**Single or Courtship: Be Mr. or Ms Right**

***Pastor Miike Ngui***

I wish that all of you were as I am. But each of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that. Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I do (1 Corinthians 7:7-8)

I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord’s affairs—how he can please the Lord. But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world—how he can please his wife—and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord’s affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband. I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord. (1 Corinthians 7: 32-35)

**Introduction**

The pulpit has to say something about all these thing and connect the realities. The fact is many people remain single and delay marriage in the developed world. Nowadays, only two generations meet during Chinese New Year. We have to deal with the issues to be single. Singlehood is a gift of God and a unique season of opportunity to grow, know and serve.

**Four things you should ask yourself:**

# Myths and Reasons

"Now for the matters you wrote about: 'It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.'" (1 Corinthians 7:1)

A myth is an unfounded notion. Example;

”Being single is not ordained by God.”

“you are incomplete”

“Always looking for partners”

“Something wrong with him”

These myths hurt single people a lot.

Reasons

* Some are born eunuchs

There are different reasons why some men cannot marry. Some men were born without the ability to become fathers. Others were made that way later in life by other people. (Matthew 19:12a (NCV))

* Some people are abused when they are young and thus it becomes difficult for them to relate to people of the opposite sex.
* Some are single by choice and prefer to be single.
* Some have become single after being married e.g. death or divorce.

There are different reasons why some men cannot marry. Some men were born without the ability to become fathers. Others were made that way later in life by other people. And some men have given up marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 19:12 (NCV))

1 Corinthians 7:37 (MSG) On the other hand, if a man is comfortable in his decision for a single life in service to God and it’s entirely his own conviction and not imposed on him by others, he ought to stick with it. (1 Corinthians 7:37 (MSG))

# Upside


An upside is something good and desirable to be used for advantage or benefit.

## Freedom from Care

All I am saying is that when you marry, you take on additional stress in an already stressful time, and I want to spare you if possible. (1 Corinthians 7:28 (MSG))

When you marry you will take on additional stress. Paul acknowledges that marriage adds demand and says that there is no reason to marry. They are free to do wherever they want and go everywhere.

## Freedom to Serve

An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord’s affairs—how he can please the Lord. … An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord’s affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. (1 Corinthians 7:32, 34 (NIV))

Single people are free to serve others. They can focus on serving God. Single people can devote more time and attention in God’s affairs. Some of the greatest people who served were single. John Wesley worked to a point he had a shaky marriage. When God asks you to leave, you are able to leave to any country. Some missionaries in DUMC are single. Some take their family.

When Pastor Mike’s mother was ill, his sister, then single took care of her mother because of the time she had.

Single people can take time to cultivate friendships and serve the community. Single people have freedom to do so.

Some single people in the bible who were single

1. Ruth (Care giver): Ruth was a widow who took care of her mother in law.
2. Anna (Intercessor): She was in the church 24/7 and was there when Jesus came as a baby.
3. Mary, Martha and Lazarus (Hospitable): They hosted Jesus and the disciples on numerous occasions.
4. Paul (Missionary): He was able to go on missionary journeys, get stoned and jailed for God because of his singlehood.

# Downside

Downside is something that you do not want or like.

## http://static1.squarespace.com/static/511a3145e4b0f4197c0e28de/t/5362438ae4b081613fd68588/1398948747158/wedding+rings+on+bible.jpg?format=1500wSexual Temptation

But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry. It is better to marry than to burn with sexual desire. (1 Corinthians 7:9 (NCV))

Paul warns of sexual temptation and that if we cannot control our urges then you should marry.

## Loneliness

Single people are lonely because they live alone and have nobody to talk to about the day or spontaneously go out for a movie or dinner. They are also lonely in their financial commitments. When it comes to buying a house or car, all commitments fall on themselves.

Some married people also face loneliness. Marriage isn’t the end of everything. Both are different and have their own set of challenges. Everyone has to deal with loneliness.

## Self-centredness

This is when life becomes all about you and nothing else. You live life alone without any person without considering anyone else. They need to manage their singleness. Singlehood is a gift of God and a unique season of opportunity to grow, know and serve.

# For the single

I want you to live as free of complications as possible. When you’re unmarried, you’re free to concentrate on simply pleasing the Master. (1 Corinthians 7:32 (MSG))

## Celebrate

Celebrate your singlehood. You have the freedom to travel and pursue hobbies. Pastor Mike used to spend up to 12 hours on plastic modelling. Since marriage, he does not have the time and the flexibility. You can pursue any hobby you want. Exploit any opportunity. Pr. Mike is taking his Masters of Divinity part time but he can’t determine when he will finish. Use your freedom to serve in God and go for missions. Volunteer on weekends. You have more opportunities.

