faith (fruit) in your moral and spiritual lives

“so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;” (Colossians 1:10)

1. Note that this verse talks about believers are *“to please Him in all respects”*
2. This includes *“bearing fruit in every good work”*

iii. Gaining more knowledge of God

“so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;” (Colossians 1:10)

1. Note that this verse talks about believers are *“to please Him in all respects”*
2. This includes *“increasing in the knowledge of God”*

iv. Musical praise of God

“I will praise the name of God with song

And magnify Him with thanksgiving.

³¹And it will please the LORD better than an ox

Or a young bull with horns and hoofs.” (Psalm 69:30-31)

1. God gave very detailed requirements of sacrifices in the Old Testament because He cared how one were to please Him with sacrifices.
2. Yet, greater than sacrifices as a way of pleasing the LORD, is the musical praise of God: *“with song”*
3. This includes:
 - a. Praising God: *“I will praise the name of God”*
 - b. Thanking God: *“magnify Him with thanksgiving”*

v. Sharing the Gospel, God’s Way

“For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.” (1st Corinthians 1:21)

1. Note that there is something in which *“God was well-pleased”*
2. What can well-pleased God is the Gospel *“preached to save those who believe.”*
3. It well-pleased God that the Gospel is preach His way, even if it seems foolish to the world: *“God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached”*

d. What help can I get for me to be able to please the LORD?

- i. *“Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.” (Philippians 2:12-13)*

1. It is true that we are responsible for our obedience in our Christian faith: *Therefore, my dear friends, as you have*

always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,”

2. It is also true that this is because of God’s working within us that we can do anything! Note that *“it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.”*
3. The word which the NASB translate as “purpose” is best understood according to the Greek as “pleasure”
4. Thus, it God’s own pleasure, which makes us able to please Him!
5. In other words God will make sure that you will be able to live a life to please Him!
6. Take these steps:
 - a. Make sure you are saved first: note that this is only for those who have “salvation” (see **verse 12**)
 - b. Believe in His promises found in these two verses
 - c. Then go out and do the work as if God is working through you (because really, God is working in you!)

III. Requirement #2: Serve the Lord

a. NOTE: This is another requirement that God specifically spelled out for singles.

b. IS IT TRUE SINGLES HAVE TO SERVE THE LORD?

i. *“¹²For there are eunuchs who were born that way from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men; and there are also eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to accept this, let him accept it.”* (**Matthew 19:12**)

1. Explanation

- a. Eunuchs are those who are not married.
- b. Jesus here in this section is teaching on marriage (**v.11**)
- c. In contrast to marriage, he talks about those who are not married in this verse.
- d. He specifically mentioned that there are those who are eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

2. Application

- a. If you are unmarried, you might be one of three possible eunuchs
- b. Be the one who is serving the LORD.

3. Picture

Do you know of Walter and what he has done in his life?

ii. *“But I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord”* (**1st Corinthians 7:32**)

1. Explanation

- a. According to this verse, an unmarried individual can be “*concerned about the things of the LORD*”
- b. The “*things of the LORD*” are specifically the things which “*may please the LORD*”
- c. Serving God are among the things which will please the LORD.

2. Application

- a. Do you serve the LORD as one who is single?
- b. Do you plan to serve the LORD not in a way that pleases you, but pleases the LORD instead?

c. HOW DO YOU SERVE THE LORD?

i. Each one of you have a spiritual gift!

1. Proof

- a. “*But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.*” (1st Corinthians 12:7)
- b. “*As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*” (1 Peter 4:10)

i. Explanation

- 1. According to this verse, each believer has receive a spiritual gift to serve “*one another*”
- 2. Note that this verse says that each one has “*a special gift*”
- 3. This gift is to be used, or “*employ*” in serving one another!
- 4. Your spiritual gift is one of the manifold grace of God.
- 5. This verse also tells us to use one’s gift as good stewards of this grace of God

ii. Practice

- 1. What is your spiritual gift? Do you know it?
- 2. If you do not know what your spiritual gift is, do you make any serious attempt to find out what this grace of God is?
- 3. You have an obligation as good stewards to serve the LORD fully and wisely.

