



## It's All About Relationships

### “Singleness”

Adults

May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017

#### I. Intro

##### A. Fun (Sarah)

- Grant down on one knee tying his shoe
- JP came in and asked us to speak on singleness due to our current relationship statuses
- The irony being, two people coming together to form one....  
Message
- Just to kill the elephant in the room, we love each other but not like that. Hence, co-teaching a sermon on singleness.

##### B. Facts (Sarah)

- More than 4 out of every 10 adults in the US is not married.
- The singles population in the US is larger than the total national population of all but 11 nations.
- America has upwards to 82 million single adults.
- 4 out of 5 single adults consider themselves to be Christian.
- Rarely talked about in church
  - Cringey sermons
  - “Hunger Games”
- How many of you, at any point of your life, have been single?  
All of us!!! Crazy!

##### C. Focus Statement (Grant)

- Loving God and loving people is not contingent upon our marital status. All people married and single are called to love God and love people. All people by the power of the Spirit **CAN** love God and love people.

##### D. Chicken Legs (Grant)

- People, church, & the Bible make us feel like singleness is an option

E. Pray (Sarah)

II. Biblical Theology of Singleness (Grant)

- Reasons for explaining:
  - marriage is obvious, singleness isn't
  - Ex. Two people kissing, hugging, holding hands
  - Why?

A. Understanding the Story of Scripture

- Kingdom, what is this? What is God moving towards?
- Kingdom has many parts and many things that will happen, the greatest of these is relationally (relationships)

B. Break Down "Relationally"

- When I say relationally, here's what I mean by that...  
Communion with God, union with Christ.
- To understand this (prior statement) we need to go back to the beginning of God's story that we mentioned the Kingdom
- God & Adam then Adam & Eve (Genesis 1:26-27 & Genesis 2:20-24); God & man and man and woman in marriage
  - Man needs woman bc, while he is image of God, he is not fully God
- Hilarious, in talking about singleness, we just said we all need to be married

C. Understanding Marriage in the End

- But remember, that's just the beginning of the story.  
Beginning: marriage between man & woman
- The end of the story looks different for marriage  
End: Marriage with us and Jesus
- Jesus jukeeeeeee!
- Matthew 22:29-30
- Greatttttt but we aren't living in the end. So where the heck are we and how do we all fit into this?

D. Where are We in the Story of Scripture (Sarah)

- We are living in "Now Not Yet," again this means the kingdom that we are going towards has started breaking in but isn't here fully.  
Here in some ways...  
Matthew 12:28

<sup>28</sup> If I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.

Acts 2

Peter's sermon at Pentecost

Not here in other ways...

The idea of "No tears"

Revelation 21

- notttttt like that

#### E. Relationships in the Now Not Yet

- Marriage and singleness co-exist in our present age
- Marriage still exists in this age bc we are still in the "Not Yet" and haven't entered in to the New Heavens New Earth
- Singleness is now an option bc we are living in the "Now" (the New Heaven & New Earth has broken in) and have started to taste our the eternal reality of our union with Christ
- Egg & chick analogy
- Singleness then only makes sense as believers bc you have the union with Christ
- In conclusion, Singleness is a legitimate and good option in the Lord
- Now we need to ask, where do we see singleness in scripture?

#### III. Examples of This in Scripture (Grant)

- The trailblazers of singleness and the examples the examples we have in the Bible are Jesus & Paul
- It is interesting that the foundation of our faith, most amazing human to ever live, and then, the author of half of the New Testament thus being the single greatest contributor to the Canon of Scripture were both SINGLE.
- Lets take a quick look, in their singleness, at the example they set and what they were able to accomplish.

#### A. Example

We see in scripture an adherence to this new way of thinking about singleness.

##### 1. Jesus

- Jesus clearly subscribed to the idea that the relationship with the Father was EVERYTHING.
- Example: Garden of Gethsemane

##### 2. Paul

- Paul also subscribed to this, and we can see this in Philippians 3:7-8

#### B. Accomplishments

Singleness is not a ho-hum existence. It's not a waiting period, or a time you stay on the sidelines of life and ministry.

##### 1. Jesus

- The breadth of the work He was able to accomplish as a single; healings, feeding, sermons, casting out demons, and 3 years with 12 men who were going to reshape the course of history as we knew it.

##### 2. Paul

- Same idea! Mentored numerous new leaders, founded churches & revisited those churches via travel and letters that later became some of his contributions to the New Testament, trained disciples, and etc.

Both Jesus and Paul, in their singleness, were able to advance the Kingdom of God because of the opportunity their singleness provided in giving them more freedom & more time to accomplish the works of God.

No ball & chain, dinner times, dirty diapers, or weekend honey-dos haha

- Now let's see what that means for us in singleness today

#### IV. Love God & Love People (Sarah)

Tie into series and do application.

From the lives of Jesus & Paul, we can see how to Love God & Love people in singleness.

