Successful Singles Ministry: Men Growing Men by Kris Swiatocho

NOTE: If you have a growing singles ministry and it’s made up of mostly women, including the leaders, and you are happy, then this article is not for you. If you are a singles ministry that desires to be more successful by balancing it with more men, then read on to hear my suggestions.

As a leader and teacher of single adult ministry for the last 30 years, I get asked over and over again how to start a singles ministry. At least 8 out of 10 of those asking are women. Women who have a passion and heart to reach singles. Women who themselves see the need in the church. Women often get tired of waiting for their pastors to start something—women who are headed for failure because they lack the crucial part needed for success. Besides consistent prayer, church support, and the ability to build leaders, successful singles ministry, I have found, has the best success rate when co-led by male and female leaders. I mean, if you want to have a single adult women's ministry, then praise the Lord. But if you want it to be co-ed, you must find a man to help. "Men leaders can grow men and women, men and women leaders can grow men and women, but only women leaders grow women."

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Now please, don't start sending me feedback saying the opposite. I know some very successful ministries are led by women (I have directed several ones myself). Still, I also found a huge support system with male leaders and pastors ready to help in these ministries. A system that most single adults viewed as a partnership of leadership versus just one lady leading things.

Great women leaders know the value of placing men and women of various backgrounds and giftings under them. They know we need men to reach other men. The last church I was on staff at had a male pastor over me who would assist me in anything I needed, from teaching to prayer to handling issues to attending events. People viewed him as a co-partnership of the singles ministry even though he didn't participate in everything we did. So why is this? Why can't women grow single adult ministries like a man?

Well, please know it’s nothing we, as women, have done wrong. It's simply what God designed in us as male and female. For a male to grow to be the man God wants him to be, he needs to be led by another male. I am not saying women can't teach a man or offer insight or some wisdom of truth. I am just saying that our role as women should be to encourage, support, pray and honor the role God has given men directly. The same is true for women, too. Men can only disciple women to a point. There comes a time when it's not safe for a single male leader to be alone with a single lady. There are things in life that only another woman can understand. So, when only women lead a ministry, they tend to draw only other women (and the occasional unhealthy men). As our single adults get older, more women are coming than men. So, this makes it much more essential to have a male co-leader to help reach those men who aren't coming.

So, what is the co-leaders’ role? Most women seem to be doing all the roles with what appears to be a success. Well, not really. If you were that successful, you would have more men coming.

So, when you find this man, what is his role so you can get a more balanced ministry?

• Get men up in front of your class, group, or event as much as possible. They can open in prayer and make announcements. This can lead to them facilitating a Bible study or leading an event.

• Ask men to call/e-mail/text other men to invite them to your events and studies.

• During bible studies or Sunday school, put men into small groups to discuss questions so they can bond.

• Encourage men to hang out separately from women. I try and get one man to be willing to be the point person for a ball game, dinner at a sports restaurant, camping, or fishing trip. If he is the point person once, he may do it again. I value their contribution of ideas and input for the ministry. Note: Discourage women from trying to join men on camping trips, sporting events, etc. We want our men to get to know each other outside of women.

• Encourage men to help. I do less and ask them to do more. I talk less and allow them to talk more. I celebrate even the tiniest things they do in hopes it will encourage them to do more. Affirm positive behavior.

You see, ladies, men know we will do it all because we have done it all. So, to allow them to lead, we must often let some things go. When men visit our ministries and see other men that look and appear like them, they are more likely to return. But if these men only see a group of cackling women—or, worse, attacking cackling women—they will turn and run.

Please know all of this takes time. If you commit this to prayer and start encouraging the existing men to help in various areas that give them visibility, you will be on the right path. And you can't ever give up, ever. What if you don't have any men who could step up? Well, sometimes, our ministries only have unhealthy men or men who cannot lead in any way (even after years of encouragement and training). These men either do not have the calling or are not mature.

**So sometimes:**

• Ask a married man to help—either a pastor, deacon/elder, or another church leader. There may be an excellent teacher who is married that could come in and co-teach the class with the agreement to help grow the men. This could be a temporary situation.

• Asked church leaders for help and prayer.

• Invite a pastor to attend some of your events to show visibility and support to the ministry.

• If there is an assigned deacon, ask him and/or his wife to attend your class, group, or event. Ask if they are willing to teach from time to time. Maybe they could host leaders meeting at home or teach an ongoing Bible study.

*“To get healthier men in your singles ministry, you must reach them and grow them through other healthy men.”*

To get healthier men in your singles ministry, you must reach them and grow them through other healthy men. We, as women, can help. We can pray for our men, value how God has placed them in our churches and ministries to lead, and foremost, step down in certain areas to allow men to step up.

Ladies, I know you are willing to do whatever God wants you to, but you will never know how much greater ministry is when it’s co-led by a male. So put it to prayer and wait on God. When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts (Acts 11:23).

www.LaborDaySingles.org

www.IntentionalRelationshipSolutions.org

www.TheSinglesNetwork.org

[www.KrisSwiatochoMinistries.org](http://www.KrisSwiatochoMinistries.org)