

Singlehood, loneliness and fulfilment in Christ

Lesson Presented by Asaolu O. S. (asaolu@yahoo.com) at COC UNILAG, Lagos, Nigeria on June 7, 2026

Definition: *Singlehood* is the state of an unmarried adult or one who is not in a committed, long-term romantic relationship. Those in this category includes the never-married i.e. Bachelors, Spinsters, and those whose marriages ended i.e. Widows, Widowers and Divorcees. Thus, it may be by choice or imposed by circumstances; some choose celibacy and singlehood to focus on self, career, etc. while some become single through the loss of a partner. Some decide to abide therein for a prolonged period to focus on education, friends or family, enjoying the attendant sense of independence or focus on spirituality. While the freedom from commitment to another may be exciting, there are associated challenges with time such as having to make all decisions and take actions alone; no partner to contribute ideas or resources in one's life and home, societal pressure to get married, coping with sexual passion, etc.

Loneliness is a state of emotional distress: feeling isolated, disconnected, or lacking the intimacy and social connections that one desire. It is not necessarily solitude or choosing to be alone, neither is it just lacking people around. One could have many friends or be living in a crowded family house yet be lonely; it is a function of the quality of one's relationships. Where bonding and intimacy is absent, when one has nobody to pour the soul or mind to and share worries, crucial moments (e.g. holidays, birthdays) etc. with, then the feelings of emptiness and detachment brings loneliness which may subsequently lead to anxiety, depression, etc. Loneliness can easily befall a Single person and may even affect a married individual due to physical or emotional separation from the Spouse. The remedy is to seek a partner or improve one's relationship.

Fulfilment in Christ is the satisfaction that comes with meeting one's needs according to the will of the Lord. A realization that purpose, peace, and completeness are found only through a relationship with Jesus. Rather than relying on worldly achievements or possessions, believers anchor their identity and joy in His unconditional love. In the context of our lesson, it is moderating other human-relationships through the principles or lens of Christ; allowing His word to guide our search for a marital partner and how to build our homes or raise a family.

Introduction: For an adult who is mature in every respect (physically, emotionally, financially, spiritually, etc.), the ideal thing is to have a marriage partner of the opposite sex; a true companion. No career, hobby or pet can substitute for this need in the typical or average person as evident in

Genesis 2:18-24 *And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*

1 Corinthians 7:2 *Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.*

It takes a divine gift or unnatural situation for someone NOT to naturally desire to be married or attempt to venture into a relationship that would lead to marriage.

1 Corinthians 7:7-9 *For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.*

Matthew 19:12 *For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.*

Notes:

- When the soul pants for God as the deer for the waters, the one who worships and serves God righteously can cope with singleness better and is less likely to encounter loneliness (Psalms 42:1-8). Marriage is in itself a bit of a distraction in spiritual service relative to when one is single (1 Corinthians 7:32-35)
- Such distraction ought to be MINIMIZED, and made easier to navigate by marrying a fellow-believer, not compounded by marrying outside the faith or church. Hence, we have: *Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD* (Proverbs 18:22). Before someone becomes your spouse, let such first be your friend and your lover. Thus, both can relate and connect on many levels.
- One may cope with loneliness through study of the scriptures, prayer, fellowship with the saints, going out more to interact with associates and to meet new people, devoting one's self to attain set goals e.g. writing a book, going on vacation, volunteering in the community, etc.
- Being single is okay. People may make you feel like something's wrong if you aren't married or dating someone, don't be pressured unnecessarily. Fear of Singlehood and loneliness made Lot's daughters commit incest (Gen 19:30-38)
- Those who can and want to should try to get married, it is good and honourable (Heb 13:4a, Jere 29:6)
- One can live a Single life that is productive, holy and fulfilled, such would have determined to make extraordinary commitment to the service of God (e.g. Jeremiah, Jesus, Anna in Luke was *a widow indeed*, Paul) or some other quest but it should be **voluntary, not compelled** (1 Tim 4:1-3)
- Even men of God feel lonely at times (e.g. David –Psalm 25:16, Elijah - 1 King 19:12, Paul - 2 Timothy 4:16-18), anyone can fall into this state but should not abide there. Even Jesus experienced loneliness when abandoned by His disciples after His arrest and temporarily forsaken by the Father when Christ bore our sins on the tree (Mt 27:46). Paul though unmarried, had numerous Christians he associated with everywhere (Rm 16: 3-16) aside Timothy his adopted son so he wasn't always alone.

Conclusion: Fulfilment is in Christ; He alone can comfort, sustain and preserve both the Single or the Married. God has promised not to leave us alone, even when parents or lovers forsake us. Commit your plans and ways unto Him and He will grant you the desires of your heart (Psalms 27:10, 34:18, 37:3).

Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you. But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away. -1 Corinthians 7:27-31

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