

Should a Christian Try Online Dating and Other Insights Into the Single Life

Thirty-six year-old Mandy Hale says she's determined to live her best life now, even without the man the church always seems to think she needs.

Hale is taking a stand for singles and she has poured much of her knowledge of singles into her new book, *Beautiful Uncertainty*.

"I feel like singles—we fall through the cracks," Hale says. "Once you get past a certain point, you have (ministries to) college age, singles, you know, young careers. But I'm 36 now, I don't feel 36. It's kind of like at certain age, (you) stick out like a sore thumb."

Indeed, some of Hale's same comments are mentioned in *Charisma's* recent article, "Singles and the Church: Sidelined or Sanctified."

Despite the influx of sermons, devotionals, small groups and teachings based on marriage, this doesn't change the fact that more than 50 percent of adults are single, and many of those are in the church.

Hale openly rejects the idea that life begins at marriage. Instead, she says she wants to show up for her life now.

"It's amazing to see what happens when you show up for your life, live right now, enjoy it and celebrate this moment," Hale says. "Singleness is always waiting around for next big thing to occur, and you can spend your entire life waiting, and not doing anything. ... There's a beautiful uncertainty to singleness. It's unknown; it's not mapped out for us like it

is for our married counterparts. Taking a look at it through a different lens means we can embrace the uncertainty and fill the empty time with adventure, friends and traveling.”

To combat the perceived attitude that a woman is complete without a man, that her identity, instead, should be in Christ, Hale speaks boldly about living her life right now in the beautiful uncertainty that is her singleness. Much of it, she says, has to do with the daily surrender to Christ.

“Yes, I have my days when I’m bummed out and watch Netflix. We all have those days,” Hale says. “You have to remember that even as a content single person, those days will come. You can’t judge; you have to work through them. You tell God, ‘Today, I want to hand back to You my singleness and have a day where I don’t feel single and alone.’ God is big enough to handle that. ... If I could hand Him my singleness once, I would be dependent on myself, but because I am in constant state of surrender, I’m constantly depending on Him.”

And part of that trust may involve setting up an online dating profile.

Hale, who started as a publicist and is now a full-time author and blogger, has seen first-hand the power of technology and how the Internet can be used for good. She may even consider giving God the chance to work on her love story through online dating—something many in the church hesitate to consider.

Though some have considered choosing to date online as playing God, Hale says she’s beginning to reject that notion.

“I’m kind of starting to look at online dating in a different perspective,” Hale says. “Think about the old adage that Lord works in mysterious ways. Who is to say that He can’t bring the love of my life through a dating website?”

Dating aside, Hale says she wants the mindset surrounding singleness to change.

“There’s so much negative information, including statistics, telling how many single men are out there versus single women. Honestly, that’s the crux of the entire message. We need to put a different message out there,” Hale says of the church. “I thought I would see a lot of other people rise up to see people talk about singleness in another way. Lord knows we could use some men who have good heads on their shoulders. I hope that the single message is evolving, that the mindset about singleness is changing. I don’t know how quickly that’s happening, but I think opinions are starting to shift, hopefully.”

And it all boils down to this: Each individual is complete in Christ.