



Why Are There So Many Single Adults? 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.

In my last article, I shared with you the statistics of young and single adults in our country. Half of all adults in the US are single (18 to the grave, never-married, widow, single again, etc.). If this is so, where did they all come from? And why do we not see them in the church?

Note, in larger cities the percentage is higher while in rural areas the number is much lower.

Why the recent explosion in the number of singles?

1. Young single adults (18-33) are postponing marriage as social values change.

They are just choosing to live together or not get married at all. In a recent online interview conducted by www.myfoxatlanta.com, Andy Stanley, pastor of NorthPoint in Atlanta, GA, said that 50-60% of singles coming to his church for counseling are cohabitating. Pastor Stanley has had to make some serious changes in how they reach and grow singles adults at North Point.

2. There is a small increase in the number of individuals in our society who have chosen to remain single permanently.

Most are staying single because of trust issues. They see all the marriages around them fail including their parents. They are afraid of failure and choose not to pursue marriage at all.

3. Selfishness at an all-time high.

We are a generation of people extremely self-focused. We simply lack the skills to handle differences with the opposite sex. We go into relationships with a mental button that says "exit" at anytime or just delete. We have no idea what real commitment is or how to handle conflict. If we can't handle conflict between friends then how do you handle it with a spouse?

4. The number of divorces in America continues to rise.

Although in the future I predict this number will come down as there will not be any marriages, just cohabitation.

5. Many more singles are simply having kids without having to commit to a marriage, creating an epidemic of single-parent households.

A few years back I was speaking with Linda Ranson Jacobs, founder of Healthy Loving Partnerships For Our Kids about "Divorce Care for Kids", a program that she help to develop and teaches through Church Initiative. She made a remark that she wished the title of the material was "Disaster Care for Kid's" as more and more of her audience were single parents who have never been married. Some of the single moms and dads had lived with the other parent while many more had not. For some reason, singles feel that choosing to have kids without the other parent present is going to be easy but they learn it is very difficult. To this day I have never met a "single parent" who loves parenting alone.



6. As a nation, the approval and tolerance regarding same sex relationships continues to rise.

We have a generation of young adults who have grown up with these individuals. They simply do not see it as a problem. The more comfortable we become around adults in same sex relationships, the more we continue to see the numbers of singles increase.

7. All people are living longer. So even when a spouse dies, the remaining spouse is living longer than they use to be.

8. People are not listening, believing or following Christ.

They just don't believe the Lord is relevant anymore. They will just trust in themselves, making their own future. I have never seen this so prevalent in the future generation of young single adults. Just take a look at Facebook. Because they don't appear to need the Lord, they also don't need His direction. A direction that would lead them toward a committed healthy relationship, toward marriage.

So whose fault is it? Singles? Married's? The Church? Why are we not reaching singles adults the way we should be? I believe God wants most people to marry and have children. But the enemies goal is for this NOT to happen. John 10: 10 says: The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

The enemy seeks to destroy the single adult before they get married, before they have even grown up by:

- attacking them through broken homes where they may be abuse and abandonment
- eliminating leadership in the home
- attacking any opportunity to bring Christ into the home
- attacking their self-esteem and value system from their childhood into their teens; a time when young people start to experiment with drugs, alcohol and sex.
- attacking any opportunity to learn life skills such as how to have a healthy relationship

The enemy steals our identity in Christ before it can be developed. He lies to us from the beginning of our lives. His goal is to destroy us. If the enemy can keep a single focused on himself, his issues and his problems, then he never focuses on others. He never learns to find completeness in Christ. And as a result, pouring out to others and serving. If the enemy can keep a single separated from community, church, and family, then he will eventually separate them from God (or even prevent the connection to begin with). If the enemy can keep the church focused on what it knows only, then what it doesn't know gets ignored, like the single adult, he wins. And when no one reaches the single adult, then eventually (based on stats) there will be no one to reach. How much longer can you ignore us Church, Pastor? We need the church to reach out to millions of young and single adults in your home, your community and your church. Reach out for ALL the relationships of tomorrow...so there will be a tomorrow.

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 MinistriesTheSinglesNetwork.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!