2. Serve the LORD with zeal

- a. Proof: “*Not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*” (Romans 12:11)

i. Explanation

1. One should not be “*lagging behind in diligence*”
2. Christian singles (and non-singles) are to be “*fervent in spirit*”!
3. This is the way you are to serve the Lord!

b. Application

- i. Serve whole-heartedly the LORD as taught in **Joshua 22:5**!
- ii. Apply your entire being to what you do for the LORD!

c. Picture

(Victor and Wendy before they were married)

ii. Motives

1. Serve in light of what great things God has done for you

a. Proof:

“*Only fear the LORD and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you.*” (1st **Samuel 12:24**)

Explanation

1. Samuel here tells Israel about serving the LORD
2. One ought to serve the Lord in truth and zealously (“*all your heart*”)
3. The motive ought to be in light of what great things God has done.

b. Practice

- i. What great thing has God done in your life?
- ii. How does that reflect in your life of serving God?

2. Serve because Jesus our Lord and Savior is a servant

a. Proof: “*For even the Son of Man ^(A) did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.*” (**Mark 10:45**)

b. Practice:

- i. Why should you ultimately serve the Lord?
- ii. Who is our ultimate example?
- iii. Do you think of Jesus when you have a hard time serving?

IV. Requirement #3: Self-Control

a. Definition: The ability and the practice of the human will to choose the good and right path, and to order one’s life to the glory of God despite the temptation to do otherwise.

- i. In light of this definition, it is important to note that self-control is necessary in fighting sin, and Christian sanctification!

- b. Establishing the need: According to God's Word, Self-Control is important for singles: *"But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I. But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn with passion."* (1st Corinthians 7:8-9)
- i. Paul would like singles to remain single (v.8)
 - ii. Yet, Paul said that if someone was single and do not have self-control, it turns out that self-control is more important than staying single!
 - iii. Thus, there is an indirect reference in Scripture of singles to the requirement of self-control.
- c. Christians are required to practice self-control
- i. Proof: *"Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness..."* (2 Peter 1:5-6)
 1. Note that the main verb for this is "supply"
 2. The verb "supply" is an imperative; that is, it is a command.
 3. The verse commands us to "supply...self-control"
 4. The manner in which we go about having self-control ought to be "applying all diligence"
 - ii. Practice: Three good question to ask yourself here!
 1. Are you practicing self-control?
 2. Are you seeking this with all diligence?
 3. And if you were to put this into practice with an all out diligence, what does such a plan look like?
 - iii. Picture: What does the lack of self-control were to look like? *"Like a city that is broken into and without walls, is a man who has no control over his spirit."* (Proverbs 25:28)
- d. Christians can live a life of self-controlled
- i. Proof:
 1. *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."* (Galatians 5:22-23)
 - a. Note that one of the things that the Spirit of God is able to do is produce in the believers the fruit of the Spirit.
 - b. Among the items listed of what the fruit of the Spirit means, is self-control! It is what God does in the lives of believers!
 2. *"For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline"* (2 Timothy 1:7)
 - a. Paul in this verse is telling to Timothy that God gives the believers a spirit with a three-fold aspect

- b. Specifically, God has given us a spirit of “discipline”
- c. A Christian’s life of discipline is something given by God!
- d. It is made further possible because of the enablement by God, who gave us also the spirit “of power”!
- ii. Picture: (In light of Proverbs 25:28’s illustration of self-control with walls, I think about the restroom door in my house, how I found out that there was a lock recently! I found out I had the ability to control access now, rather than others!)
- iii. Practice: You can have self-control! This truth should move us! In fact believing this will change your life! Do you believe in the promise of what God’s Word says? Will you trust in God? After trusting in God, will you show that your faith is not dead, by doing the works of God in your life, thereby showing the power of God?
- e. Godly motives for self-control

The issue of self-control is what do we have in our mind when we live our life. Therefore, the motives that fuels us to self-control must be the knowledge of Godly truth (cf. **2 Peter 1:5-6**; note: “knowing” before “self-control”)

i. Making decisions in life, knowing the End Times

1. Proof: “*The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.*” (**1 Peter 4:7**)

- a. First clause of this verse teaches that the end of all things is near.
- b. This truth has ramification (note the “therefore”)
- c. The ramification is that one ought to be “sober spirit”
- d. Some translations for “sober spirit” is “self-control”

2. Practice: Maybe our zeal in the faith and our self-control is gone because we forgot about the end. Our study of end times bears fruit for the practical. Study God’s Word about the end, with a devotional spirit.

