

What's a Single Girl to Do!

✖ *With so many dating options today, waiting on the Lord for a mate has taken on a whole new meaning.*

Marijean

(not her real name) had just broken her engagement to a successful businessman, who turned out to have serious moral failings. She was 31, and looking for real solutions to some of the relationship dilemmas many singles face, so she began regularly visiting a home Bible study I attended that addressed singles issues.

One

evening on the drive home, she coyly asked me this question: "What is the procedure if someone is attracted to another person in the Bible study?" Gulp. I searched my mind for a file called "procedure," but found none. "Well," I said, finally, "they could try and mingle over cookies and juice at the end of the evening." That was the best I could offer, and I knew it was lame.

I

also knew that a few men in the group had expressed the same dilemma to me before—they were attracted to someone but were afraid of seeming forward or disingenuous if they asked for a phone number at a Bible study. So often they did nothing but admire them from across

the room,
forever. What was the procedure?

Interestingly,
Marijean came from a Muslim background. She related to me how
“love
issues” were handled in the mosque she formerly attended. A
male or
female leader called a wali “shepherded” the interest
expressed by a man
or woman in the congregation about another.

If
there was mutual interest, the wali let the man know in no
uncertain
terms that if he pursues the woman he’d better have marriage
on his
mind. (The wali is usually the third party on their phone
calls, too!)

According
to Marijean, the typical courtship is a very short process,
and, it
seems, one that leaves few broken hearts behind. Knowing the
similar
dilemmas many singles face in the church, (where there is
often no wali)
I could not help but wonder if we as Christians were missing
the boat
in this area.

“The church
doesn’t realize how many people avoid services because they
are too
focused on families and they alienate singles,” notes Lana
Trent,
co-author of *Single and Content* (W Publishing Group). Indeed,
some

singles admit that Sunday mornings are the loneliest part of their week.

For those singles who stay close to the church, it's questionable whether or not the issues of alienation, sexual dilemmas and the need for godly companionship are effectively being addressed. Many say they aren't.

How the Word Applies

My co-author Chris Burge and I are passionate about helping our single peers reach their divine potential in every area of their lives, through practical application of the Word of God. We tackled many of the above-mentioned concerns in a book we wrote, *His Rules: God's Practical Road Map for Becoming and Attracting Mr. or Mrs. Right* (WaterBrook).

Here is a sampling of the steps crucial for single women of any age desiring marriage.

Change your mind.

In Deuteronomy 2:3, the Israelites were told, "'You have been wandering around in this hill country long enough; turn northward'" (NLT). In order to advance to their destination, God's people had to change their course.

The first step to take if you are wanting to be married is to change your mind-set from "I

want/need a husband” to “Who do I need to become to be a godly wife?”

Very

often we single women live in a fantasy that our prince will come, overlook all our faults and make everything better merely by his arrival. Or, more seasoned saints may take on an attitude of “He’ll have to take me or leave me, I am what I am.”

I’m

sorry to tell you that only Jesus’ love is unconditional. Isaiah 54:5

says, “For your Maker is your husband” (NKJV, emphasis added). Ask

yourself, “Am I a godly wife to my Husband now? Am I submitted to His will?” Once you learn to honor Him, honoring your earthly mate will be much easier.

Practice

intimacy now. Very often we associate intimacy exclusively with something sexual. But when Solomon wrote: “‘Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away'” (Song 2:10), he was referring to much more.

It

is often said that true intimacy should be spelled “into-me-see”

because it is really about allowing someone to see into all your dark crevices and moldy corners. Marriage will be a mirror for all your

unregenerated areas.

Start

practicing intimacy now with the Father, your first love. He knows everything already and still loves us. Yet, He wants us to share the depths of ourselves with Him, and be totally transparent in our love relationship, as He is with us.

In

John 15:15, Jesus said, “‘I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.’” As we share all things with Him, and He with us, we practice the type of intimacy we will enjoy with our future mate. And if a mate never comes, we will have deepened the quality of our most important relationship.

Clean

house. Paul, in his second letter to Timothy, wrote: “If anyone cleanses himself...he will be a vessel for honor” (v. 21). Single or married, our ultimate calling is to holiness and sanctification.

Imagine

that your body, soul and spirit are three individual balloons. When we came to know Christ, we began to blow air into our “spirit balloons.” As we heard good Bible teaching, dug into the Word ourselves and worshiped with a grateful heart, our spirit balloons became larger and

larger,
until they crowded out the balloons called “body” and “soul.”
Eventually, body and soul become dethroned, and our spirit,
led by the
Holy Spirit, becomes king.

Yet,
many of the spots and wrinkles we acquired while our flesh sat
on the
throne remain. Scars from the past can keep us from knowing
our Lord in
certain areas, and from receiving the blessings He has for us.

Christ
longs to remove all the barriers to our knowing Him, but we
must first
acknowledge that they are there. Spending time with Him in
personal
retreats and times of consecration with extended fasts will
help sharpen
our sensitivity to His voice.

Then
the Holy Spirit will point out our past hurts, reveal the
people we
need to forgive as well as the past sins for which we need to
repent.
This inner cleansing is a crucial step toward going into
marriage whole.

Remember, you have the
responsibility before God to walk in holiness and purity.
Whether or not
the church you’re a part of appropriately addresses your
issues, you
can go to God and seek His wisdom for your life.

Whatever

you do, allow the Holy Spirit to transform your thinking about your single life, so that you no longer see yourself as incomplete, but as a whole vessel—fit and prepared for the Master's use.

Pamela Toussaint *is the co-author, along with Christopher Burge, of His Rules: God's Practical Road Map for Becoming and Attracting Mr. or Mrs. Right (WaterBrook), from which portions of this article were adapted.*