

Opportunities Single Christians Have Sunday AM 07/31/22

Introduction:

Opportunities are strange things, they often disguise themselves as problems, they often pass by without us noticing them, and we have to be willing to do something to take advantage of them. Example of the story of the man in the flood. The water is rising while he is standing waist deep in water. A man on a horse comes by and offers him a ride. He says, "No thanks, I am waiting on God to deliver me." As the water rises, he is on the porch and a boat comes by offering a ride. Again, he turns it down saying, "God will take care of me." Next, he gets on the roof top as the water rises, and a helicopter comes by, lowers a rope ladder, and tells the man to climb on up. He turns the offer down and once again says, "No thanks, God will rescue me." Finally, he drowns, and faces God. He asks why God didn't take care of him? God's reply, "I sent a man on a horse, a boat, and a helicopter." Single Christians have opportunities which they may or may not recognize. In this lesson we want to focus on; Time, Freedom, and Doors of Opportunity. I realize I am painting with a broad brush and being single at different ages presents different opportunities. Also, I am not trying to minimize the time requirements and constrains single Christian's face, nor their obligations, or the doors which might be closed to them.

***Can be an obstacle or an opportunity. Remember doing a SWOT analysis in class. What might be a strength, or a weakness, an opportunity, or a threat, depends on how you look at it.**

***Age makes a difference in how you respond.**

I) Time

A) Time to work on self, practice some "self-love"

1. Think about what kind of person, Christian, you want to be. See your strengths and weaknesses.

2 Peter 1:5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control

perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- a. 'Add to' means you can get better.
 - b. Not speaking of preparing for marriage but the things which will make you a better Christian.
 - c. Make a list for you, not for your future spouse.
2. How can I be more like Christ.

Philippians 2:5 *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.*

- a. Not speaking of being "selfish" but improving self.
- b. Get better results when I try to be more like Christ, instead of being a better version of myself.

B) Specifics

1. More time for Bible Study- privately and publicly.

2 Timothy 2:15 *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

- a. We all need to meditate upon God's word.

Philippians 4:8 *Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things.*

- b. Study some different topics on your own or in home Bible

studies. Study those “white pages” of the Bible.

2. Go and visit the orphans and widows in need.

James 1:27 *Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.*

- a. One of the most common needs today is someone to talk to.
- b. Differences in age and sex can make a difference in what you can do. Younger Christians may mow the yard, fix the running faucet, etc. An older Christian may offer to take someone to the doctor, or to the store.

3. Community activities

- a. While living in Shoals, IN I got involved in the school fair, being an official in “The Great Canoe Race”
- b. A good way to let your light shine is to get involved in your community.

Matthew 5:14 *"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 "Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*

4. Go to Gospel Meetings, lectureships in order to learn and be around other Christians.

II) Freedom-

- A) Single people do have obligations but not the “family” obligations

1 Corinthians 7:32 *But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord--how he may please the Lord. 33 But he who is married cares about the things of the world--how he may please his wife.*

1. Not as many people depend on you, leaving more freedom to serve the Lord.
2. Age plays a role in this as children grow up and time is demanded but once grown parents have more time.

B) Financial burdens

1. Paul was not married and had the opportunity to not take wages for his work.

2 Corinthians 11:8 I robbed other churches, taking wages from them to minister to you. 9 And when I was present with you, and in need, I was a burden to no one, for what I lacked the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied. And in everything I kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so I will keep myself.

2. Opportunities to move to another location without having to “worry” about children, spouse.
3. To start a new career path, travel more, etc.

III) Open Doors of Opportunity

***Remember opportunities often disguise themselves, sometimes are not easy, are wasted unless you do something with them.**

A) To make conscious decisions

1. A lot of people get so busy living they don't actually think about the future.
2. Single Christian's, your lifestyle will be different from the world and from fellow Christians who are married.
3. Use it to think outside the box.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

B) To be grateful for what you have

1. Your sanctification, being made pure and holy.

1 Thessalonians 4:3 *For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;*

2. In the Old Testament sanctification was a process.
 - a. Something to do

Exodus 29:37 *"Seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and sanctify it. And the altar shall be most holy. Whatever touches the altar must be holy.*

- b. For a purpose

1 Chronicles 15:12 *He said to them, "You are the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, you and your brethren, that you may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel to the place I have prepared for it.*

3. In the New Testament
 - a. We are sanctified, made pure and holy by the blood of Christ.

1 Peter 1:1 *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.*

- b. We are sanctified by the word of God.

John 17:17 *"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.*

- c. For a purpose, to live holy lives.

Philippians 1:27 *Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,*

4. Easy to get caught up in the things of this world. To be the wayside soil, or the soil with the thorns and thistles as described in the parable of the Sower, **Matthew 13**.
 - a. As a single Christian you have time, freedom, and opportunities, what you do with them is up to you.
 - b. What will you fill it up with?

Matthew 12:43 *"When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. 44 "Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. 45 "Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation."*

- c. Fill your life with godly things.

Conclusion:

All Christians are like the house which has been cleaned. Have you ever notice that once you clean up a place how easy it is to clutter it up again? The best way to keep it uncluttered is to develop good practices, and fill it with good things. The same for our lives, we get rid of sin, and replace it with God's word, godly service, godly friends, and godly living. That applies to all of us. Don't be like the man in the flood who waited for God to save him and passed up all his opportunities to be saved. Peter said to be saved from this perverse generation, **Acts 2:40**. The next verse reads, **Acts 2:41** *Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.* What had Peter said? What were his words? **Acts 2:38** *Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*