



Being single is not as difficult to deal with as the times of loneliness that come during that singleness. Loneliness will be experienced at special times—birthdays, Christmas, holidays—but it will be felt when a person experiences a blessing from the Lord or has a joyous experience and there is no one with whom to share it. I believe if we can deal with this loneliness, it will be very helpful in handling the single life. We must realize, of course, that all of us have been called to be single for that is the way we were born. At some point, God may call some of us to married, but then we still never know when we may receive the call to singleness again.

Probably those who struggle with singleness the most are those who have been married and have had someone with whom to share their experiences. When that person is no longer present, they may experience acute loneliness.

One of the poorest motivations for marriage is loneliness. Many who were motivated by loneliness and married the first person who came along, found themselves even more lonely when their expectations were not fulfilled. They found they could not share their innermost feelings with this person who they may have hastily chosen to end their existence as a single person.

If you are single and want to be married, I believe one of the best projects you can do is to get before the Lord and ask Him to lay upon your heart at least ten qualities that you would want in a life partner. Think them through and keep this list to review it. The first quality should not be just that you will date a Christian, but rather you will date a growing Christian. I have dealt with young people who had dated Christians and had shipwrecked their lives because that one who they became emotionally involved with was not growing in Christ. One was moving toward God, but the other was moving toward the world, and in order to keep that relationship going, they had to set aside basic convictions and begin to violate their

consciences. When we violate our consciences to keep a relationship going, we have absolutely no idea where it will end.

Every one of us has a deep need to be loved by somebody. I believe it is one of the underlying motivational reasons that causes many to reach out to salvation in Christ offered by God the Father. And if we are single, we need to develop this relationship with Jesus Christ, the one with whom we might share the deepest needs of our hearts without the fear of ever being rejected or being made to feel foolish. We need to realize that Jesus Christ was tempted in all points like we, yet without sin. Jesus Christ lived 33 years on this earth as a single person. He was never married. He never had a physical relationship with a woman and yet he was perfectly fulfilled as a person. Jesus Christ lived the kind of life that single people ought to emulate. This ought to let us know that singleness should never be considered second rate. The Apostle Paul, in his writing in Corinthians called the single life a gift from God. What a tragedy that many single people sit around and act as if life is passing them by. They hurriedly get married and then realize all of the privileges and all of the benefits that were theirs as a single are now gone. They did not use their singleness to the fullest benefit. Possibly you ought to stop and think — what are all of the things that you can do as a single person that a married person would not be able to do. I believe that you could list 20 or 30 things if you would set your heart and mind to think in this area.

Now, here are some steps to deal with loneliness.

1. Learn to use the feeling of loneliness as a signal from God to share that thought or experience with Him.
2. If you have just recently broken up a relationship and every time you think of that relationship you experience a deep hurt, then realize that you are sensing in your inner being the pain of God who also was at one point in your life rejected by you. This experience of rejection will help

Loneliness - the Plague of Singles

by N. James Logan

you more to understand the mind of God.

3. Get involved in an active church and allow the Body of Christ to meet some of these needs in your life.
4. Select special Scriptures that tell of God's ability to meet the deeper desires of our hearts. Here are some for an example: John 14:1-6, 15:9-17, 17:20-26, Jeremiah 31:3, Romans 8:28 and 29; 1 John 3:1-3 and verse 16, 4:8-11. Review these verses on a daily basis and as you read through the Word of God, add to this list the verses that speak to your heart and comfort you in the area of God's love to you and for you.
5. Do not focus on the negative aspects of singleness, but go over the list of the positive ways that you can use your singleness for the Lord. Singles have fewer restrictions in the way they use their time, money, where they will live and work. They will not have a lot of negative criticism from someone they live with. They will have many more opportunities to serve God because they do not have to take anyone else into consideration. They have a freedom to use their money on other people. They will have more time to devote to themselves, to their own spiritual lives and interests because they do not have to take the partner into consideration. These are just some of the things that you could put there.
6. Make a list of people you know who care for and love you, and write down specific ways that they have expressed their love to you. When you are lonely, go over the Scriptures and this list of people.
7. Check your motivation in relationships. Be sure that you are developing relationships to meet the needs of others, rather than to have them meet your needs. (If your relationships are developed for ulterior motives, you will find that you make people victims of your expectations.)
8. Study God and the aspects of His character. You will find that every need of a man's heart is met by an aspect of God's character. Two books which will help you with this are **Knowing God** by J. I. Packer and **Knowledge of the Holy** by A. W. Tozer.

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