3. Picture: Some of the most amazing Christians were able to serve the Lord mightily because they lived in light of the end. Think of the Apostle Paul Himself!

ii. Making decisions in life, knowing it’s profitable for present life

1. Proof: “*On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.*” (**1 Timothy 4:7b-8**)

- a. The first sentence here commands believers to “discipline yourself”
 - b. The first sentence also tells us why: “for the purpose of godliness”
 - c. Verse 8 tells us the benefit of godliness: “but godliness is profitable for all things,”
 - d. While it is also profitable “for the life to come”, the verse also teaches “for the present life”
 - e. What is profitable for the present life is also something that God promises: “since it holds promise”
2. Practice: Here I turn the table on our Bible study back to you: Go through the Bible this week, search the Scriptures, read other Christian authors and ask other believers: What are the Scriptural promises of Godliness as it pertains to the profit of Godliness? Write these down somewhere, and call someone to tell them about how God’s Word spoke to you about His glorious promise that became the fuel to your life of self-control.
- V. Requirement #4: Avoiding sexual immorality
- a. NOTE: This is another requirement that God specifically spelled out for singles.

“But because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband.” (1 Corinthians 7:2)

 1. Apparently, the requirement of avoiding sexual immorality is so serious that it is better to change one’s singleness status to being married rather than fail in this area!
 - b. Prohibition of sexual immorality
 - i. Prohibition of actual physical sexual immorality

“Or ^(A)do you not know that the unrighteous will not ^(B)inherit the kingdom of God? ^(C)Do not be deceived; ^(D)neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor ^[a]effeminate, nor homosexuals,”(1 Corinthians 6:9)

 1. Fornication is the actual physical sexual act between two unmarried individuals.
 2. Those who fornicate will not inherit the kingdom of God.
 - ii. Prohibition of sexually perverse speech

“and there must be no ^(B)filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which ^(C)are not fitting, but rather ^(D)giving of thanks.” (Ephesians 5:4)

 1. Believers are not to have filthy language.
 2. Sexual jokes are categorically prohibited under the category of “silly talk, coarse jesting”
 - iii. Prohibition of sexually immoral thoughts

“You have heard that it was said, ^(B)YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY’; ²⁸but I say to you that everyone who

looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matthew 5:27-28)

1. One has already committed sexual sins by lusting.
2. Lusts involves the mind.

c. The seriousness of sexual immorality.

Note: God provides grave warning in the Bible against sexual immorality.

i. Sexual sins are sins against the body.

1. *“Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.” (1 Corinthians 6:18)*

- a. Sexual sins are against one’s own body.
- b. Is there no wonder sexual sins has physical consequences?
 - i. Fast aging.
 - ii. Sexually Transmitted Disease

ii. God’s judgment of death.

“Nor let us act immorally, as ^(D)some of them did, and ^(E)twenty-three thousand fell in one day.” (1 Corinthians 10:8)

- a. The 23,00 deaths is referring to the various sins (including sexual) reported in **Numbers 25**.
- b. God can bring judgment of sexual sins unto death.

iii. Eternal separation from God

1. *“Or ^(A)do you not know that the unrighteous will not ^(B)inherit the kingdom of God? ^(C)Do not be deceived; ^(D)neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor ^[a]effeminate, nor homosexuals,”(1 Corinthians 6:9)*

- a. Note: Fornicators, adulterers, effeminate and homosexuals.
 - b. This probably the most scariest one.
2. *“But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in ^(B)the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the ^(C)second death.” (Revelation 21:8)*

- a. “Immorals” often times in Biblical Greek refer to those who are sexually immoral.

d. How do you remain pure?

i. Flee/run-away

- *“Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.” (1 Corinthians 6:18)*
- Practice:
 - The wisest thing when faced with is to just run away from it.
 - When tempted, start moving, otherwise you are dead.

