

4. Read Ephesians 5:31-32. Marriage points to the ultimate but is not the ultimate thing. What are some of the ways we make it into the ultimate thing and how does that impact what it really meant to do?

5. Read Matthew 19:27-30. How can the church family act more like a church family?

6. Explain how one or two of the false narratives impacting Christians who are single also potentially impact marriages in negative ways.

Christian Sexuality—Jesus, Sex & Gender

“Singleness & Intimacy”

Matthew 19:4-12

Review: What the Bible teaches about sex sounds really _____ to a lot of people, including the majority of the people whose stories are told in the Bible. But we get our marriage and sex ethic from Jesus.

- Marriage is meant to be a _____ commitment.
- Marriage is meant to be between one man and one _____.
- Sex is meant to be experienced _____ in marriage.

Are people who are single for their lifetimes in some senses _____ to miss out on intimacy, to be relegated to second-class status, and to live unfulfilled lives?

4 False Narratives

1. Sex means _____ and everything at the same time.

“In our day, sex means nothing and everything at the same time. On the one hand, the culture presents your sexual choices to be as non-consequential as what you choose to eat. Sexuality has been gutted of spiritual and relational significance. At the same time, sex has been linked with your identity, your maturity, and your personal fulfillment as a human being. Sex has become the “catch all basket” to bear burdens it was never created to carry.” (Juli Slattery, “What Do I Do With My Sexual Desires?”)

In Matthew 19:4-12 Jesus goes back to Genesis 1-2, to creation, to God’s design, to affirm marriage, to explain that sex belongs only in marriage between a man and a woman, and to affirm sex in that context. He explains the convoluted history of sex and marriage and divorce in the Bible after Genesis 2. And he does something no other religious figure had done before him: he _____ singleness.

2. Singleness is a special _____ reserved for people who are gifted with no desire to marry.

1 Corinthians 7: 7 I wish that all of you were as I am [i.e., single]. But each of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.

3. Christians who are single are _____.

Marriage points to the ultimate thing (i.e., the gospel); it's not the ultimate thing.

4. Christians who are single don't experience _____ with another human being.

Sex is only one aspect of intimacy, and _____ can be experienced without sex or romance.

Resources:

- Regular attenders at Five Oaks have access to the Christian Sexuality curriculum. For access, write "Curriculum Access" on your Connect Card or email the office (office@fiveoakschurch.org).
- For access to the Sam Allberry talks and many more on singleness, go to singleminded.community.

Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. Read Matthew 19:3-10. The third kind of "eunuch" Jesus mentions does sound like someone who senses a specific calling to be single for the kingdom. Why would it be incorrect to assume that someone with that calling has little or no desire for marriage or sex?
3. What are some of the reasons some Christians (both married and single) buy into the false narrative that sex is meaningless and everything at the same time?