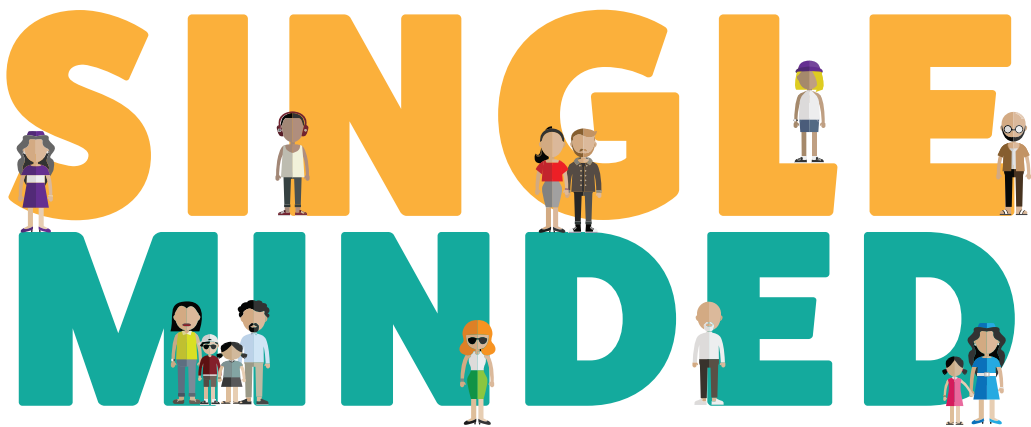


SINGLE MINDED

The title 'SINGLE MINDED' is rendered in large, bold, sans-serif letters. The word 'SINGLE' is in orange and 'MINDED' is in teal. Small, stylized human figures are placed within and around the letters. For example, a woman in a purple dress is inside the 'S', a man in a white shirt is inside the 'I', a couple is inside the 'G', a man in a white shirt and purple cap is inside the 'L', and a man with glasses is inside the 'E'. In the 'MINDED' row, a family of four is inside the 'M', a woman with orange hair and sunglasses is inside the 'I', a man in a white shirt is inside the 'D', and a woman in a blue dress and a child are inside the 'D'.

THURSDAY 22ND AUGUST, 2019



SINGLENESS & SEXUALITY

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LIFE AS A SEXUAL BEING... WITHOUT SEX

Is sexuality a curse for the single Christian?

No! Your sexual desires help you love God more:

“...God makes no appetite in vain...”

CS Lewis, 'Learning in War-Time' in *CS Lewis Essay Collection: Literature, Philosophy and Short Stories*, p.175.

- **Appreciating his love for you**

“...the *ultimate* reason (not the only one) why we are sexual is to make God more deeply knowable. The language and imagery of sexuality are the most graphic and most powerful that the Bible uses to describe the relationship between God and his people - both positively (when we are faithful) and negatively (when we are not).”

John Piper, *Sex and the Supremacy of Christ*, p.26.

Ezekiel 16 [Hosea; Song of Songs]

- **Seeing his beauty in others**

Genesis 1:27

“Thank you so much for the expression of your desire and hope. You know already that the young, attractive, affectionate, caring, intelligent, spiritual and socially conscious gay man has only one name: God!”

Henri JM Nouwen, *Love, Henri*, p.343.

▪ **Trailing where his world is heading**

Revelation 19:6-9 [John 3:28-29; Matthew 9:15]

“...we need to turn Freud on his head. Instead of thinking of "God" language as really being about sex (Freud's reductive ploy), we need to understand sex as really about God, and about the deep desire that we feel for God - the precious clue that is woven into our existence about the final and ultimate union that we seek.”

Sarah Coakley, *The New Asceticism*, p.96.

No! Your sexual chastity helps you love others more:

“Irrespective of the integrity or maturity of the person practicing it, celibacy carries opposite potentials: it can be a burden that results in depression and personal harm, or a spiritual practice that brings intimacy and human flourishing.”

Jenell Williams Paris, *The End of Sexual Identity*, p.126.

▪ **Having greater capacity**

I Corinthians 7:32-35

“On the practical level, celibacy is a way of remaining significantly more available to cherish and nurture others' being and becoming because of the choice not to take on the responsibilities of establishing and maintaining one's own family unit...”

Keith Clark, *An Experience of Celibacy*, p.140.

▪ **Having spiritual children**

2 Timothy 1:2

“...our sexuality calls us to give ourselves away in life-giving love. The celibate person doesn't reject this call. He just lives it in a different way. Every man, by virtue of the spousal meaning of his body, is called in some way to be both a husband and a father. Every woman, by virtue of the spousal meaning of her body, is called in some way to be both a wife and a

mother. As an image of Christ, the celibate man "marries" the Church. Through his bodily gift of self he bears numerous "spiritual children." As an image of the Church, the celibate woman "marries" Christ. Through her bodily gift of self she bears numerous "spiritual children."

Christopher West, *Theology of the Body for Beginners*, p.70.

▪ **Advertising God's sufficiency**

Psalm 23:1

"Christian singleness is a testimony to the complete sufficiency of Christ for the present age and gives visible witness to the hope of our eternal inheritance yet to come..."

Barry Danylak, *Redeeming Singleness*: p.214.

No! Remember our sexual, chaste Lord Jesus:

"Right at the start of his Gospel, John describes Jesus as the Word made "flesh". In its immediate context, that word suggests sexual desire. In the story at the well, Jesus' best friends clearly think him as capable of sexual desire as the next man. It is quite telling that in this same story John offers one of his strongest images of Jesus' human limitations, depicting him as simply too tired to continue into town to get food and instead sitting down by the well. John deliberately brings out Jesus' experience of sexual desire in the frailty that is common to all of us. Those of us for whom questions about faith, sex and sexuality arise from our experience can heave a sigh of relief: the God whose commands we struggle with, and to whom we pray in and about our difficulties, understands sexual desire from experience. He is not only "gentle and humble in heart" as he disciples us, but he has more than a rough idea of what we are going through."

Andy Angel, *Intimate Jesus*, p. 98.

▪ **Unafraid of the opposite sex**

"The depth and breadth of the robust embodiment with which Jesus related to women in highly significant for cultures obsessed with sex. The Gospel stories offer a rich embodied distinction between sex and sexuality. These stories highlight Jesus' freedom and authority to live and practice an

enfleshed, physical, concrete, nonromantic nearness with women in a culture that had no place to put such physical nearness and touch with one's female neighbour.”

Dan Brennan, *Sacred Unions, Sacred Passions*, p.120.

John 4:1-30

- **Unafraid of physical bodies**

Luke 7:36-38

“One of the central Christian doctrines, the incarnation, is itself an endorsement of our sexual humanity. For Jesus had a body, Jesus was a body. Jesus touched the bodies of others, the disease-ridden and deformed as well as the beautiful. He was kissed, stroked, and anointed in return, even by a woman of doubtful sexual reputation. Jesus' body needed food, drink, sleep, comfort and exercise, and when he washed or swam he was probably naked. Nothing could be more convincing of ultimate honour of human sinews, skin and bone than the reality of Emmanuel, God bodily with us.”

Elaine Storkey, *The Search for Intimacy*, p.192.

- **Unafraid of relational intimacy**

“Christianity means community through Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, p.10.

John 17:20-23

Sexuality is a blessing for the single Christian

“Sin always begins with character assassination of God.”

Timothy J Keller, *The Prodigal Prophet*, p.138.