

How To Be Happy Being Single

We are dealing with a very practical problem that people go through in normal life. The Bible is the most practical book you could ever read, study or build your life on. God promises great blessings if you do it. If you read it and do what it says, He promises great blessings. Isn't that what you want?

Do you really want to have a blessed life, a life that is full and complete where you feel like you are living at the top of your game? You can. You can if you give everything to Jesus and say, "Lord, I am going to follow the words in this Book." I am going to let them give me life and fulfillment.

Today, we are talking about how to be happy though single. Sometimes when you are in the ministry and you are married; you preach, teach and talk to married people. Single people that have never married or single people that are divorced think, "Does anybody care about me? Does anybody understand? Does anybody have words for me?" This lesson is for you. If you have a friend that is single and going through a hard time, let them know that this lesson may be of help to them.

Many of us look at something we do not have and say to ourselves, "If I could have that, I know I would be happy." Abraham Lincoln said, "I have discovered that most people are about as happy as they make up their mind to be." I heard a man say on the radio, "For those of you who think if I could just have a little cottage at the end of a long road, I could just go down there I could be happy." He said, "No, you would not because you would be there and you would have to live with your own issues inside your own head." That is the way it is looking at marriage when you are single. You are looking at your life here and you think, "Oh, it would be some much better if I had somebody with me." Then, you get there and you discover marriage has its own issues.

I have a friend I admire very much. She has had three husbands; one died in World War II; one died later of a very serious disease that took his life quickly and the third one she was married to for over 40 years. It was a great marriage and then he died. She told me that she had learned that when people leave one marriage thinking they are getting out of their problems, they just go from the frying pan into the fire. They do not realize that they have their own problems and issues they have taken with them. If you have not solved them, they are going to crop up again. However, single people do not realize that. They do not think about that, or they think just give me somebody and then I will be okay.

I know somebody who was divorced and remarried. The second marriage only lasted about three years. This man said to me, "I have learned that there is something worse than being lonely and that is being married to the wrong person." That is what he saw. Today, there are people just in and out of divorce, in and out of relationships. Many people live together and are not married and think, "This is better than anything else. We can split the living expenses." Even then, you still are not living in a married relationship the way God wants, a committed relationship. You are still really two single people living in the same house.

(Look at these two pictures. One is a single guy and one is a single gal.) My husband and I worked with singles two different times for many years. I saw this over and over, this one thing, kind of a romanticized idea of what marriage could do for them. There is a loneliness when you do not have someone. I am not saying you do not. It is lonely and you wish you had somebody to talk to and share your thoughts with. You want somebody to love you and somebody for you to love. The Bible says it is not good for a man to be alone. In fact, God in the very beginning started marriage. He started right off the bat with Adam and Eve. He could have started the world and had Adam run the world for 50 years, or because people lived so long He could have waited 500 years and then brought him a mate. But God said it is not good for man to be alone and so He brought him Eve.

We are going to study that. I want to show you some things that might help you remain happy while you are still single waiting for somebody to come. You do need to remember that not everybody is called to be married, not every one is. God has calls on some people's lives that would be so difficult to be married. I talked to someone that has that gift of celibacy and I have asked her, "Have you ever wished you were married? Have you missed it?" She said to me, "You know, I really have not. I just kind of feel like God is my husband and I am busy doing what He wants me to do, so no I do not think I could say that."

In Genesis 2:18-19, "God says, I will make a helper who is just right for him. There was not one around." You want God to be in charge of everything in your life. You want him bringing it into your life at the right time, do you not? If it came too early maybe you would not be ready for it. If it came too late maybe you would be so dissatisfied you would be grumpy. While you are single and waiting to see who comes into your life, you need to learn how to be peaceful, happy and content so that it does not matter whether you are married or whether you are single, you are full of peace and trusting in God.

I have another thing for you to think about. What if, in God's plan for your life, your mate still is not supposed to cross your path for another five years? You say, "I could not stand that. Surely that will not happen." It may not, but what if it did? Could you be happy and content while serving God and walking with Jesus? Yes.

If you look at Genesis 2:21, it says, "God called the man to fall into a deep sleep and while he was asleep God brought Eve to him." God brought the woman to him. You need to allow God to put you to sleep. You need to allow yourself to get involved in whatever it is that is God's will for you right now, whether it is your career, ministry or whatever you are doing, it does not matter. You need to just let God get you involved in all of that.

