

Sunday, July 23, 2017
Did You Know?

Biblical Singleness & Dating Relationships

Recently, some of the Emerge group went on a retreat to look at the theme of *Biblical Singleness and Dating Relationships*. As I was preparing for this retreat, I had to address this question: *Why is there a great interest in this topic in our Emerge community?* I personally concluded that it's because all of us have this **desire to love and be loved**. And, because we're Christians, we want to know how we can use our singleness for God and how we can pursue dating relationships (and marriage) in a way that pleases God. Of course, the problem is that there's a lot of **confusion and obscurities** when it comes to these issues. Not only that, but some of us have **worries and fears** regarding this. You might have said something like:

What if I'm called to be single forever?

How do I know if he/she is the "right one"?

Isn't this what I *should* be doing in life – getting married and having kids?

If you've asked any of these things, you're not alone, but as a result, some of us may feel very **frustrated**. You're not happy that you're single. You're not happy that the dating relationship you're part of is not very fulfilling and satisfying and some of you may be even questioning God.

Whatever the case may be, **we need to learn to define and live out singleness and dating relationships in a way that is prescribed by the Bible, not this culture**. This is a call not just to the singles but to our church as a whole. I believe that many churches in the West (including CoaH), unfortunately, don't seem to have understood the goodness of singleness. As a result, we quickly label it as "Plan B for the Christian life." We *all* need to recover a Biblical understanding of singleness, dating relationships, and marriage so that we can bless one another. Singles can be an example to others in **your devotion to God**. Those who are dating can be an example to others in **your pursuit of holiness**. Married persons can be an example to others in **your love for one another as husband and wife**. Here is a short summary of what was discussed.

Biblical Singleness

Waiting with Sexual Purity – The Bible makes it clear that God not only desires, but also demands that single people remain virgins until they're married (1 Cor. 7:25). We must flee from sexual immorality (1 Cor. 6:18).

Walking with the Right Focus – We must live, not being preoccupied with a desperate need to date or marry, but live preoccupied with Jesus (1 Cor. 7:35).

Working for the Lord – Single people have a unique freedom to find and pursue God's purpose for them and to function in that calling with undivided, undistracted commitment to Christ (1 Cor. 7:20).

Biblical Dating Relationship

Why Should We Want to Date/Marry? The goal of dating and marriage is, ultimately, not for each other's happiness but for holiness because this is our life's goal (Matt. 6:33).

Who Should We Want to Date/Marry? The Bible tells us to search for someone of character because while looks won't last, godly character improves with age (Prov. 31). We are called to use wisdom, not feelings, to guide us in this decision. Always ask yourself this question, "Can this person walk with me toward God?"

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