

# Singleness: To be Pitied or Pursued? 3

**01 Whether married or not. None of us were born married. All of us have spent part of our lives being single and it is entirely possible that we will experience singleness again.**

- a. Share, have you spent more of your life married or single?**
- b. For those who have experienced both singleness and marriage, share something valuable that you've learned from each season.**
- c. For those who are single, share a perspective of either singleness or marriage (as you experience it in others) that is unique to your experience.**

**02 What are some of the myths of singleness that you have heard (or perhaps believed)?**

**03 Was there anything in Sunday's message that particularly stood out or that you perhaps found jarring?**

#### **04 Read Matthew 19:1-12 in its entirety.**

Pay special attention to Jesus' discussion about those who are single. Note that he uses a word not common in our vernacular today "Eunuch". Try not to get 'hung up' on this word Jesus defines Eunuchs within the Body of Christ effectively as those who are unmarried wither due to a physical condition or for a vocational purpose.

#### **05 How does Jesus elevate the single or celibate life in verses 11-12? Why was this countercultural then—and perhaps still now?**

#### **06 Read Deuteronomy 23:1. Discuss the status of Eunuchs in this period of history. How does Jesus' ministry shift our understanding of inclusion and value in the Body of Christ, irrespective of marital status?**

#### **07 Now read Isaiah 56:3-5. What did you notice? How does this echo Jesus' teaching about singleness? This must have represented a seismic shift for Jewish believers. How can it inform our own experience today?**

#### **08 Read 1 Corinthians 7:7-9, 25-40. How does Paul's teaching about singleness and marriage complement Jesus' words in Matthew 19?**

**09** While we avoid broadly using the phrase “called to singleness” some might say that they have a vocation that better “lends itself to singleness” or that in their particular circumstance they have experienced a call to singleness.

**How might the Church today reclaim a positive theology of singleness as a vocation and calling?**

**10** Singleness of course has broader implications in our communities. For example singleness in the bible reflects a call to celibacy. This is not necessarily the case in wider society.

**How do we lovingly hold the tension of these different expressions of singleness in our society, equip our Church and be a safe space for people with alternative perspectives to step into?**

**11** How can Christians practically support both married couples and those called to singleness in our Church community?

**12 Closing Prayer Suggestion:** Ask God to remove any barriers or roadblocks that would see married or single people differently. Help us find ways to love and build up all members of our Church and support them in their pursuit of Jesus. May God also help us to be a safe space for people with alternative perspectives to also engage.

***Want to submit a question for QnA Sunday 21 Sep?***

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