Let me give you some examples of people. Joe Jackson is an NFL Super Bowl player. He played for the Minnesota Vikings. He got saved when he was 18. I heard him speak and tell his story and testimony. He got saved when he was 18. He went on to play football in the NFL. He was very active as a Christian in the NFL. He conducted Bible studies. He began to realize that God had called him to be an evangelist; so in the off season he was out preaching everywhere. He was really good at it and had an incredible singing voice, just incredible. I saw this guy. I went to hear him preach recently. He is about 6 feet 4 inches, probably weighs 260 and works out all of the time. He looks like a giant football player, very much in love with Jesus. All of these years he never got married. He kept trying to find the perfect wife for one thing. He did say that was one of his problems. "I kept trying to find the perfect wife and I would keep meeting these women and they had different issues; and I thought that is not it. That is not the one. That is not the one." It got longer and longer and longer before he got married. Finally, at 43, at 43, do you hear me? He met this girl. He said, "This is it." He had a big wedding and invited a thousand people to his wedding. I think Joe Namath was one of the groomsmen. A bunch of these NFL big-time name people. The girl did not show up for the wedding. He said it was so humiliating. "I was standing at the altar. She did not come." He said, "And then crazy as I was three months later I tried to give her a chance again to do it again and she did not do it again." He said, "I was so bitter. I had to really deal with bitterness, just a lot of bitterness." He said, "I kept going along and I wanted to be married." Then he said something kind of funny. He got into his fifties and he just sat down one day and said, "Lord, I have been waiting for the perfect person to come along and obviously there is not one. I am taking the next one you send." He met this lady at the gym. He was 54. They got married; the first time for him to be married. They have been married two years now. I said, "Well, how is it?" He said, "You know what? It is a struggle. It is a struggle to be married. For one thing, with my business and my ministry I travel all of the time." He said, "We are making it."

I have another friend who played professional football. You would think I had all of these friends that played pro football, but I just have two. He was an evangelist. His name was Billy Hobbs. He died a couple of years ago. He had relationships. He really did not find God until he was around 35. When he found God, he really found Him and he took off. He was the most dynamic speaker. He was working as a youth pastor in San Antonio. A girl came in for counseling about advice with her boyfriend because it was an unhappy situation. He really liked her but he thought, "I better keep my mouth shut. I would be crossing a line here." He really did not say much. This girl and her boyfriend never made it. Later he began to date her. He was in his 40s and she was in her 20s; and they got married. They were happy, very, very happy, just a wonderful marriage. We used to tease him and say, "Billy, you had to wait for her to grow up. That is all it was."

I will tell you another one. I am telling you some long-term waiting on the right person but these people were happy while they were waiting. I met a man when we were doing a women's retreat at Glen Eyrie in Colorado Springs. It is the Navigator's Conference Center, but you can have retreats there. One day I was talking to one of the men that work there. I think he was the guy that was at the gate when you checked in. I do not know what even brought this all about, but he made some kind of a comment about being a newly-wed. I said, "Really?" He said, "Yeah, I am 57 and I just got married for the first time." I said, "Well, how did that happen?" He said, "Actually the woman I married is 54 and it was her first time also." I said, "How is that going?" He said, "It is going fine. We are both so happy we found each other. Yes, we have differences. Yes, we have stuff to work through, but we are so happy. I just really need to be honest with you and tell you we are really happy. We

just praise God.” You see, that was God’s plan all along. God had things for those people to do. That woman had been in a ministry where she had traveled all over the world and had needed to be free earlier in her life.

Do you remember that the apostle Paul said, “I wish you could be like me. I am not married.” People do not know if he was married or not, but you kind of get the idea that he was not. He said, “Because when you are married you not only have to please God, you have to please your spouse. When you are not married, you are free. You can do what you want to do and you go where God leads you to go at any minute.” So Paul did not think it was so bad to not be married.

Why did God put Adam to sleep? Why did He not just say, “Adam, let’s go find somebody to be your mate. Let’s go do it. You come and help me.” Why did he not do that? First of all, Adam did not know there was another human on earth. I guess we could laugh about that. The other thing is, there would not be any room for him to direct the Lord. We saw what happened to Adam later, so maybe God knew what he was doing there. What do you think? God has many Hebrew names.

One of his names is Jehovah-Jireh, our provider, my provider. Jehovah-Jireh means the bountiful one, giving the impression of meeting all of your needs. Maybe the Lord wanted to do it that way because He just wanted to show Adam I can provide all of your needs; even ones you would not have the slightest idea of how to make happen or how to provide. Then God caused that deep sleep to come. You can really pray. If you feel like, “I have waited so long; I might as well just get ready that it can be longer.” Ask God to put you in that deep sleep of Him. Get to know Him. Relax with Him. Enjoy Him. There is only so much time in a day that has to be taken up with earning an income, taking care of your home and meeting with your friends that you really do, as a single person, have time to be alone with God a lot if you want to. It is not as easy if you are a single mom with kids and trying to get to school and work. I know someone who did that. She really stayed with the Lord, but it was very difficult to get all of that done. In fact, I think they should have a congressional medal of honor for single moms. I do not even know how they do it. They probably do not know how they do it. They probably would say, “I’ll tell you how I do it, with very little sleep.”

Adam slept. How did he sleep? Did he have nightmares? No, he slept sweetly knowing that God would take care. That is all he knew was how to trust God. He knew how to trust all of his life to God. Do you know how to do that? Have you ever come to the place in your life where the most important thing you wanted to happen is not going to happen? Instead of being disillusioned and angry, you say, “Lord, I give it all up. I am tired of worrying about it. I am tired of fighting it. I am tired of fighting You. I am tired of having faith. I am tired of having no faith. I am tired of it all Lord. I know You love me. I know You watch out for me. I know You care for me. God, if You want me to be married, You bring the person to me. You bring me who You pick for me.”

