



Myths About Singles

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 singles 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.

In my last article, I shared with you why there are so many single adults in our country. From the downward spiral of the values in our society, to the lack of leaders and parental figures to guide them to the enemies attack to good old fashion sin. Singleness is here and it continues to grow at an alarming rate. We do not have time to sit by thinking it will go down in numbers on it's own. As a church we have to do more. We have to reach out to singles of all ages. We have to empower and educate, encourage and elevate. Single adults want to contribute. They want to help grow the church too. While some singles are called to be single if not now or for season, most are called to be married. Single adults want the leadership, guidance and support so they can have a successful married. But if you continue to ignore them, eventually they will stop coming and trying to be apart of your congregation. They will either find a church that will embrace them or stop going to church all together. The world loves single adults...then why doesn't the church?

So in order to help reach more single adults, I am going to be writing a series of articles on the "myth's" of single adults. I pray this helps you in establishing a way to reach them. Remember, there are many singles in the Bible that did amazing things for God, including our Savior, Jesus Christ. Don't limit what a single person can do in your church, your ministry and even in your family and community.

Let's clear up some myths about single adults...

MYTH #1: WE HAVE MORE TIME

Single adults have the same amount of time as any body else. However, singles never married* have the most flexible use of their time and money but are typically the least reached in the church. Singles that have been married and/or parenting kids at home, have the least flexible use of their time and money but typically have the most needs in the church.

Today a lot of churches have started to reach out to young singles from 18-30 through college and young adult ministry. Single parent ministry is doing much better as well since so many churches have included them under "family ministry" program. Singles 45 and up are being reached through divorce and grief recovery ministries (Note: Divorce and death affect adults of all ages but in the church, we primarily see folks over 40 who come for help with divorce recovery and or a death of a spouse). So what is missing? It's the in between age. It's the 30 to 45ish and sometimes even over 45 that has never been married. Not only are they the least reached in the church but also they are least used when they are reach. *Statistically, never marrieds from 18 to the grave are the largest demographics among all singles, but again, we are the least number in the church.

So church, wake up and reach out to this amazing group of never marrieds or for some, "always single." We



may not have more time than you pastors that are married but we do have more flexibility with our time and money. We can be used in ways no one else in your church can. We can come in earlier, stay longer, go on mission trips, and serve in last minute needs. We can also make quick decisions regarding the use of our income. From personal experience, if you reach out to a never married, they will be more consistent with their serving and giving, more than any other demographic. So start today, look at your church stats, and find those never marrieds.

MYTH #2: WE ARE LESS COMMITTED

You know, for year's single adults have had a bad rap for being less committed. This is such a joke to me. Why? Well, if you serve in church long enough you realize there are a ton of marrieds who are also not committed. Tons of wives that show up without husbands and vice versa. Tons of parents serving without their children showing up. It's not a singles problem but a people problem.

I think the problem is that because singles are alone, when they may not show up for a commitment of some kind, you automatically assume they aren't committed. However, when a married person shows up without their spouse who also committed to something, you think in your mind, they have both showed up because one them did. When in fact, it's the same problem. Somebody didn't show up for a commitment. So the real issue is getting God's people to follow-through with what they committed too.

I know for myself, when my church valued my opinion, involved me in the leadership of the church, called me by name, took the time to get to know me, treated me like an adult, etc. I was committed. In fact, my home church had leadership positions of 3 years at a time. I was on several of these over the years. I never thought twice about making the decision to serve this long. Sure, as a single I could get married and want to quit but you know what, marrieds have things happen in their lives that cause them to quit as well. Like singles, our parents get sick, jobs change, children need extra attention, etc. Simply, life changes.

So next time, you think...singles have more time or they are less committed, realize we are just like you. We have the same clock, the same needs to be included and valued. Maybe to get singles to be more committed, you need to be more committed to them and set the example. So start today figuring out how you, as a pastor, as a leader can reach more single adults. Value their time, value their insight, and value their contribution. If you do, you will be amazed of how they can serve in your church. You will just be amazed.

Psalm 37:4-6 Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.

Kris Swiatocho is the President and Director of TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries and FromHisHands.com Ministries. Kris has served in ministry in various capacities for the last 25 years. An accomplished trainer and mentor, Kris has a heart to reach and grow leaders so they will in turn reach and grow others. She is the author of three books: *Singles and Relationships: A 31-Day Experiment*, co-authored with Dick Purnell of Single Life Resources; *From the Manger to the Cross: The Women in Jesus' Life*; and the most recent, *Jesus, Single Like Me with Study*



Questions (includes a leader's guide and conference/retreat of the same name). Kris is currently working on her fourth book: FAQ's of Singles Ministry coming this fall 2013.

The Singles Network Ministries 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' 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!