

MESSAGE SIX

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 7:27-39 (NASB)
27 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Are you released from a wife? Do not seek a wife. 28 But if you marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet such will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you. 29 But this I say, brethren, the time has been shortened, so that from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none; 30 and those who weep, as though they did not weep; and those who rejoice, as though they did not rejoice; and those who buy, as though they did not possess; 31 and those who use the world, as though they did not make full use of it; for the form of this world is passing away.

32 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; 33 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. 35 This I say for your own benefit; not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote what is appropriate and to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord.

36 But if any man thinks that he is acting unbecomingly toward his virgin daughter, if she is past her youth, and if it must be so, let him do what he wishes, he does not sin; let her marry. 37 But he who stands firm in his heart, being under no constraint, but has authority over his own will, and has decided this in his own heart, to keep his own virgin daughter, he will do well. 38 So then both he who gives his own virgin daughter in marriage does well, and he who does not give her in marriage will do better.

39 A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

MESSAGE GOAL:

This sermon will help singles understand how to use their time without the

demands and constraints of marriage to build intimacy with God.

INTRODUCTION:

I'm sure many singles feel like they are in a holding pattern. Like when you're flying on an airplane, just about to begin your descent, and the pilot gets on the intercom and tells all the passengers that they're in a holding pattern. Hour after hour the plane just circles but doesn't land. The passengers become more anxious wondering when they will land so they can get to their destination.

Many singles feel frustrated, alone, just waiting for their status to change. As they circle in the holding pattern on singleness they ask God, "How long, Lord, will I feel alone? When can I land and find a mate?"

Well, God has a word for singles—and it's a strong word. Before God created a family in Genesis, He created a single man and a single woman—Adam and Eve. After God created Adam, he walked with God and knew his calling to name the animals. After God fashioned Eve, all Eve knew was her relationship with God. Before God took Eve to Adam, they were two single individuals who depended wholly on their relationships with God.

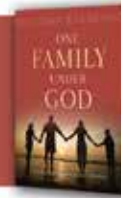
Marriage and family are supposed to reflect something bigger than just alleviating loneliness. Marriage and family must reflect God's kingdom. God had to orient single Adam and single Eve to Him before He could bring them together in marriage. The most important thing a single Christian can do is get connected with God. If, as a single person, you're just waiting for God to hook you up with your mate, but you're not using your time without the demands and constraints of marriage to build intimacy with God, you're missing the most important thing. If you're just waiting for a human relationship and you're not focusing on your vertical connection, you're going to live in a frustrating holding pattern over which you have little or no control.

SERMON POINTS:

1. **SINGLES, DISCOVER THAT GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOU IS TO BUILD INTIMACY WITH HIM.**

our society's problem
is not solely our *government's* problem.
it is **the church's** problem.
it is *our* problem.





- God has a specific purpose for the “holding pattern” of singleness.
- God wants single believers to focus on their relationship with Him.
- Use your freedom as a single person to build intimacy with God and serve others.

2. TRUST GOD AND WAIT ON HIS TIMING. (1 CORINTHIANS 7:27)

- God wants singles to learn to trust Him and patiently wait for His timing to get married.
- When single individuals refuse to wait for God’s timing to get married, they may rush into marriage with the wrong person.
- Singles must remember that marriage is a form of bondage because husbands and wives must make all of their decisions with their spouse in mind.
- Single Christians should maximize their freedom and not seek to be bound to a spouse.

3. DEVELOP A HEAVENLY PERSPECTIVE AND LEARN TO BE CONTENT IN YOUR SINGleness. (1 CORINTHIANS 7:31)

- God wants single Christians to develop a heavenly perspective on their singleness and to develop a kingdom-oriented mindset.
- Adam learned to operate under God’s rule and to be content while he was single.
- God wants single Christians to develop contentment, which means they will be at ease in their situation, even if they would prefer to be married.
- Fulfilled, content singles have learned to operate under God’s kingdom rule and they know that God has a calling on their lives.
- Frustrated singles place their focus on a human relationship and miss out on God’s divine calling during their singleness.

4. USE YOUR FREEDOM TO FOCUS ON PLEASING GOD. (1 CORINTHIANS 7:32)

- Single Christians must use their freedom to develop undistracted devotion to the Lord.
- Single Christians can’t function as “kingdom singles” if they are focusing on the mate they don’t yet have.
- Single Christians should have a mindset that recognizes that they are kingdom Christians who are to fulfill God’s

kingdom purposes in their single state, and also later in their married state, if that is God’s will.

- Single Christians have the freedom to use their gifts, talents, skills, and experiences for God’s glory and to advance His kingdom.
- If a single Christian’s focus is on the Lord and working for Him, God will take care of him or her.

5. WAIT FOR THE CHRISTIAN MATE GOD HAS PLANNED FOR YOU TO MARRY. (1 CORINTHIANS 7:39)

- When the time is right, God will bring the right mate—a Christian mate.
- Single Christians must not settle for non-Christian mates because they’re tired of waiting on God.
- God has custom-made a mate for the single. Christians whom He wills to get married.
- Single Christians must wait for the right person whom God has designed for them—it will be worth the wait!

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

DEVELOPING A HEAVENLY PERSPECTIVE: There was a little boy who lost his contact while playing with his toys. He got down on his hands and knees and searched but he couldn’t find it. After a while he asked his mother to help him find the missing contact lens. Within 30 seconds the boy’s mother found it! The little boy asked his mother how she found it so quickly. She said, “Son, you were looking for a contact lens. I was looking for \$150 dollars!” Your perspective determines what you see. If you have an earthly perspective, you’re going to be frustrated because you can’t find what you’re looking for. But when single Christians develop a heavenly perspective in the midst of their singleness, they will find God’s purpose for their singleness—to love and serve Him.

FINDING CONTENTMENT IN GOD: Queen Elizabeth the first never married. She always felt the pressure to get married. One day someone asked her, “Why won’t you get married?” And she answered, “I’m already married. I’m married to the kingdom of England.” See, she had a kingdom perspective toward her nation. And that kingdom perspective gave her fulfillment and contentment as a single woman and ushered in the Elizabethan age of progress. When single Christians find fulfillment and contentment in their relationship with God, they will fulfill their kingdom destiny.