What kind of lessons can you learn from that kind of an attitude? You can learn to trust God. You can learn to believe that God really does have a plan for your life. You can learn to hear God.

There is another thing that can happen. You can see God keep you from making big mistakes. Sometimes the opposite sex presents themselves to you and they can make themselves look so good, and then when you are married to them you find out things you never knew. That is heartbreak city. That is really bad. God knows what the people are like who are coming around you. I knew a divorced lady who had been single a long time. She thought, “Maybe I do not even like men anymore. God, is there something wrong with me?” She was working for a friend of mine as his secretary. She said, “All of a sudden this good looking man came in the room and I went, Whoa!” She said, ‘Okay, Lord, thanks for showing me. I will just keep waiting until You tell me.” If you occupy yourself with the work that God has given you to do and occupy yourself with building an intimate relationship with Him, that will prepare you to know if this is the one. Because your heart is open to God and open to His will. Even if you have a fear of marriage, it will still work out and be what God can ordain and God can bless. You know what Adam called Eve? Aisha. It means she-man. God could have made Eve out of anything. He could have just spoken and she would have appeared. How did He choose to do it? He put Adam to sleep.

The third Scripture is Genesis 2, “The Lord God took out one of the man’s ribs and He closed up the opening. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib and He brought her to man.” Think about it. You know what a rib looks like. You have eaten ribs. Some day we are going to get to see how that happened; that God could take a rib and make a human out of it; a living, walking human. A lot of people wonder why He did it that way. Some people say He did not take it from his head so she would not try to be the boss, did not take it from his leg so that she would try to walk all over him. He took it from his rib, so she had to be right by his side. I think that is really romantic and sweet. I am wondering also, though, if maybe God took it from Adam’s rib because she needed to be so much a part of Adam. She needed to have his likes and dislikes.

What did God say that Adam needed? A helpmate. When do you need a helpmate? You need a

helpmate when what you are trying to do becomes more and more difficult. So how do you know this person is right for you when it comes time? If it makes you a better person for knowing this one and makes them a better person for knowing you, then it is a good sign that it will be a good union. Just what you need, just what will fulfill you and just what will complete you. Adam looked at the animals and he did not see anyone like himself. How would you like to be like that? At first it would be fun being around all of those animals, giving them names, but who do you have to talk to about it?

Nobody. Ask God to give you a really good friend while you are waiting, a really good friend. You do need someone to talk to. You need someone to pray and share with. Ask God to give you that kind of a helpmate. Not the one you are going to be with, but one to help you until the real one comes along.

When you get married you are going to be a team, but you are still going to have challenges. I know you know that. I know you have watched that. It is okay to look around and see what kind of a mate you think you need. You can even ask your friends. What kind of a mate do you think I need? You can even make a list of what qualities would be really important to you. You just have to remember if you are not happy by yourself, then you will not be happy married. There are a lot of women who go from man to man to man. They cannot ever be without a man. As soon as they break up with one, they have to have another, yet they never get married. What is that all about? They have never learned how to be content with themselves, how to feel like they are enough. That is a disaster waiting to happen when you get married if the only way you are going to be happy is for you to have a man. It puts a lot of pressure on the man and it might make you pick someone too quick. Learn how to be happy with yourself, just like you are. Another thing is when you have a group of friends, people that you can count on, sometimes as a single that can make up for being married. I am not talking about just having one friend or a soul mate. I am talking about just a group of people that are single. I was single like that for a while before I got married. I did not get married really fast. I can remember teaching school in a town, a small town actually, really small, 15,000 people at the most. A bunch of us who were school teachers and others working in business all met each other. We discovered that we had a lot of fun together. We would always have special things planned for the weekend. We could not wait to get together. We laughed and we played jokes on each other. Life was really good. It was really fulfilling.

I want to read you a quote, "A woman's heart should be so hidden in Christ that a man should have to seek Him first, meaning Christ, to find her." Is that not really what you want? If God has a mate for you, do you not want it to be a Christian person who really has character and integrity? Sure you do.

Just chill out and relax a little bit. Say to yourself, "I would rather be lonely like this than miserable with the wrong person." It is really not worth it. If you can have the patience, wait on the Lord. Do not be like the old maid that said, "Lord, anyone." No, wait on God's person and be happy in the meantime. Trust God.

QUIET TIME QUESTIONS

1. What is the key to being happy while single?
2. Who is your spouse when you are single?
3. Why is it important to wait on God's plan for your spouse?
4. What should you do while you are waiting on God's plan?
5. Why is it sometimes better to be single when serving the Lord?

To watch the video on HOW TO BE HAPPY SINGLE, Pillar Five, Relational Skills, go to www.bettyswann.com.

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