##### A. Love God

- Adherence to the story
  - Both Paul & Jesus accepted where the story was going. While marriage is fruitful, good, and a blessing, for them, they chose to embrace the eternal reality presently.
  - So this is what we have been building towards! We have shown the Biblical narrative of singleness, show people who embraced singleness, and now we need to be OK with singleness.
  - However, knowing that singleness is a legitimate & GOOD option in the Lord, and living in light of that is difficult for us to work out in our practical lives.
  - We read...  
Phil 3:7-8

<sup>7</sup>But everything that was a gain to me, I have considered to be a loss because of Christ. <sup>8</sup>More than that, I also consider everything to be a loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. Because of Him I have suffered the loss of all things and consider them filth, so that I may gain Christ

John 17:3

This is eternal life:

that they may know You, the only true God, and the One You have sent—Jesus Christ.

Psalms 63:3

<sup>3</sup>My lips will glorify You

because Your faithful love is better than life.

Psalms 42:1

As a deer longs for streams of water,

so I long for You, God.

Psalms 27:4

I have asked one thing from the Lord:

it is what I desire:

to dwell in the house of the Lord

all the days of my life,

gazing on the beauty of the Lord

and seeking Him in His temple.

We love those verses, we read those and do the “Holy mmmm” but do they really satisfy us, do we find rest in those, are we truly content with the truth in those verses?

- In order to be satisfied, find rest, and be content we need to stop seeing ourselves as single and start embracing the truth that we are actually married; we are in union with Christ.
- Instead of feeling gipped, we have to see that we have Christ the most fulfilling spouse that has ever existed.
- So what are we doing then to embrace this marriage?
- If you were to talk to any person in a healthy marriage they would tell you just what the Bible says, a healthy marriage comes from a willingness of both people to serve one another in love. If we want to defeat the feeling that we are getting the short end of the stick we have to be willing to give ourselves to God in a service of love bc He has already given himself for us.

- And that's all we can say! As frustrating as it is, we can't give you a to-do list or steps 1-5 on how to be content in the Lord because this is a heart issue, and a relational issue between us and Jesus. Our hearts can't be fixed in 5-easy steps and a relationship can't be formed in a 30-minute sermon.

All we can say, that is true of everyone, is that we have to learn what it looks like to deny ourselves and give ourselves to Him each day so that HE is more important than anything else in our lives, including, but not limited to, marriage.

Does this mean that marriage is out of the question?

No.

It means pursuing contentment with Christ and then being open to the possibility of marriage; contentment yet openness.

- Sexual Purity
  - Let's face it, one of the most difficult places for us to love God in is sexual purity.
  - Our culture promotes the greatness of sex but also the non-sacredness of sex.
  - As Christians we can whole-heartedly affirm the goodness of sex BUT we also have to affirm the sacredness of sex.
  - Unless you have a ring on your finger and are currently married, sex is not for you because God has placed sex and physical intimacy within the confines of marriage.
  - #struggs #thestruggleisreal #fomo #wejustlosthalftheaudience
  - Bc sex surrounds us in all areas, interpersonally and on your own (if you need to know what on your own means, you're doing great) we have to open ourselves to accountability with people.
  - Why? Bc this area is no joke, and Paul actually says to run away from it.  
"flee" (movie analogy)
  - Practically, find your people & ACTUALLY BE OPEN with them.

## B. Love People (Grant)

- Remembering back to the accomplishments of Jesus & Paul as singles we can learn how to love people.

- They did not look at their lives in a selfish/self-reliant perspective, where it was all about them. They made their lives about the mission of God which is loving people.
- Author Scazzero says in his book “The Emotionally Healthy Leader,” “Where as marriage communicates the depth of God’s love, singleness communicates the breadth of God’s love.”  
John 3:16
- As singles we have an unlimited amount of freedom and time to love this world.
- Get out there! Be singles who are ready to mingle! Pour yourselves into community, serve others, get involved at church.
- For pouring yourselves into community: Don’t be at home every night hanging out with your friends Ben & Jerrys and watching a Rachel & Ross hook up.  
Embrace community with singles and married alike! (Even the couples that make you feel like a third wheel. Don’t worry we are gonna mention them in a second.)
- For serving others: If you have married friends, offer to babysit and bless them with a date night.
- Get involved at church: Don’t see church as an opportunity to slink in and out but as a place to love others, get to know others (as humans and not dating options), and serve somewhere. You certainly have the time!

#### C. Aside to Married Peeps about Loving God & Loving People

- Love God:
- Adopt God’s overall story, especially in regards to relationships bc you need to be content in God just the same. Marriage is not your get-out-of-jail-free pass to avoid cultivating your marriage with Christ. Bc that’s what is ultimately coming for everyone in eternity.
- Love People:  
In light of what we have learned, married friends of singles, don’t look at them as people/situations that need to be fixed.  
Also, in light of that, include them in your family’s life.  
And, if you are a parent, be open to both options so that your child can find contentment as both a single and a married person.

#### V. Conclusion (Grant & Sarah)

- (Grant) Will it always be easy to love God and love people as a single person? No.  
But in Christ we can find our contentment.
- I hope we can feel encouraged that in Christ we have the perfect spouse.
- Feel encouraged by the unique breadth we have to Love God & Love People.
- (Sarah) When we believe singleness equal rejection, it leads to insecurity and depression.  
When we believe singleness equals loneliness it leads to discontentment and bitterness.  
When we believe that singleness is legitimate and good it leads to amazing ministry and contentment in Christ.
- Let us walk forth with new understanding and new appreciation of singleness.
- (Grant) Pray