ii. Fear the Lord

1. Fearing the Lord as a motivation not to sin is a legitimate response by Christians.
 2. Or why would Paul say: “*Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.*” (1 Corinthians 6:18)?
 3. Practice:
 - a. Meditate on the Word, and it’s consequences of sin.
 - b. Pray that God will remind you the fear of the Lord in this area.
- iii. Meditate on the Gospel
- “For ^(W)you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in ^(X)your body.” (1 Corinthians 6:20)
- a. Context Paul says this is addressing the topic of sexual immorality.
 - b. Practice
 - i. The truth of God to meditate on: “*you have been bought with a price*”
 - ii. Reminded of the gospel , should stir you to “*glorify God with your body*”
- iv. Walk by the Spirit
- “But I say, ^(A)walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out ^(B)the desire of the flesh.” (Galatians 5:16)
 - Practice:
 - Abiding in the Spirit, communing with God.
 - The more you work on your relationship with God, the more your temptation “*will not carry out the desire of the flesh*”.
 - The fruit of the Spirit requires one practice this with others, and thus, walking in the Spirit requires one to be fellowshiping with believers, and serving the Church!
- v. Practice self-control
1. Sexual sins are sins that occur because of the sin of lack of self-control.
 2. Therefore, work on self-control in the area of the Christian life (see Requirement #3 above).
- vi. Be in the Word of God
1. God’s Word is able to change people.
 2. Question to ask yourself: Are you in the Word of God regularly?
 3. Next week will be on how the Word of God can help us!

God's 7 Step Purity Program for Singles

Psalm 119:9-16

Need: What does God's Word has to say about how a young man is to be kept pure in this day and age?

Purpose: Be deep in God's Word, so that it will keep you pure!

- I. Summary of paragraph (v.9)
*⁹How can a young man keep his way pure?
By ^(A)keeping it according to Your word.*
 - a. Obey God's Word!
- II. Go to God's Word in order to seek God which will cause you to not desire immorality (v.10)
 - a. Point: When you desire to seek God, you will not want to seek immorality
 - b. Proof:
*¹⁰With ^(B)all my heart I have sought You;
Do not let me ^(C)wander from Your commandments.*
 - i. The first line is a declaration the fact that the psalmist is seeking God: "*¹⁰With ^(B)all my heart I have sought You*"
 - ii. The next line explains the implication in seeking God means in terms of purity: *Do not let me ^(C)wander from Your commandments.*
 1. Note that the requests to God that the Psalmist do not wander from God's commandments!
 1. This wandering is a moral wandering and not an accidental wandering.
 2. Wandering away is dangerous: Every big fall took thousands of steps to get there.
 2. It leads to a prayer life directed to God petitioning that one be faithful to God's commandments.
 - c. Practice: When you struggle with sexual purity, what do you seek more: God or sin? Do you realize you need to seek God more than sin? How do you so? Is the Word of God part of your plan?
- III. Memorize God's Word in order not to sin against God (v.11)
 - a. Point: Verse memories are powerful, as this verse teaches.
 - b. Proof:
*¹¹Your word I have ^(D)treasured in my heart,
That I may not sin against You.*
 - i. The first line is a declaration the fact that the psalmist is committed to memorizing God's Word: "*¹⁰With ^(B)all my heart I have sought You*"
 1. The heart is where sins begin (Matthew 12:34)
 2. The word for "treasure" is Beth, literally "house"
 - ii. Purpose of verse memorizing is described line two: *That I may not sin against You.*

