

SINGLENESS

It took three husbands before I realized that I had the gift to be single. What better examples to follow than Jesus and Paul. I Corinthians 7:7, “For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that,” is what truly set me free and revealed to me that not everyone has to have someone in their bed.

In this society and especially in these last days there is a lot of pressure on women to have a man. That has to be a trick of the enemy. The Bible says it’s not good for man to be alone, not woman. Women are pre-wired to be just fine alone, but some have been fooled into believing that they need a man to be whole. No, men need us. That’s why the Bible instructs us to wait until they find us.

The pressure that society puts on women to have a man makes some of us get married when we shouldn’t. It happened to me three times, to the point I had to stop and ask, what is the problem? I studied a teaching by T. D. Jakes called “The Temptation Series” and got some real insight and answers to the problem. In his teaching Jakes instructs you to look back over your life and chart your patterns. He said you don’t have a lot of experience in your twenties, however your experiences start to mount up in your thirties, but by the time you reach your forties, you should be able to look back and see some patterns.

Since I was in my forties I looked back over my life and found an interesting pattern. I realized that I was happiest, satisfied and at peace when I was not married, in between marriages. I went back to when I was in college and my marketing professor had us to write out a five year plan for our lives. My plan included graduation, get a good job, get a house, and have a child. Marriage was nowhere in my plans. That omission was a direct result of my upbringing. I had absolutely no point of reference in my background of a truly, happy marriage, therefore subconsciously I opted out. My neighborhood was filled with single mothers, including mine, and that is what I identified with. Therefore my first pregnancy was out of wedlock.

As I experienced the challenges of correctly raising children alone, mainly by setting a good example, I decided to get married. It was a good marriage, on the surface, but my husband had deep issues that I couldn't reach. I was never trained on how a wife is suppose to respond to her husband's needs, therefore I couldn't help him, but I tried. In trying to help him, two wonderful things happened. I got saved and then I had another baby. Outside looking in, our family was wonderful, until after many years of marriage my husband's drug challenge drove me to escape the dangerous situation in which his addiction had put us.

Well, I had Jesus now and was at the peak of my faith. So I stepped out on it and allowed God to relocate my children and me. When I arrived at my new destination after being married for so long, and not quite sure if I could handle these now three children alone

now that I was out there, I accepted another offer of marriage to a younger man. It was good, served it's purpose, got my groove back as well as realizing that I actually could take care of my children alone, because I was raising them and him. He was younger and I, still not understanding the institution of marriage, punished him like he was one of the children. This became tiring and I began looking for a way out, found it and took it.

Then after a few tragedies struck my family back to back, I was at my weakest and most vulnerable point. That's when husband number three came into the present from the past. I had known him all my life, although I hadn't seen him for a very long time. Because I knew him, his family and background, I thought God had sent him to help me get back on my feet after surviving all the family tragedies. I found out quickly that that was not the case. As I was marrying him at the courthouse, I knew it wasn't right, that I was doing it for all the wrong reasons. Had I been at the top of my game I would have had the sense to get up out of there or never to go down there in the first place. But I was in the middle of it and didn't have the strength to stop the madness.

I had bought into the world's concept of divorce, go on and get married and if it doesn't work, divorce him. Deep down I think I out spiritualized myself. My justification was that I didn't have the strength to keep my body under so instead of burn, I'll marry.

When all I had to do was send the men away. I was not looking for physical love and I had everything else I needed in my friendships, work and family. It was only when the man pursued that I became weak and they knew my walk with Jesus so they suggested

marriage and I walked right into it, eyes wide open. Women inherently know how to drive a man away and that is exactly what I did when I realized what I had done.

My children and I prospered beyond our imaginations when it was just us, a fact I saw when charting my life's patterns, as instructed by Bishop Jakes. The reason is because I depended solely on Jesus and oh how he met each and every one of my needs more so and in greater ways than I could ever ask or think. I am, by nature, a happy person and am never depressed. However, looking back at each time I was married, I was on the verge of depression, a sign that this marriage thing is not for me.

I am still friends with all of my ex's. There was never any of the ignorant drama you see nowadays on court TV and elsewhere. I have wonderful, saved, intelligent, successful and prosperous friends who are male, female, young, old, married, divorced or never married who enrich my life. God has been my husband, my babies daddy and everything else I needed each and every time I needed something. The thought of a man in my life is unfathomable.

Fortunately, I am not one of those women who are desperate because their biological clock is ticking and they haven't bore children yet. I thank my ex's for my children. For I always knew I wanted children, just like I always knew I didn't want a husband. This thought is not Biblical, it is a product of my upbringing. You only know what you know and with only images of happy wives, living happy lives with their faithful husbands on TV in the form of Donna Reed and June Cleaver back when I was a child, I thought

marriage was relegated to TV Land. Since I was not an actress, it was deposited into my psyche that I would never be a happy wife which has been the basis of my failed marriages.

Today is so much worse. At least I could see happy marriages on TV as a child. Today, on TV, the movies, magazines, in the work place and anywhere else you care to look, including the church, infidelity is the acceptable norm. The Down-Low scare, where supposed straight men are having homosexual relationships and bringing deadly diseases home to their wives and mates settles the fact that I have the gift that Jesus and Paul had and this is to remain single and do the work of the Lord.

I praise God for my family, my friendships with my ex's, for all the wonderful people God has put into my life and for finally figuring it out. I thank God for the gift. Actress Halle Berry said she doesn't want to ever get married again, but she missed the point. She is hurting from marriage. She still wants a physical relationship with a man, therefore deep down, she wants to be married. I just wanted children, again, because of the way I was conditioned from childhood. A man was a means to that end. However, the curse has been broken because my children witnessed me happily married at various points, as well as other people in our lives, so they have the point of reference that I didn't have growing up. They embrace and look forward to marriage. Therefore the circle of life will continue, without the haunting issues from the past and I am looking forward to enjoying my grandchildren.

If I could tell women one thing, it would be, don't let anybody or any hormone pressure you into getting married. Let God lead, guide and direct you down the aisle so that your marriage will stand a chance in this crazy mixed up world. That's it.

Several issues have been raised in this initial article to support the concepts of singleness, purity and abstinence. These issues include the gift to be single, who needs who, societal pressures, life's patterns, setting examples for our children, wife training, tailspins caused by family tragedy, childhood roots, generational curses, justifying one's wrong actions, to name a few. I can't wait to talk to you again next month to explore some of these topics in an effort to break the chains that bind.

TTYL,

Sonnie