

The Biggest Temptations for Single Christians

The words singleness and purity can paint different pictures for people. Some might vividly see spiritual life virtuously triumphing over carnal desires. Others might see constant spiritual struggle involving blood, sweat and tears. The truth is that the pursuit of purity for singles is often a mixture of both.

Purity and holiness is important to every believer, not just singles. So why does holiness and purity deserve a whole separate approach from singles' perspective? Well, singleness—especially long time singleness—is a unique way of living, and because of that it comes with a separate set of challenges.

I've heard it said many times that singleness is a gift. But frankly if you have been single for a long enough time, you probably know that more often than not, singleness doesn't feel like a gift. As a single person you have nobody to be intimate with, and that can leave you with unmet emotional and physical needs.

But there are exceptions to this. You may not desire to be married, and you can be perfectly satisfied without a mate. Your heart's desire is to be unmarried, and you're living your dream life. Or, you may want to get married, but you live in such a vibrant relationship with the Lord that you are fulfilled emotionally. And your mind is so full of Him that your sexuality is kept at the right place as well.

Of course, the majority of us singles struggle from time to time to guard that vibrant relationship with Christ. We are close to Jesus and feel satisfied, but then we drift from the deep intimacy with Him and we feel the struggle again.

Even if it doesn't feel like fun at times, singleness can be a gift. As a single person, you can be a unique gift to the body of Christ and to the world. You are free to go. You are free to volunteer. You are available to take risks that you probably wouldn't take as a married person.

For many people, singleness can also be just a season. You can learn and grow without burdening somebody with the process. The best advice I've ever been given regarding this was to "become the person you are looking for." During the time I live as a single woman, God can do major groundwork in my life to prepare me to be a gift to my spouse when he comes.

Singleness can be a gift for you and Jesus. And this is the most important aspect. Singleness as we know it now, and marriage as well, will pass. They belong to this short life that we live on Earth. But our life is eternal, like our relationship with Jesus.

As a single person, we have an opportunity to really establish profound closeness with Jesus. These are things that we can learn in marriage, too. I hear from married friends that they learned a lot about becoming more Christlike after they got married.

But as the Apostle Paul said, "He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord" (1 Cor. 7:32, MEV). And that goes for unmarried women, as well. We have undivided attention, time and energy that we can invest in our relationship with the Lord.

But what about the temptations that can try to pull us away from holiness and purity? Obviously, there are sexual temptations, in all forms and shapes. This is a vulnerable area for most singles. I believe we have to be extra careful of what are we watching, reading or thinking about. The area of sexuality is the one we probably have to guard the most.

But there are other temptations, too. Waiting a long time to

find a mate can lead to unwise choices. If we get impatient and marry a non-believer, that doesn't necessarily come against our purity in the strictest sense, but it will distort God's plan for our lives. Getting bitter over singleness is a temptation too. Also, living alone for a long time can present the danger of becoming self-centered, thus becoming someone who is not even Christ-like, let alone a good future mate.

Purity means so much more than not getting into a sexual relationship before we say "I do." Holiness is not just about things we do and don't do. Holiness is about being separated for Jesus in every aspect of our lives. We are to be His. We must give up our presumed right to personal happiness so that we can conform to His Word.

I'm not writing these lines as someone who has got it all together. Even though I haven't had a major sexual failure as a Christian, I've fallen into things that were impure. I've battled bitterness and self-centeredness.

Every time I fall in some way or I kick and scream against my single state of being, I realize that God is speaking to my heart and offering His love to me. He wants me to receive it—to get rooted and grounded in it. He wants me to know He is enough for me.

He wants me to seek after His crazy, passionate love. If I really knew it as I am supposed to know—not on an intellectual level, but on a heart level—then I would be satisfied and saturated with Him. I would be less likely to fall into temptation, and I wouldn't kick and scream that I don't want to be single anymore!

Holiness is a heart issue. The greatest force that fuels purity and holiness is to know that God is holy, but to also know His love and grace for ourselves. Then we love God more than the promptings of our flesh. And whether single or married, we strive to live in this place on a persistent

basis.

Holiness is beautiful. It is full of strength, power and peace. God called us to be holy as He is, and He never asks of us anything that He hasn't made us capable of. He is cheering for us and interceding on our behalf.

Singleness doesn't have to be a struggle. He has made a way for us to be satisfied and holy in this season of our lives regardless of how long it will last.

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