**DEAR KRIS….**

**where are all the men, the healthy Christian men? It seems like all the men are either leaving our singles group or not coming at all. What are we doing wrong? How do get more men to show up?**
**Janet, It's Not Raining Men**

Dear Janet, you have asked one of the biggest questions not only facing singles ministry but all ministry. There are several factors but let's address a few right up front. You might want to also purchase the book, ["Why Men Hate Going to Church" by David Murrow](http://www.amazon.com/Why-Men-Hate-Going-Church/dp/0785260382%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) which may offer some additional insights.

In singles ministry, we know:

1. Ministries only led by women will only grow women. Bottom line, men need to be led by men. It's not that women don't have something to teach or share, it's just the way God designed men. If men walk into a singles gathering and there are only women, especially those yakking to each other, it's a turnoff. Also, a lot of time these men will be attacked by lonely, somewhat desperate women which only adds to the problem. If the guy is healthy, he will leave and not return. If he is unhealthy, he will stay, looking for someone to date which will end up in an unhealthy relationship.

2. If a couple is divorces while in the church, typically the woman will stay with the children while the man leaves, again adding to the growing number of women.

3. If a couple divorces outside the church, women are more likely to seek the church for help with their divorce recovery and with single parenting.

4. Women are more likely than a man to seek the church for emotional, spiritual and financial help.

5. Women are still outliving men.

6. Most healthy Christian males have found their wives in their twenties, leaving a lot of males beyond forty that are not as healthy.

7. Most singles ministry socials, Bible studies, book clubs, etc. are geared toward women's needs and desires.

8. Men and women are not completely sure of their identities, often explaining why so very few men lead and why so many women take over.

Since the beginning of time Adam and Eve have struggled with their roles. Adam became distracted with Eve, allowing her to lead their family, thereby losing his identity. Eve was not happy with what God had given her and looked outside her relationship with God and Adam to find fulfillment. Even today, we see women eating, shopping, craving constant affirmation, etc. in an attempt to be filled. Men aren't sure if they should open a woman's car door, ask them out first or desire to lead their future family (and whatever that means).  This struggle causes men to leave or not come to church in the first place as they do not feel they can live up to the expectations of their role. Women, while waiting for the men to do their part, get tired and end up doing it all themselves. This only adds to the existing problems. If men perceive women can do it all and do not need them, they will let them do it all.

Genesis 2:15-17 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”Genesis 3:6-7 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

**SOLUTIONS:**
1. Pray. Pray for men, pray for more to come, pray for your part, pray how to empower and encourage them. Also let your church prayer team know of your needs.
2. Find a man to co-lead your ministry, even if he is married so that he can help reach other men. A married man who truly cares about singles is a valued leader. Be sure this man is willing to lead other men in your ministry to not only be "in" the ministry but also in leadership. Note: It's better to start over, getting men involved at the core level then to try and build men when the ratio is 10 to 1.
3. Encourage the men that are coming by empowering them to lead, even in the smallest of areas such as set/clean up, making announcements, picking someone up, etc. As they start with smaller responsibilities, you can add more.
4. Spend time with the men in your ministry to find out what they want to do.
5. Encourage your men to be involved in the men's ministry of your church, even setting up a mentoring program is possible. Work together to help grow your singles ministry.
6. Encourage your men to take camping and fishing trips, attend sporting events, and get together to help build each other up. 7. Involve the pastor(s) of your church and other leaders for help.
8. It's OK to be a single women's ministry as there is a need for that, too.9. Involve other churches, combining resources including men.
10. Involve the younger men of your church to help with certain things such as set-up, greeting, ushering, running sound equipment. etc.

I know it may seem impossible to grow the men in your ministry but with time and prayer, it can happen.

[Matthew 19:26](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2019:26&version=NIV" \t "_blank) Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God ALL THINGS are possible.”

If you have some more suggestions not listed here, please send them to me at Kris@thesinglesnetwork.org.

Blessings, Kris

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