



Jesus, Single Like Me: He Was Grateful
by Kris Swiatocho

Jesus lived his life as a single adult till his death. Because he lived his life as a single adult, he understands every aspect of what you and I are experiencing today. This series examines the "singleness" of Christ in relation to our singleness with the hope you will be encouraged to walk this journey you have been given. A journey that not only leads to the cross for our salvation but to his resurrection for our future.

You've got to be kidding. You want me to be grateful that I am single? Grateful I am alone? Grateful that I don't have that special person in my life? Grateful that I don't have someone to fall asleep with or wake up next to? Grateful that I have all the financial burdens, all the responsibilities? You must be crazy. How could I ever be grateful? What is there to be grateful for?

Every day I wake up alone. I get up, yawning, wanting to hit the snooze alarm one more time. And believe me, that is no easy endeavor. It's on my cell phone. I actually have to hit four buttons to get the phone to snooze. You would think I would just get up by then. It's fall now and the mornings are much cooler. I quickly start my morning routine making sure the coffee is made. I open a couple of windows, grab my coffee, sit down in my over-stuffed chunky chair, legs up, Bible open, silence ... wow, silence.

I spend as much time as I need with Jesus. Sometimes I have many things to do and have to cut things short and other times I can spend the entire day with the Lord. It's up to me. Then I'm off to do whatever needs to be done. I am thankful for these mornings, for this special time with God. I am thankful because I know a lot of my married friends have to fight for this time with God. Their mornings are rushed with getting kids and spouses ready for work and school, the dog fed, breakfast and lunch made. Their mornings are whirlwinds. The only way they can find time with God is to get up even earlier—but this means going to bed earlier. That is great if your kids go to bed at 7 p.m. or you managed to get all the laundry done, house cleaned, dinner made and let's not forget having time for your spouse.

Now I can hear some of you saying right now, "Kris, I would rather be married with kids and have to fight to have time with God than be alone." I hear you, and I totally understand. God understands, too. In fact, he gives us some well known scripture that most singles know about. In 1 Corinthians, Paul is speaking on marriage and being single. He was saying how he wishes we could all be like him, single, but that he knew some would marry. He went on to say:

I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs—how he can please the Lord. But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world—how he can please his wife— and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband. I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord (1 Corinthians 7:32-35).

Okay, I hear you, Paul. I hear you, Jesus. I can have more time to devote to God? I am less distracted? Well, Paul not only believed it but lived it. Paul lived it because he saw what Jesus did. He saw not only his Savior but a single man, devoted to serving and worshiping God. A man who could put all his time and energy without the distractions of being married. He could see the thankfulness of being single. And this thankfulness changed Paul's attitude and mine. Jesus taught us to be thankful in all situations as it is where God has us until he moves us somewhere else—that all of our situations are for God's glory, not ours.

As a single adult myself, I have days of wanting my life to be different. I get easily distracted with what things could be versus where things are. I get so focused on the future that I forget what God has given me now. As a single adult, Jesus lived so much of the lives that we live today. So how was he grateful for where God had him, in his singleness? And, am I grateful as well?



Jesus was the first in a large family of siblings.

Like Jesus, I am the first born in my family. I had the honor of helping to take care of my siblings just like Jesus. I could be the example to my younger siblings.

Now at the time it wasn't much fun, but now as I look back, I can see how it helped me to grow up, to be more responsible. It helped prepare me for my life as an adult. It helped prepare me to do the work of the Lord.

And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:17).

Jesus ended up taking care of his mother, a widow.

What an honor it is as a single adult to help take care of our parents. Last year my father died after many years being sick. I was able to travel back and forth to their home as much as needed, to the point of even moving in with them for several months. I know that if I had been married with kids this would have been difficult, or in most cases impossible. I was able to build memories that no one can take from me.

For God said, 'Honor your father and mother' and 'Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death' (Matthew 15:4).

Jesus was able to go into public ministry, without any hesitation.

As a single, without children, I can go and do whatever God wants me to do. Now I do have some financial responsibilities, but in general, I have been able to work around this to be available for God at the spur of the moment.

After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them (Acts 16:10).

Jesus could spend as much time as needed with whomever.

What I love about being single (and grateful) is that I can stay up as late as I want, hang with friends, go on trips, etc. for the Lord's purpose. What a blessing it is to have that freedom. If God leads me to talk with strangers in a store or a neighbor or someone on the phone, there are no limits.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24).

