

The Single Chiropractor

by L. Mark Brett, D.C.

"A man is not complete until he's married, then he's finished!"

At least that is what the slogan on my hat says. The idea that a single person is less than complete seems to be the consensus of a fairly large number of Christian people, both married and single. But is it true? The scriptural basis for this belief is pretty much limited to Genesis 2:18 where God says, *"It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."* So God created the various animals and brought them before Adam for him to name. But guess what? Among all these beautiful animals *"There was not found a helper suitable for (lit. corresponding to) him (Adam)."* So God fashioned a rib from Adam into a woman and made a helper suitable for him. When Adam saw this new creation he was excited and exclaimed, *"this is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh..."* There were now two people who not only were created by God but were also made in His image. Although this is still the foundation of the marriage relationship the context is different. There may be many lonely singles today, but none are alone in the same way Adam was. And certainly no one is incomplete simply because he or she is single. Furthermore, just being married is not a cure for loneliness.

Single people have played some very important roles in both the Old and New Testaments. Among the prophets, Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah and Daniel probably never married. Ezekiel was an early widower. In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul indicates that he was single. The apostle John was known as "the beloved celibate". There are indications that Luke and Barnabas were also single. Jesus' friends Mary, Martha and their brother Lazarus apparently lived together as single people. Philip the evangelist had four virgin daughters who were prophetesses. Of course, Jesus was himself the perfect single. So the positive influence of single people throughout the scripture is well attested. For a discussion project, I once asked the singles group I teach to list the advantages and disadvantages of being single. There was one plus and one minus which was uniformly expressed. The plus was "freedom". The minus was "loneliness". There are Scriptural principles which help us to deal correctly with both states.

Freedom is what the Apostle Paul picked up on in his discussion of marriage and singleness in I Corinthians. He says, *"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; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and his interests are divided. And 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"* (I Cor. 7:32-34). It is apparent that those who are free from family concerns have more "free time". The challenge is to use that time for the Lord, rather than pandering to the desire of the flesh. If a married person with family re-

sponsibilities can spend one hour a day in prayer and Bible study, it would seem that a single person without those responsibilities could spend 2 or 3 hours a day in prayer and Bible study. For the single Christian Chiropractor perhaps more time could be devoted to short-term missions. The freedom provided by our singleness is not freedom from accountability or responsibility, but from pressures which compete for our time.

What about loneliness? From time to time everyone, including those who are married, experience loneliness. Just being a Christian in a world hostile to our faith and practice can make one feel isolated and lonely. The prophets of old often faced loneliness. Jeremiah said, *"Because of thy hand upon me I sat alone"* (Jer. 14:17). Loneliness is not necessarily a pathological condition. It can be a time for valuable reflection, reassessment, and re-focusing. If our loneliness is due to a wrong attitude or behavior, we need to change. If our loneliness is due to commitment to biblical values we need to stay on course and rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer loneliness for Christ's sake (Matt. 5:11, I Peter 3:14,17). The single person must not ameliorate his loneliness by forming friendships which compromise his fellowship with the Lord. Ken had been in our singles fellowship but moved to Louisiana to work in the oil industry. One Friday night he called me from his apartment. He was lonely. The guys he worked with, most of whom lived in the same apartment, had gone "out on the town". Ken had to make a choice. At this particular time, Christian fellowship was not an option. His choice was between going with the guys and enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season or being lonely. Fortunately, he made the right choice.

As Christian Chiropractors, we are often faced with the same kinds of choices. This is especially true at conventions and social functions. Being a Christian single can some times put us in the isolation ward. The CCA and the various state Christian associations really help to fill the void and provide the fellowship and encouragement we need. By using the plus side of our singleness, i.e. our freedom, to serve the Lord more, we can minimize the negative side of our singleness, i.e. loneliness. Single or married, God's will for our lives is to get on with His plan. And He wants us to learn to be content in whatever state we are.