



Women Devoted to God

Lesson 01

Gifted for God's Glory

by Eileen Berry

*One who is unmarried is concerned about the things
of the Lord, how he may please the Lord;
. . . This I say for your own benefit; not to
put a restraint upon you, but to promote what is appropriate
and to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord.*

1 Corinthians 7:32b, 35

What Singleness Is Not

1) A bad thing or a problem to be solved

Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. . . . But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I. (1 Corinthians 7:1, 8)

2) An unhappy state

A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. But in my opinion she is happier if she remains as she is; and I think that I also have the Spirit of God. (1 Corinthians 7:39-40)

3) An unfruitful state

My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you—(Galatians 4:19)

To Timothy, my true child in the faith . . . (1 Timothy 1:2)



Singleness Is

- 1) Singleness is a gift, in many cases a temporary one for a certain season.

Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am. However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner, and another in that. . . But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn with passion. (1 Corinthians 7:7, 9)

*But He said to them, "Not all men can accept this statement, but only those to whom it has been given. For there are eunuchs who were born that way from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men; and there are also eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to accept this, let him accept it."
(Matthew 19:11-12)*

—“gift” = *charisma*

2) This gift comes from a perfect Giver.

Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. (James 1:17)

—God is perfect in knowledge.

—God is sovereign.

—God is good.

*For the LORD God is a sun and shield;
The LORD gives grace and glory;
No good thing does He withhold from
those who walk uprightly.
(Psalm 84:11)*

3) This gift requires stewardship.

His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master."

(Matthew 25:23; see v. 14-30)

But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Corinthians 12:7; see entire chapter)



4) This gift is for God's glory.

But I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord . . . The woman who is unmarried, and the virgin, is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how she may please her husband. This I say for your own benefit; not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote what is appropriate and to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord. (1 Corinthians 7:32-35)

“When God calls us to Himself it transforms the purposes for which we live. To respond to that call is to view relationships, responsibilities, gifts, and opportunities as His purposes for our lives. These purposes are our callings—the things we are equipped by God to do in our individual situations throughout all the seasons of our lives. This perspective on life as a set of callings from God helps a woman get her bearings when singleness gets confusing—anchoring her identity, giving her a sense of belonging, setting a direction for her life’s activities, and shaping her overall sense of purpose. . . .

“The plural *callings* is . . . intended to help us avoid the trap of elevating any one purpose here on earth—other than the pursuit of God—to the place where we confuse it for our whole life purpose. God’s multiple callings in each of our lives may include marriage, but that is not the full story of His grand design for any of us. Being too focused on marriage (or its absence) may lead to neglect of our other callings at hand or cause us to miss the fulfillment He intends for us in each of those callings. Glorifying God should be the organizing principle of life.”

Jennifer Marshall

For Further Reading on Singleness:

Danylak, Barry. *Redeeming Singleness: How the Storyline of Scripture Affirms the Single Life*. Crossway, 2010.

Marshall, Jennifer. *Now and Not Yet: Making Sense of Single Life in the Twenty-first Century*. Multnomah, 2007.

McCulley, Carolyn. *Did I Kiss Marriage Goodbye?: Trusting God with a Hope Deferred*. Crossway, 2004.