Jesus could spend his money, his fruit, the way he wanted to.

I am very grateful that I can sow, spend or give my time and money the way I feel led to by God, without having to ask anyone else.

Give generously to him and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to (Deuteronomy 15:10).

Jesus got to be alone.

I am grateful for my alone times, for just being with God and no one else. No one is pulling me this or that direction. I



can turn off my cell phone, lock the front door, turn off the computer, etc. and just be with God.

But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed (Luke 5:16).

Jesus learned how to get along with others as a preparation.

I am thankful that all of our experiences as singles only prepare us. If God is calling you to be married, having a roommate (not opposite sex) or living with family only prepares you for marriage. If you can't get along with folks, pay your part of the rent/utilities on time, deal with conflict, then how are you going to be in a healthy marriage?

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger (Proverbs 15:1).

Jesus had friends of the opposite sex.

I am thankful that through my opposite sex friends, I have grown so much in my understanding of them as well as my appreciation of who God has made them to be.

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus (John 11:5).

Jesus, as a single adult, had boundaries.

I am so thankful for boundaries. Boundaries have protected me in so many situations. From dating to friendships to work situations and neighbors, boundaries have kept communication open while allowing the relationships to grow for God's purpose. Boundaries have protected me and the ministry God is doing through me.

May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope is in you (Psalm 25:21).

Jesus had spiritual children.

Even though Jesus was not a parent per se, he had many spiritual children. I am thankful that as a single, I can too. I am blessed to be an aunt to my nieces and nephews, giving them some extra attention and in return, making a difference in both our lives. I am thankful to the little children at my church who run up to see me each Sunday.

When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these (Mark 10:14).

Yes, there are tough days when being single isn't so great. But every time I start to have a pity party, Jesus reminds me of just how great I do have it. That my singleness has allowed me to travel and teach other singles how much God loves them. I have been able to educate pastors that singles don't have leprosy, and we will not cause their married folks to divorce. That Jesus was single and just like him, we are loved by God and usable by the Kingdom.

As a single, I have been able to do things and go places a married person could not. And although I am still hopeful that God will bring someone to me one day, I believe and trust that he knows best. I would rather be single, where I am in all that I am, than to be in a marriage that is hurting, not growing—or even worse married to someone who doesn't believe. The grass isn't always greener on the other side, no matter if there is a septic tank or not. Thank you, Jesus, for my singleness.

Questions for Discussion or Personal Exploration:

1. What are some things you are thankful for as a single and why?



2. What are some things you are not thankful for as a single and why?
3. What needs to change for you to be thankful for all things?
4. How are you living your life where you are until God moves you?

Application:

Start today to pray and ask him to reveal his truth to you. What is God telling you about yourself in regards to being thankful for your singleness? Are there areas of singleness that you cannot seem to give to God? Are you angry or mad at God for still being single? What is the next step God is asking of you?

Kris Swiatocho is the President and Director of TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries and FromHisHands.com Ministries. Kris has served in ministry in various capacities for the last 20 years. An accomplished trainer and mentor, Kris has a heart to reach and grow leaders so they will in turn reach and grow others. She is currently working on her third Bible study, *From the Manger to the Cross: The Men in Jesus' Life*. Her second Bible study, *From the Manger to the Cross: The Women in Jesus' Life*, was published last fall and is available on her websites. Her first book, *Singles and Relationships: A 31-Day Experiment*, was co-authored with Dick Purnell of Single Life Resources.

TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries helps churches, pastors and single adult leaders evaluate, develop and support their single adult ministries through high-energy speaking engagements, results-oriented consulting and training and leadership development conferences and seminars. Click here to request a FREE "How to Start a Single Adult Ministry" guide.

FromHisHands.com Ministries is Kris's speaking ministry. If you've ever heard her speak, you know that Kris is the kind of speaker who keeps the crowd captivated, shares great information and motivates people to make a difference in the lives of those around them! She speaks to all church audiences on everything from "first impression" ministry to women's topics to singles and young adults. She can speak on a Sunday morning, at a woman's retreat or for a single adults conference. Bring Kris to your church today!

Singles and Relationships by Kris Swiatocho and Dick Purnell

Many singles are Christians who wonder if God will ever bring a mate their way or if they should just stop focusing on a future with a marriage partner and live the single life to the fullest. Kris Swiatocho and Dick Purnell offer solid biblical answers for singles in this newest title in Dick's popular 31-Day Experiment Bible study.

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