



Jesus ... Single Like Me: Building Your Ministry
by Kris Swiatocho

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EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article is part of the Jesus . . . Single Like Me series.

Jesus lived his life as a single adult till his death. Because he lived his life as a single adult, he understands every aspect of what you and I are experiencing today. This series examines the "singleness" of Christ in relation to our singleness with the hope you will be encouraged to walk this journey you have been given. A journey that not only leads to the cross for our salvation but to his resurrection for our future.

It was 2 a.m., and I was scrunched down in my hall bathroom with nothing to keep me company but my dog, a black Cocker Spaniel named Joshua, and a battery-operated radio. I kept switching back and forth to the various stations trying to find out where the storm was. The power had gone out hours before, and panic was beginning to set in.

It was September 5, 1996 and Hurricane Fran was just about to hit my hometown of Garner, NC (a suburb of Raleigh). As I kept fighting with the radio, my dog needed to go out again. I was reluctant to let him out but knew I preferred to not have him go in my small bathroom. I lit another candle and slowly opened the front door to let him out. Everything was pitch-black. The wind sounded horrible, and there was an uneasiness in the air. I hollered for Joshua to come back, and in a matter of seconds a very wet dog ran back inside. We quickly walked back into my bathroom and laid on the mattress I had put on the floor. This would be a long, hot night, waiting for the storm to pass and praying my house would still be standing. Had it been built right? Had it been built on solid ground? Could it withstand the storm ahead? Only God knew the answers.

I have used this story many times as I have led single adult ministry. Of how important it is for our ministries to be started on solid ground. So many times we get ahead of God, wanting to have a ministry for singles to have something fun to do. Sure, we know we need Bible study and prayer but somehow, some way, those things get prioritized toward the bottom of the list. In Matthew 7:21-29 Jesus tells us the importance of building not only our ministries on solid ground, but ourselves as well.

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only those who do the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law (Matt. 7:21-29).

Jesus, Single Like Me Teaches:

1. Not everyone will enter the kingdom just because they cry out to God. It's so easy to say as Christians that we are good people and we love God. That we go to church, read our Bibles, and say "bless you" when somebody sneezes. Jesus tells us not everyone who calls out to God will enter the kingdom of heaven but only those doing the will of God. The devil believes, goes to church, knows the Bible better than you or I but he is not going to heaven. Our relationship has to be more than lip service. More than just fitting in with those beside you. More than just putting "Christian" on your Facebook



page. It's how you are living your life. It's your walk, day in and day out. It's how you love others due to your relationship with Christ. It's how you spend your money, your time and your energy. It's your attitude. Are you building God's kingdom or your own? Are you really seeing growth in your relationship with God? Has your salvation really made a change in your life? A change that not only changes you but helps you to lead others to that change as well?

So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking (Eph. 4:17).

"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matt. 6:33).

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God (Col. 3:1).

2. To enter into heaven, actions led by God must be followed our faith. There are so many folks out there who live a mediocre life in Christ. They are like zombies in the world. They do the same thing every day, working hard for the paycheck only to end their day in exhaustion and emptiness. Christ came to give us life in abundance. This abundance is a life with passion and purpose. Out of our relationship with Christ, there should easily be a desire to serve the Lord, but it must be in HIS WILL. So many people serve the Lord out of obligation. Well, I am a member of this church so I guess I should sign up to teach kids or serve food, etc. What? How boring is that! I promise you as you seek God with all your might and all your strength, he will give you direction. He will help you find the passion that comes from purpose. He will guide you to serve in a way that brings joy not only to our heavenly Father but to you and those around you. As you find your place in God's will for your life, it will spread to others to seek theirs. Don't just believe in God, but follow in HIS way.

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says (James 1:22).

The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy (Ps. 111:7).

Very truly I tell you, all who have faith in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father (John 14:12).

3. These principles apply to our ministries, too. As a ministry, Jesus tells us that many will say "we" did this and "we" did that in your name. Lord, we built this ministry and fed homeless people, we raised money for this mission trip, we visited people in nursing homes and so on. But again, lost people feed the hungry and raise money and visit folks in nursing homes. When you say you do these things in HIS name but aren't living it yourself, it means nothing to Jesus. He will simply tell you he never knew you. There are so many so-called ministries out there that raise funds to help orphans but keep most of the money for themselves. Even on a smaller scale, do we give God our leftovers or our best? Are we really serving out of a humility from grace or because it looks good to others? As we lead our ministries, we must teach others the importance of serving God. That not all ministry is truly led by God.

