

# A Season of Singleness: Maintaining a Healthy Mindset and Perspective

*Ecclesiastes 3:1* states “*To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.*” Seasons come and go throughout a calendar year. Even when it feels like Winter may never end, we know sooner or later, Spring weather will arrive. We get used to the change of seasons and anticipate what is ahead. As we move through life, it is thus easy to assume life seasons should move with the same rhythm and pattern for all people just like the seasons on the calendar.

While there is no “right path” forward in life, it is easy to feel that something is missing or unfinished when certain seasons, specifically the season of marriage, are delayed. An individual in this place may find themselves waiting, desiring, and striving for this marriage season to come and yet singleness may be an ongoing, persistent season. For the person navigating life unmarried, it is important to maintain a healthy mindset and perspective even when the season God has you in is different than what you expect or desire. The key to this involves being intentional in your relationship with God and others in your community. Below are a few things to consider in these areas.

## **PUT GOD FIRST IN ALL THINGS**

Is God truly first in your life? This is an important question to consider as we live in a world today where many things compete for our time and attention and can lead us to a feeling of busyness. The problem with busyness is it does not always equal the purpose or connection that most are striving for, and it can establish our relationship with God as just another task we need to tend to. For some work and entertainment gets in the way of putting God first and for others it can be a misplaced focus on the cares and unmet desires of this life. Jesus gives two important instructions on this matter. He states “*...seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness*” (*Matthew 6:33*) and to “*...love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and will all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*” (*Matthew 22:37*). Purposing to do these things and build up our relationship with God allows us to maintain trust and steadfast faith in seasons that feel difficult.

## **MAINTAIN A HEALTHY IDENTITY AND THOUGHT PATTERNS**

Identity can be defined as understanding who a person is and is not. Too often the current season of life starts to become our identity, and it is easy to define what we are able to do or not do through this lens. It is important to be aware of unhelpful thinking styles that may develop with an increased focus on seasons of life. For some, singleness may be viewed as a transitional season and unhelpful thinking patterns may include, “Once I’m married, I will be able to...” or “I’m not completely fulfilled until...”. For others the season of singleness is fully accepted and embraced. While there are many advantages to this, it is important to be mindful that this identity does not become a source of pride or sense of security. When this happens, unhelpful perspectives around a lack of need for relationships or fear of change may begin to develop. Thankfully, as Christians we know our true identity is in Christ alone. Maintaining this perspective should shape the way we think and live.

## **EMBRACE THE VITAL ROLE YOU PLAY IN THE CHURCH**

A thriving church is a church where all members are working together to fully utilize the various spiritual gifts present. In addition to this, a church will benefit from fully utilizing individuals in various seasons of life. It is vital for both the married and the unmarried not to undervalue the important role singles can have in their church. The Apostle Paul writes “*He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord.*” (*1 Corinthians 7:32*). For the unmarried individual, this verse should provide much purpose and direction for your role within the local church body. While believing a single has much more time to dedicate to the church is not a helpful or accurate assumption (as all individuals are equally

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busy), singles do have a type of freedom and flexibility unique from their married peers in the church which allows them to serve in various capacities. When a single embraces this scenario, it can lead to an increased feeling of connection and usefulness within the church body God has placed you in and can allow God's kingdom to be furthered.

## SEEK SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

While navigating through a season of singleness, it is essential to maintain consistent support and accountability from others. Spending large amounts of time isolated and disconnected from others in your community can drive insecurity, lack of contentment, and bitterness. The book of Genesis states, *"And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone;"*. As a single, maintaining connection with others in the community God has placed you in allows you to live singleness well. Being intentional in maintaining close friendships and stepping into mentoring and discipling relationships allows for continued growth. These opportunities give individuals the challenge to stay involved and active and to have the ongoing reminder you are not alone.

If you find yourself in a season different than what you expect or desire, it will be helpful to maintain focus on the truths of God's word and allow yourself to lean into activities which lead to spiritual, relational, and personal growth. Ask yourself questions:

- "Is God truly first in my life or are the cares and desires of this life stealing my attentions and focus?"
- "What thoughts am I paying attention to and forming decisions around?"
- "Am I allowing myself to be used in the body of Christ or am I letting insecurities or frustrations hold me back?"
- "Who am I intentionally connecting with and being vulnerable with in this season of life?"

Making sure the answers to these questions are firmly rooted in biblical truths is the key to maintaining a healthy mindset and perspective. As we navigate the various seasons of life it is helpful to remember and focus on the truth found in *Philippians 4:19*, *"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."*