Be careful of temptation, loneliness and self-centredness. You need to cultivate a strong relationship with God to overcome all these.

## Cultivate authentic wholesome relationships

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. (Galatians 6:10 (NIV))

Use your time to cultivate relationships with everybody. Make genuine friends. Serve in community services. Be a mentor or big brother. Paul called the church his family. When you cultivate such relationships, you will have lasting friendships

## Continue

### Grow to be the you in Christ

The time and energy that married people spend on caring for and nurturing each other, the unmarried can spend in becoming whole and holy instruments of God (1 Corinthians 7:34 (MSG))

Continue your walk in Christ. You will grow to have the inner beauty which emanates as a secure person unique in Christ. You will grow to be the Mr. or Ms Right, not a mistake. God will release you to love people without condition.

When people date, both people wear masks. Be the real you and enter marriage in this manner to grow the inner beauty.

### Obsess yourself with God

And don’t be wishing you were someplace else or with someone else. Where you are right now is God’s place for you. Live and obey and love and believe right there. God, not your marital status, defines your life. (1 Corinthians 7:17 (MSG))

God defines your life, not your marital status. God is the main document. Everything else fits in.

### Crave Godly Contentment

But godliness with contentment is great gain. (1 Timothy 6:6(MSG))

Seek your contentment in Christ. Contentment is active. It is about the way we think. Put your contentment in God. The only one that can satisfy us is God.

# For the unsingle

Don’t think lowly of them. They are the ones that can serve. It is God’s gift to the body of Christ. Be understanding and have compassion for those who are single for circumstance. Let us be sensitive and not nag them all the time. Don’t match make them all the time. Allow them to grow to be the person God wants them to be.

# Conclusion

Singlehood is a gift of God and a unique season of opportunity to grow, know and serve.

Sermon summary contributed by Abbey Thangiah

Prayer points contributed by Loong





SERMON: Being Single

**Pray:**

* Those who are single will find their identify and worth in Christ and will be set free from stigmas placed upon them by others.
* They will take advantages of the freedom of being single to serve God.
* They will not succumb to temptations and loneliness.
* Married Christians will provide support by acceptance, understanding and being sensitive.

***Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I do. (1 Corinthians 7:7)***

**MINISTRIES & EVENTS: Lent**

**Lent in 2016 started on 10/02/2016 (Wed).**

**Pray:**

* Christians live a simple live and fast so they can focus on Jesus.
* As they remove distractions in life, they can draw close to God.
* Those who lose track of life’s purposes will be able to hear from God and rediscover their purpose in life.
* During the season of Lent, Christians will dwell deeply into the Word of God and spend time with God.
* The intimacy with God developed during this time will continue long after Lent is over.

***“Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.” (Joel 2:12-13)***MALAYSIA MY NATION: Sarawak State Election

***The next Sarawak state election is scheduled to be held on 20/09/2016.***

**Pray:**

* A government that has integrity and justice and righteousness will be elected.
* Elected representatives will have a heart to serve the people and put the people’s interest first.
* Clean and fair election.
* Commitment made will be carried out and not become empty promises.
* Sarawak will be treated fairly according to the agreement made when they joined and formed the Federation of Malaysia.

***Appoint judges and officials for each of your tribes in every town the Lord your God is giving you, and they shall judge the people fairly. Do not pervert justice or show partiality. Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the innocent. Follow justice and justice alone, so that you may live and possess the land the Lord your God is giving you. (Deuteronomy 16:18-20)***

* **A TRANSFORMED WORLD: Cyclone Winston**

***Cyclone Winston struck the Fiji, leaving 6 dead and most of the nation without electricity. The weather was calm on Sunday but a curfew was extended to ensure order. Police are allowed to make arrest without warrant during the curfew. Efforts are being made to restore power, fresh water supply and communication.***

**Pray:**

* Rescue work will reach those in need in time.
* Order will be maintained at this time.
* Supplies will reach those who need them.
* Electric power supply, water supply and communication will be restored very soon.
* The nation will rebuild itself from the damages caused by the cyclone.
* People will find comfort and hope in Christ.

***Surely God is my help; the Lord is the one who sustains me. (Psalm 54:4)***