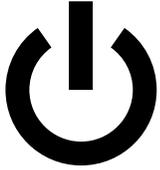


Title: Singleness—The Gift Nobody Wants

Speaker: Courtney Cherest

Key Verses: 1 Corinthians 7:1-9, 25-35; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 12:5-13

Summary: Singleness is a gift from God that keeps us close to Him.



Power Up: Take a moment to prepare

Courtney mentions getting “a word” at a conference she attended. This “word” served as a theme for her life. What “word” has God given you?



Replay: Take some time to watch

Note the flow of Courtney’s talk: **1)** personal background as a single thirty-something; **2)** accepting marriage and singleness as gifts **3)** rethinking a theology of singleness **4)** seeking God with undivided devotion.



Comment: Take some time to talk

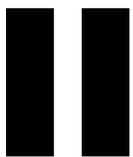
Courtney quotes Beth Moore, who called singleness the best life station “to follow hard after Jesus and fulfill [one’s] calling.” **What prompted Moore to make this statement? Do you agree or disagree?** Explain.

“I don’t need a neutral add in my life. I’m good,” Courtney declares. **What does she mean by a neutral add? What neutral adds are in your life?**

Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-6. What concession does Paul make? How does his view differ from the modern-day church’s view on marriage?

Courtney exposes two misunderstandings we have of God if we are unwilling to accept our singleness? **What are these errors?**

“So many of you feel like your singleness is a noose around your neck,” Courtney says. **Where does she get this word picture? What drives this hunger for marriage in most of us? How does God satisfy it Himself?**



Pause: Take a moment to pray

Thank God for the gift of your relational status (married, single, dating). Ask Him to guard you from idolizing marriage, affection, and love. Ask to draw close to His side and grow in undivided devotion.



Take Action: Take a step forward

Take inventory of the relational idols in your life. Whether you are single, dating, or married, you may be more inclined to look toward others for love, affection, and purpose than to God, who wants undivided devotion. Start by scrolling through the last few days of text messages. Who is rivaling God?

Bonus Features | Additional Notes and Quotes from Courtney Cherest

Power Track Summary: For most people, marriage is likely included in God's plan for you. Marriage is a beautiful gift of God, one to be embraced and enjoyed when God leads you to it. However, the Bible is clear that singleness is also a gift, and it, too, must be embraced and enjoyed as long as it is yours. This Power Track discusses the immense value of singleness according to the Bible and how you can be set free from idols (of love, self, marriage, pleasure, fear, etc.) to embrace this powerful season of life.

About the Speaker: Courtney Cherest, worship leader, teacher speaker - **one19ministries**

Beth Moore Quotation (in response to question, "How do you balance family, life, ministry?"): "There is something so skewed in the body of Christ because the New Testament clearly teaches that singles have more capacity to follow hard after Jesus and to fulfill their calling than anyone else in the entire family paradigm."

"I don't need a neutral add [e.g., dog, pillow] in my life. I don't need a husband simply to sleep next to me. *I'm good*. Unless I'm convinced this man will propel my ministry forward, I'm good."

Notes on 1 Corinthians 7

- v.1 – at least the second correspondence with Paul
- vv.2-5 – sex is good within marriage
- v.6 – "Concession, not a command," in reference to marriage (see v.2)
- v.7 – I wish all were like I am – single
- v.25 – concerning singleness, I give my conviction in this present circumstance
- v.28 – if you've married, you've not sinned
- vv.32-35 – married people have more interpersonal anxieties; divided interests. Single people are anxious about things of the Lord.

"Marriage and singleness are both gifts. Paul clearly thinks singleness is a gift."

"We don't want to be single because we actually idolize marriage...affection...love..."

"Typically, if you're not quite thankful for your singleness, there are two options for your viewpoint. 1) God is withholding marriage from you; 2) God is punishing me with singleness."

"There is discipline from Christ Jesus, but zero punishment."

The error in our culture says there's something wrong with the single person (purity issues, contentment issues)...so God hasn't blessed them.

Restraint in Greek (*brancos*): "a noose, a slipknot by which any person or thing is caught or fastened or suspended to throw a noose upon one; forcing someone."

"So many of us think our singleness is our noose that's going to kill us but in actuality it's the thing God has used to catch us and draw us by His side... Your singleness is God's gift to you to secure your undivided devotion to himself because he knows in him all your desires are satisfied. He is our prize."