

Single Servants Of God

Sunday AM 07/17/22

Introduction:

Many servants of God were either single for much of their lives, or never married, or lost their spouse. Realizing there were different cultures and reasons for them being single. We want to look at some of those servants and lessons we can learn from them.

1 Corinthians 7:17 *But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk. And so I ordain in all the churches. 18 Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised. 19 Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters. 20 Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called. 21 Were you called while a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it. 22 For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ's slave. 23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. 24 Brethren, let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called.*

I) Joseph

A) Sold into slavery as a single Hebrew

1. Joseph had three strikes against him.
2. He was single,

Genesis 37:2 *This is the history of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to his father.*

3. A slave, served in Potiphar's household. **Genesis 39.2**
4. a Hebrew.

Genesis 39:14 *that she called to the men of her house and spoke to them, saying, "See, he has brought in to us a Hebrew to mock us. He came in to me*

to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice.

Genesis 41:12 *"Now there was a young Hebrew man with us there, a servant of the captain of the guard. And we told him, and he interpreted our dreams for us; to each man he interpreted according to his own dream.*

5. Socially isolated as the Egyptians would not even eat with him.

Genesis 43:32 *So they set him a place by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves; because the Egyptians could not eat food with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians.*

B) Lessons from Joseph

1. Being single places one in positions of sexual temptation.
 - a. Potiphar's wife was very bold in tempting Joseph but probably no more than is done today.
 - b. When most people think nothing of premarital sex and extramarital sex.
2. Single, celibate people are seen as either lying, or homosexual, or weird.
3. Joseph kept his emphasis on God
 - a. when facing temptation.

Genesis 39:9 *"There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"*

- b. When interpreting dreams

Genesis 41:16 *So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace."*

- c. When he is given the opportunity to take revenge.

Genesis 50:19 *Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? 20 "But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for*

good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.

3. Joseph did get married and had two sons but his life of service was not dependent on being married.
4. Perhaps the best description of Joseph and God is given in **Genesis 39.23**

Genesis 39:23 *The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's authority, because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made it prosper..*

II) Jeremiah

A) Commanded to remain single.

Jeremiah 16:1 *The word of the LORD also came to me, saying, 2 "You shall not take a wife, nor shall you have sons or daughters in this place."*

1. This was unique as marriage is to be held in high esteem. **Hebrews 13.4.**
2. Jeremiah's time was one of great distress.
 - a. Jeremiah would be hated by his fellow countrymen.
 - b. Put into a well and almost starved to death.
 - c. He would see many of his countrymen killed or taken into slavery.
3. The prohibition to Jeremiah would
 - a. Spare him the agony of seeing his own family going through these things.
 - b. Allow him to preach more boldly the word of God.

B) In times of distress.

1 Corinthians 7:25 *Now concerning virgins: I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy has made trustworthy. 26 I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress--that it is good for a man to remain as he is: 27 Are you bound to a*

wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife.

1. There are times of “present distress” - nothing specific mentioned - persecution of some sort.
2. Those who were married were to remain married. Those singles were to remain single. Not as a command but as an inspired piece of advice.

III) Daniel and His Three Friends

A) They were taken captive into Babylon.

1. Again faced numerous temptations, perhaps the biggest was to go along with the cultural norms.

Daniel 1:8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

2. We never read of them getting married or having children. They may have been made eunuchs in order to serve the king.

B) Purpose in your heart to not defile yourself.

1. To control yourself.

1 Thessalonians 4:3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;

2. Having three friends had to be a source of encouragement to Daniel and them.

IV) Apostle Paul

A) Was single.

1 Corinthians 9:5 Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?

1. Voluntarily and purposely remained single.
2. Was not a second-class Christian but one working to serve the Lord.

1 Corinthians 9:16 *For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! 17 For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. 18 What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel. 19 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more;*

B) Do not look at single Christian with either a sense of sadness but rather encourage them.

1. They are doing what Paul speaks of in **1 Corinthians 7**.
2. The world will do enough to discourage them; we need to think of how to be their family and encourage one another.

Hebrews 10:24 *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,*

V) Dorcas/Tabitha

Acts 9:36 *At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. 37 But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room.*

Acts 9:39 *Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them.*

A) She was

1. Doing good deeds
2. Among the widows.

B) Widows/Widowers in the Lord's body.

1. Be busy at the Lord's work.
2. Tend to be more widows and they often want to do more, in many congregations I would call them when needing help.

Conclusion:

A Christian is never an orphan; they have a loving Father in heaven. They have brothers and sisters in Christ. Their family reaches upward to heaven and is around the whole world. It is the one family they will have in heaven. Are you a part of that family?

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved. 7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.