- c. Practice:
 - i. Do you commit verses to memory that speak to your specific sins?
 - ii. Do you know what verses addresses your problem with purity? If not, who can you find out from?
 - iii. Who can you go to, to keep you accountable to memorize Scripture?
- IV. Ask God to teach you about His statutes (v.12)
- a. Point: Encountering God's Word is encountering God Himself, and Him teaching you is a powerful motivation for you to be pure.
 - b. Proof:
 - ^{I2}*Blessed are You, O LORD;*
 - ^(E)*Teach me Your statutes.*
 - i. This is an address towards God to "teach" him God's statutes
 - ii. Purpose of verse memorizing is described line two: *That I may not sin against You.*
 - c. Practice:
 - i. Asking God to personally teach you His laws means that every Bible study is an encounter with God Himself. Know this fact!
 - ii. Does your heart, attitude and mind reflect the truth you are meeting God and God is teaching you, when you read the Scriptures?
- V. Telling God's requirement from His Word to others (v.13)
- a. Point: Telling others God's requirement from His Word edifies us for our own sanctification.
 - b. Proof:
 - "With my lips I have ^(F)told of all the ^(G)ordinances of Your mouth."*
 - i. Note that the psalmist is telling others practically "*with my lips*"
 - ii. The ordinance the psalmist tells others originates from God's own mouth!
 - c. Practice:
 - i. Depth: Are you getting deep enough in God's Word where you can share God's requirements with others?
 - 1. If not, do you pursue further depth with God's Word via one's own Bible devotion, Sunday School, small group bible studies, Bible institutes, commentaries, etc?
 - ii. Stewardship: With the ordinances of God's Word that you do know, do you share them with others?
- VI. Value the importance of living out by God's Word (v.14)
- a. Point: The Word of God will make a difference in your life if you value living according to God's precept.
 - b. Proof:
 - "I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies,
As much as in all riches."*
 - i. When one values the way of God's Word, one can rejoice: "*I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies*"
 - ii. The value placed on God's precept for living life is equal if not more in value than all the riches.

- c. Practice:
 - i. What do you value the most in life?
 - ii. Pray to God that God will make you value the way of His Word more.
 - iii. Write down a list of things right now you can rejoice to God about the way of life that His Word prescribe.
- VII. Meditate on God's Word (v.15)
- a. Point: The Word of God will make a difference in your life in the area of purity if you rid all distraction and give sole focus and contemplation on God's requirement.
 - b. Proof:

*"I will ^(D)meditate on Your precepts
And regard ^(D)Your ways."*

 - i. Meditate on God's requirements leads the Psalmist to consider God's ways more carefully: "*And regard ^(D)Your ways.*"
 - c. Practice:
 - i. Do you meditate on God's requirements?
 - ii. When was the last time you meditated on God's Word?
 - iii. In your reading of Scripture, do you slow down to set time to meditate on God's Word?
- VIII. Delight in God's Word (v.16)
- a. Point: Obeying God's Word and walking a path of purity is not a chore when one delight in God's Word!
 - b. Proof:

*"I shall ^(K)delight in Your statutes;
I shall ^(L)not forget Your word."*

 - i. When you delight in God's statutes, one does not even forget God's requirement!
 - c. Practice:
 - i. How do you find delight in God's Word? By going to it more and more!
 - ii. The more you taste God's Word, the more you would want it for your life!

Special singleness problem:

- I. I'm discouraged with fighting sexual immorality
 - a. If you are a Christian, it is God's will to sanctify you. Therefore, trust in God's sovereignty
 - i. *"For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality"* (1 Thessalonians 4:3)
 - b. We are predestined to be blameless and Holy! Therefore, go on your Christian life and be holy!
 - i. *"just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love"* (Ephesians 1:4)
 1. This means that God before time has determined you will be holy.
 2. Knowing this, what's left is that we go and be pure before the Lord, and the strength we have must be acknowledged as coming from God.
 - c. However, if you struggle with sexual immorality, make sure you are a believer!
 - i. *"Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you--unless indeed you fail the test?"* (2 Corinthians 13:5)
 1. The book of 1 John provides a good test.
 2. Practical questions to ask:
 - a. Do you trust in Jesus as the Savior of your life from sins?
 - b. Have you trust in Jesus as the Lord of your life?
 - c. Do you understand that saving faith means an obedient faith?
 - d. Is there any fruit of change in your life?
 - d. God never let you go beyond what you can handle. Therefore, you can handle what you are going through.
 - i. *"No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it."* (1 Corinthians 10:13)
 1. Others have faced the same temptation.
 2. Others have faced the same temptation and not failed.
 3. God is faithful and will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you can not handle.
 4. You are able to endure it.
 - e. Going through the Word of God
 - i. ¹¹*Your word I have ^(D)treasured in my heart,
That I may not sin against You.* (Psalm 119:11)
 - f. Fellowship
 - i. Seek the spiritual encouragement of other believers.

- ii. Have other believers keep you accountable.
- II. I want to be married and I'm not with someone!
- III. Jealousy of others because they are married