"Bring the best of the first-fruits of your soil to the house of the LORD your God" (Ex. 23:19).

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15).

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others (Phil. 2:1-4).



4. Before I can do anything in His will, I (we) must listen:

a. I have to be quiet. I can't tell you how many times I have lost direction in the ministry God has given me due to not being quiet enough to hear God. The Lord teaches us the importance of being quiet so that we can really hear God speak. We are so distracted by so many things. From our own personal sin (and that of others) to people pulling us to do this or that, to the personal needs of others to over-commitment. How can you even begin to listen when the noise in your life overwhelms you?

But whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm (Prov. 1:33).

"Now then, my children, listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways" (Prov. 8:32).

b. I have to make it something I practice daily. How can I know what God wants from me daily if I don't listen daily? This means a consistent time with God where you are reading his Word and allowing time for the Holy Spirit to give you direction. It's personal time with God so you can pray for others as well as yourself and your ministry. Out of this quietness comes the peace and strength we need from God.

"Teach me, and I will be quiet; show me where I have been wrong" (Job 6:24).

The fruit of that righteousness will be peace; its effect will be quietness and confidence forever (Isa. 32:17).

c. Be ready to do what God asks. God gives us direction all day. We don't move on this action because we sometimes don't like what he is telling us to do. For myself there are times I know God wants me to share with this person, or deal with this conflict, etc. I know this is only to help me grow, but I will sometimes avoid listening to God. But realize, his way is also best. His way leads to victory. His way leads to peace. His way leads to wisdom. You can never have too much wisdom.

Again and again I sent all my servants the prophets to you. They said, "Each of you must turn from your wicked ways and reform your actions; do not follow other gods to serve them. Then you will live in the land I have given to you and your ancestors." But you have not paid attention or listened to me (Jer. 35:15).

Note: Leaders, it's very important that we continue to model this to our teams. We need to be holding folks accountable to their own time with God. Ask the hard questions, encourage them to be consistent, seek help from a counselor as needed, etc. We want our teams to grow, and it has to start with them as individuals. As we grow personally, it affects the whole team.

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:11-13).

5. As we build our lives and our ministries on a solid foundation, we can handle anything thrown our way. When your relationship (your foundation) is built based on God's direction, you are built on solid rock. Like a house, our ministries must be started with the right foundation. So many singles ministries are started backwards. We want the events and fun things to do. We want the large numbers, however, we don't want to do the work to get there. Just like in your own walk, you have gotten to where you are step by step. Our ministries are the same. We must go the speed God wants us to, slowly building a strong foundation of prayer, leadership development and communication. The stronger the foundation, the better chance of continued success.

So there I was with my dog, listening to the wind howl and the rain pound on the roof. All I could do was pray. I knew my house was built well. I knew I had done what I needed to secure items on my deck from blowing away or crashing into



my house. I knew I had bought necessary food and water supplies. But would it be enough? Would the preparations I had done save my house? Well morning finally came and to my surprise my house had withstood the storm. I had one tree that had toppled over away from my house. I would find out later that weeping willows have short root systems making them easy targets for storms. However, as I walked throughout my neighborhood, some of my neighbors' homes had not fared as well. Some had trees fallen through their roofs and cars. Some had windows blown out. I quickly ran home and grabbed some supplies to help my neighbors. The whole neighborhood came out to help each other. Even though some of our home foundations weren't as strong as others, we still came together to help each other.

So even in our own walks and our own ministries, we must come alongside to help each other grow, to build the right foundation for passionate, purposeful relationship with the Lord so when the storms come we will be able to withstand.

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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!

Singles and Relationships by Kris Swiatocho and Dick Purnell

Many singles are Christians who wonder if God will ever bring a mate their way or if they should just stop focusing on a future with a marriage partner and live the single life to the fullest. Kris Swiatocho and Dick Purnell offer solid biblical answers for singles in this newest title in Dick's popular 31-Day Experiment Bible study.