

## What Does God Say?

Why hasn't God found someone right for you? You probably have already made some good changes in your life—preparing for that special someone. But God knows what we really need. The Old Testament contains some rather advanced teaching on “human relations”:

Do not steal. Do not lie. Do not deceive one another.... Do not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block in front of the blind, but fear your God. I am the LORD.... Do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly. Do not go about spreading slander among your people.... Do not hate your brother in your heart. **Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt.** Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, **but love your neighbor as yourself.** I am the LORD (Leviticus 19:11,14,16-18)

So often when singles try to meet other singles they represent themselves as better than they are, talk about others behind their back, don't honestly go to others about perceived problems, overly respect the rich, etc., etc.

**The godly way to learn to avoid these problems is to develop relationships with people where you expect nothing in return:**

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world (James 1:27).

If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even “sinners” love those who love them (Luke 6:32).

There are many specific things that a person can do to develop love for others. One could try to meet everyone at a church service and see who needs help. One could serve as a volunteer in a worthwhile charitable group. It is best to use some of your talents if possible, but the main thing is to do good to others, expecting nothing in return. Working with young people, old people and those very different than oneself helps to develop a love for all those whom God has made.

Many people think they are unhappy because

they “have not met the right person”. But unhappiness can become a way of life and seldom changes even if the “right person” is met. It is much better to ask Christ for the strength to be happy in any state:

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength (Philippians 4:12-13).

Rather than continually going to God with what you think you need for single friends, be content with what you have and ask Him how you can be of more service and have more love for other believers—even those whom you do not spend any time with right now.

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8)

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another (1 John 4:10-11).

Ask Christ to begin putting this kind of love in your heart. Then, even if you remain single, your life will be much more of a blessing to yourself and to others. But you will also be growing into “the right person” for someone else to marry.

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SINGLE01

# How Can You Meet Other Singles?

The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him...." Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. (Genesis 2:18,21-24).

Most Christian singles know about this instruction in the Bible. They sincerely desire to meet interesting people of the opposite sex. They hope to meet someone with whom they can establish a close relationship, with whom they can share their joys and their trials—someone whom they can eventually marry, have sex with and possibly raise children.

Yet they often wonder why these commands of God can be so hard to fulfill. Many pray for God to send them single friends and the “right person” to marry, yet they go for years—even decades without an answer.

Why is this? No book or article can tell you how God is specifically dealing with you. If you ask God to show you what is best for your life and He does, then do it, even if it disagrees with this article. Believers do not have to marry early in life or at all (Matt 19:12; 1Cor 9:5,15).

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But many believers are praying for a mate and are not receiving one. They need to understand that God corrects His children whom he loves:

Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? (Hebrews 12:7).

Life often just does not seem to be fair. Some people seem to always have lots of friends all the time and easily meet the person whom they marry. Others would be happy to meet just one person that would be “right” for them.

So if you are a lonely person, should you concentrate on meeting “the right one”, or should you endeavor to become a person with numerous friends, several of who might like to marry you? Should you concentrate on “finding the right one”, or should you concentrate on pleasing God with your whole life?

This writer has experienced this difficulty to some degree in his own life. I was almost 27 when I married—several years after I had diligently began looking for the “right one”. I learned a lot during those years, but it was not until I threw away my “partner wish lists” and started to simply try to befriend others that I became ready. I have seen this happen to many others. Some grow through it; some seem to “get stuck” in one place.

### Simple Logic

If you are a single person who is not satisfied with the other singles whom you have been able to meet over the last few years, then you need to change your approach to looking. **If you keep on praying the same prayers and doing what you have already done, then you can expect to continue with the same results.**

The Bible clearly shows that God is the one who grants a good spouse. Have you ever thanked God for **not** giving you a bad one?

In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths (Proverbs 3:6, NKJV).

Houses and wealth are inherited from parents, but a prudent wife is from the LORD (Proverbs 19:14).

He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the LORD (Proverbs 18:22).

And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love... (1 John 4:16).

The focus of many single people is so heavily upon searching for other singles or asking God for the “right person” that people often miss that God is trying to teach them to **be a “right person”**.

This can be difficult to think about. Many single people have been trying hard to be attractive to and compatible with someone of the opposite sex. It is easy to ask, “Why do I need all this extra training from God when there are plenty of good looking, naturally popular people who find a spouse even though they are selfish?”

Don’t envy selfish people who are married. All of the good looks, charm, charisma and talent in the world will not cover up a selfish spouse. Selfish people almost always have bad marriages, and almost any marriage counselor will tell you that a bad marriage is worse than none at all.

Comparing ourselves with others simply is not wise (2Cor 10:12). Only God knows all of a person’s circumstances and can fairly judge them. The important part is this: If you are not happy with your present situation in life, **you need to change your methods if you expect to change the results.**

### Methods that Do Not Work

Have you ever gone to a “singles” social event or put your name in a singles directory of some kind? Have you then felt like you were a featured item at a cattle auction? It is easy to feel that way when people quietly review your face, body and other attributes to see if you “measure up” to their standards. Have you ever thought, “Can’t they treat me like an individual made in the image of God?”

The opposite experience can also be difficult. Have you ever met another single who agreed with everything you said, did whatever you wanted to do, laughed at all your jokes, and appeared to be so positive about everything that you had no idea what they were really like? This *acting* is not an effort to **be** the “right person”, but to **make others think** that one is the “right person”.

Nearly all singles will admit to having experienced the two problems mentioned above—

being coldly evaluated or patronized in a phony manner. Very few will admit to being a cause of these problems. But they happen frequently, so somebody must be doing it. It is so easy to be either overly judgmental or overly nice and phony—and to not even know it.

This writer has heard of cases where two people corresponded for awhile, found each other interesting, then immediately stopped when they exchanged pictures. In another case, a woman ended a friendship as soon as she found out how much a man earned. A man stopped befriending a woman due to a minor doctrinal difference. It was probably good that these couples did not marry—but they all needed to learn to stop trying to “find the right one”, but to “become the right one”.

### What Are You Doing Now?

Do you have a list—either written or mental—of the kind of person you are looking for: how tall, what facial appearance, what body shape, what kind of job, how much money, what kind of personality, what kind of attire?

Some people, apparently in an effort to show how much they have thought and prayed about their prospective mates, have very specific opinions about how they will comb their hair, what kind of clothes they will wear, what kind of car they will have, what kind of dwelling the two will live in, etc. While he or she might think they are doing a good job of planning their future relationship, would you want a prospective mate to plan exactly how **you** are going to look and act?

Other singles will talk about how “big-minded” they are—that they will not automatically reject a person who is “heavy”, “ugly”, “poor”, etc. This approach is clearly better than the picky person, but it still primarily focuses on “finding the right person”, not “becoming the right person”.

The opposite of this “evaluation trap” is the phony, “everything is fine trap”. Some singles treat other singles this way and wonder why most of them seem to “run for cover”. Other singles start with the evaluation problem and then switch over to the “everything is fine trap” when they think they have found Mr. or Miss “right”.