



Why My Church Does Not Have a Singles Ministry by Kris Swiatocho

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I have been single my entire adult life. Because I am single, I have had a front row experience of how churches are reaching and growing singles adults. As a result, I have found that most churches simply did not know much about us nor how to reach us. After several years of serving on various single's ministry leadership teams as well as starting my own, God called me to help others do the same. Specifically to help reach the church, the pastors and staff; to educate and provide resources so that ALL churches would know how to reach singles.

While there are several large churches that have a singles pastor or director and are doing a great job in reaching and growing single adults, most churches do not. Most churches give various excuses such as:

We don't have any single adults. Well this is because you either are not defining singles correctly or simply have not looked at your membership demographics (or the demographics of your area). In most large cities in the US, single adults are out numbering the married's. I know this might be a shock to you considering the churches numbers do not reflect this. This is because we are not doing what is needed to reach them.

Single adults range from the 18 year old that still lives at home to the 29 year old single parent who has never been married to the divorced dad with grown kids to the 58 never married now taking care of their mom to the 68 widower who lives alone. It's not that you don't have single adults in your church or community; it's how to reach them. So where do you start? How do you find them? 1) Look at your existing membership/attendance rolls and see who is not married. Categorize by age, past marital status, if they have kids that live at home or grown, etc. 2) Contact your town/city and find out the demographics of those living within a 5 mile radius. Once you find out this information, it will help you in the direction of how to reach them. You may find out you have a lot of single mom's or widows. Depending on what you have the most of could determine whom you try and reach and how to minister to them.

Please know I believe singles ministry is simply one way to bring singles into your church. The goal with all ministry is reach people for Christ, help grow them so they will in turn reach and grow others (single or married).

If we start one, I hear it will end up being a meat market. I love to always answer this question and say, "Yes, it sure will, they can meet Jesus." Churches have a huge fear that their singles ministry will end up being focused only on finding a mate. My first thought is..."and where would you like us to find a mate...in a bar?" My second thought is..."who is leading your singles ministry?" Church as a whole can easily be a place to only be fed and healed from a physical standpoint. But didn't Jesus use these ways to minister so he could get to the person's heart? He would feed and heal the body so that he could later feed and heal the soul? So if your singles ministry is thriving and growing and people come to meet the opposite sex, then who cares? It's up to you as a church, as a pastor to get them connected to the whole body of Christ. It's up to you to get to know and build a relationship with them. And if they do find their spouse at your church, why would that be so horrible? The key to all of this is a solid foundation, structure, communication, building leaders and so on. The same way it would be for any ministry in your church that may meet someone's emotional and physical needs first.

I have no idea where to start. Well, guess what? You can start with my ministry, The Singles Network. I lead



the largest single adult leadership ministry in the country. My website has a ton of great resources to help you get started and keep going. Beside myself there are a ton of other great teachers, speakers, authors and pastors who are ready to help you as well. You can also call me at 919.434.3611 for help or attend one of my leadership retreats/conferences geared toward pastors, staff and leaders. Staring a single adult ministry is easy, it's keeping it going that is tough. Because single adults are always on the move (whether getting married, moving into other parts of the Church or simply moving), the ministry can start off strong and begin to waiver. You have to learn how to keep your ministry going by growing leaders, expecting turnover, and change. The results can be phenomenal if you do.

I need to just focus on the traditional families like mine. I know it so much easier to just focus on what you know versus what you don't know. I understand completely. I have never been married nor have children, yet I continue to have them cross my path as I lead singles. The solution? You build a team, a staff, and/or hire a pastor or director that does care and understands single adults.

We don't have the resources. I realize hiring a pastor or director does cost money. However, training a lay leader to be under an existing pastor does not. Most single adults have a way to pay for the things they might need. I say this in all ministry, "just do less and allow the singles to do more." So you aren't able to underwrite a huge conference or retreat? Well, do a one-day conference at another church. Well, you aren't able to order those Bible studies you wanted for all the singles? Since when do we need the church to buy our Bible studies? Well, we can't bring in that fabulous speaker named Kris Swiatocho. Well, you start with your own pastors and lay leadership to speak and build. Don't ever let resources keep you from doing what God has called you to do. Please see my website for a list of speakers that might be local to your area.

I think its better to include singles in our overall ministry of the church and not separate them out. More and more churches seem to be doing this not because they really believe it's the best choice but because they don't want to deal with or mess with reaching single adults. Singles ministry can be difficult and time consuming due to the various needs of singles. However, churches cannot ignore that all people have specific needs that cannot be ministered too with one method. This is why we have youth ministry, women's, senior and so on. I also say, "Not all churches are called to have a singles ministry but all churches are called to minister to singles." It's not that you have to have this huge singles ministry with a pastor or director. It's more about how you minister to singles that might have specific needs such as how to build relationships for friendship or marriage. Needs such as divorce recovery, being a single parent, finances, loneliness, etc. Single adult ministry isn't separating singles out from the body but instead, helping them grow in their own walks that enhance the entire body of believers.

So what is the real issue? What it really comes down to are most pastors like you are men with traditional families. You have been married since your early twenties. You have no idea what is feels like to be single. As a result, you simply teach and move towards what you do know...others like yourself. Please know, I am not writing this to fuss at you, as I know being a pastor is hard. I simply want to educate you on the other half of our population that makes up our cities and towns. A population that is ready and willing to serve the Lord. A population that could use support, counsel and encouragement. A population that needs discipleship. A population, just like Jesus, the greatest single who ever lived, who can also do amazing things for the God if only given the chance.

I encourage you to start today, asking God if you have been reaching ALL for Christ. Asking God what you need



to be doing to reach the single adults in your church and community. And please know, when you make the effort to pour into a single adult, you are impacting the family of the future.

TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries helps churches, pastors and single adult leaders evaluate, develop and support their single adult ministries through high-energy speaking engagements, results-oriented consulting and training and leadership development conferences and seminars. [Click here](#) to request a FREE "How to Start a Single Adult Ministry" guide.

FromHisHands.com Ministries is Kris's speaking ministry. If you've ever heard her speak, you know that Kris is the kind of speaker who keeps the crowd captivated, shares great information and motivates people to make a difference in the lives of those around them! She speaks to all church audiences on everything from "first impression" ministry to women's topics to singles and young adults. She can speak on a Sunday morning, at a woman's retreat or for a single adults conference. Bring Kris to your church today!