

# Single Adult

*From BJ McMichael, Family Minister*

*With Kevin Lombard, Burluson Church of Christ Family Minister*

Douglas Fagerstrom, in the Baker Handbook of Single Adult Ministry, says, “America is changing. The singles phenomenon is a large part of this change. The statistic of over 70 million single adults is staggering, as it has many implications for the American culture.” He also notes that in the near future, more than half of adults will spend a significant amount of time as either divorcees or widows. When you add in the average age of marriage shifting back to 26 and 28 for women and men, respectively, you can see that America has far more single adults than ever before.

Singleness does offer unique challenges. Regardless of the U.S. divorce rates and young adults marrying later, the reality is that about 9 out of 10 people will eventually marry. But when you are the 1 out of 10, you may feel left out. Left out of church, left out of your friendships and maybe even left out of your family. Singles have often lamented to me, “The church is so focused on married couples – what about me?!?”

As a single adult, you may also face unique financial, practical and emotional demands. Single parents in particular have the challenge of handling a two person task - often in the context of pain and betrayal. Because the vast majority of people will (re)marry, meeting someone is a high priority. That raises questions of dealing with sexual pressures and where to find people you would consider dating. Recently an ‘internet dating guru’ said in a national interview, ‘At first, internet dating was only for those on the fringe. Now it is the norm.’ If that is true, how does that impact you and your style? As a Christ-follower, how do you deal with sexual pressure? Here are four principles to keep in mind during your single season of life:

**Principle #1: A Chance To Heal** - While unique challenges exist for the single adult in American culture, unique opportunities also exist. As an unmarried person, you might use this time to focus on healing from past hurts while working on your own areas of weakness.

While many remarry within 2 years after divorce, or jump into a new relationship shortly after a significant relationship ended, maybe some intentional healing time is required first.

**Principle #2: A Chance To Grow** - You may feel the weight of loneliness now like never before. However, is it possible to allow your loneliness to drive you closer to your Creator? Is it possible that God can turn the pain of loneliness, and possibly betrayal, into an incredible time of spiritual, emotional and relational growth? Perhaps there are unique factors in your life that you have never before, or will never again, experience. It’s easier said than done, but why not pray and ask God if there is something He wants to build into you during this time.

**Principle #3: A Chance To Serve Others** - While you certainly don’t want to shortcut your healing and growth by distracting yourself with busyness, serving others will eventually be part of a healthy single season. Singles are some of the busiest people I know, but does your busyness include serving others? Husbands and wives will always have each other, and their children, to focus on first. However, if you are single, the reality is, you do not have a spouse as your first priority. If you have children, of course, they will fall into that spot. But intentional service to others may bring you a new level of growth and development.

**Principle #4: A Chance To Live A Pure Lifestyle That Reflects Christ** - Remaining sexually pure during this single season may be your greatest challenge. However, you are representing Christ in a unique way. Our American culture encourages you to leverage and enjoy single sexuality. However, this way of thinking has helped produce a high divorce rate. Christian marriage is a picture of Jesus Christ and His Church; therefore, single purity prepares you for a God-honoring marriage. You are honoring God’s picture of marriage - as a single. Also, think of this time as an investment in the health of your future marriage. But whether you marry in the future or not, sexual purity is a reflection of your relationship to Christ.

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## GOING FURTHER - Resources

**Recommended Books:** (Available at *The Well* at Stillwater Church of Christ.)

***God's Call To The Single Adult*** (by Michael Cavanaugh) - The insights in this book have changed the lives of many people, answering many tough questions singles ask.

***They Were Single Too*** (by David Hoffeditz) - The Bible holds many examples of adult singles—through their examples, Hoffeditz leads the way to spiritual freedom in the midst of living single today.

***Before Engaged*** (by David Gudgel) offers priceless advice and direction for daters who are considering popping (or answering) the big question.

***What Women Wish You Knew About Dating*** (by Stephen Simpson) educates men about spiritual and psychological obstacles to dating and provides solutions to the problems that often interfere with a healthy, holy dating life.

**Recommended Website:** Check out the Being Single section at [boundless.org](http://boundless.org)