

Presentation for the GMHC 2022 in Louisville KY, USA

Title:

"Single Minded Singleness: Handling the Challenges and Rewards of Being Unmarried in Ministry & Missions."

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Abstract:

There are a lot of advantages for being unmarried or unattached when involved in caring ministries, strategic endeavors, or broad-base services. Yet, there are also some disadvantages, difficulties, and hindrances that run parallel to that lifestyle, relational option, and career alternative.

In this seminar we will *redefine* the labels and terminologies commonly used to describe the singleness or unmarried persons. We will highlight the leading advantages, positive gains, and additional achievements that unmarried people possess and enjoy. We will review the major frustrations, unpleasant experiences, mental challenges, emotional longings, and common temptations facing unconnected singles. Although they are an important segment of society and a significant part of God's kingdom and His universal churches, they do face special challenges and unique circumstances. And finally, we will explore some ways to handle their unmet needs, maneuver social awkwardness, and cope, survive, and strive in their life goals and helping vocations.

As single unmarried people, we can *enjoy* unrestricted social connections, broad relational networks, mutual supportive groups, and many circles for available nurture and prayer. We can *adopt* other singles or couples, young and old, near and far to become our extended family. These wonderful people in our adopted community--or *koinonia*, will in turn adopts us gladly, check on us regularly, invite us to their homes repeatedly, and help us in time of need readily. And we can respond easily because we do not have a spouse to consult with, a little family-tribe to carry along, or a complicated schedule to sort out and clear before accepting.

Individuals-singles, as unattached or unmarried professionals, have the potential of becoming *role-models* for serving the world and for leaving a long-lasting legacy.

It is very likely that they can, not only *manage*, but also *flourish* with a focused vision, positive hope, single mindset, and marked resiliency, as they influence multitude of other people, broaden their scope, and engage in kingdom-work locally and globally.

So, together we press on, together we build each other up, and together we will make a difference.

Learning Objectives

1. Identify two commonly used definitions of the terms “single” or “singleness.”
2. Describe two rewards and advantages of being an unattached-unmarried person in the helping professions and local-global ministry endeavors.
3. List three disadvantages or frustrations with which the single professionals and cross-cultural servants usually struggle.
4. Discuss three ways unmarried persona can handle potential obstacles and face challenges/stressors/anxieties and therefore thrive better and develop enhanced creativity and resiliency.

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