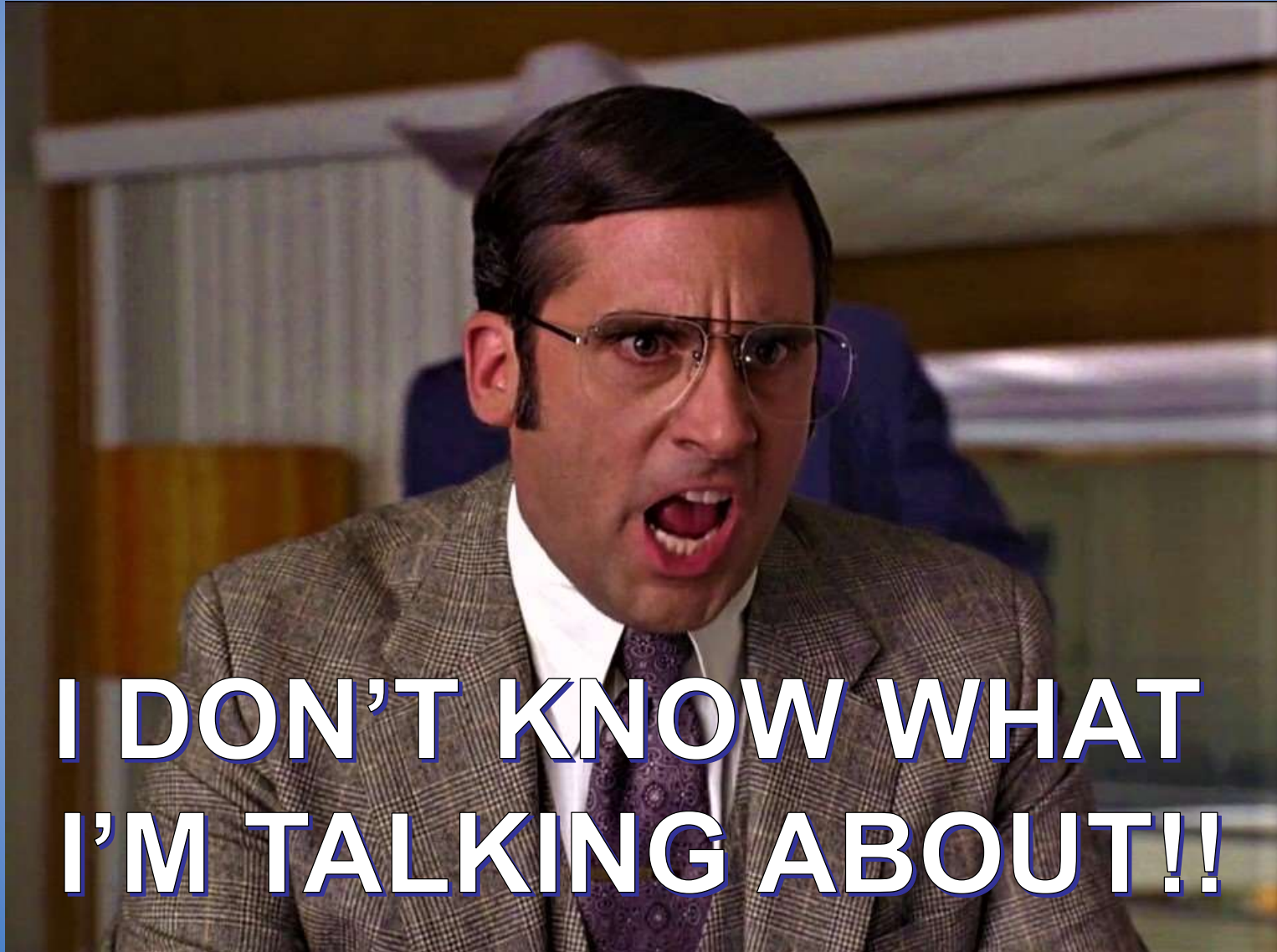


The Gift of Singleness



The Gift of Singleness



**I DON'T KNOW WHAT
I'M TALKING ABOUT!!**

The Gift of Singleness



The Gift of Singleness



The Gift of Singleness



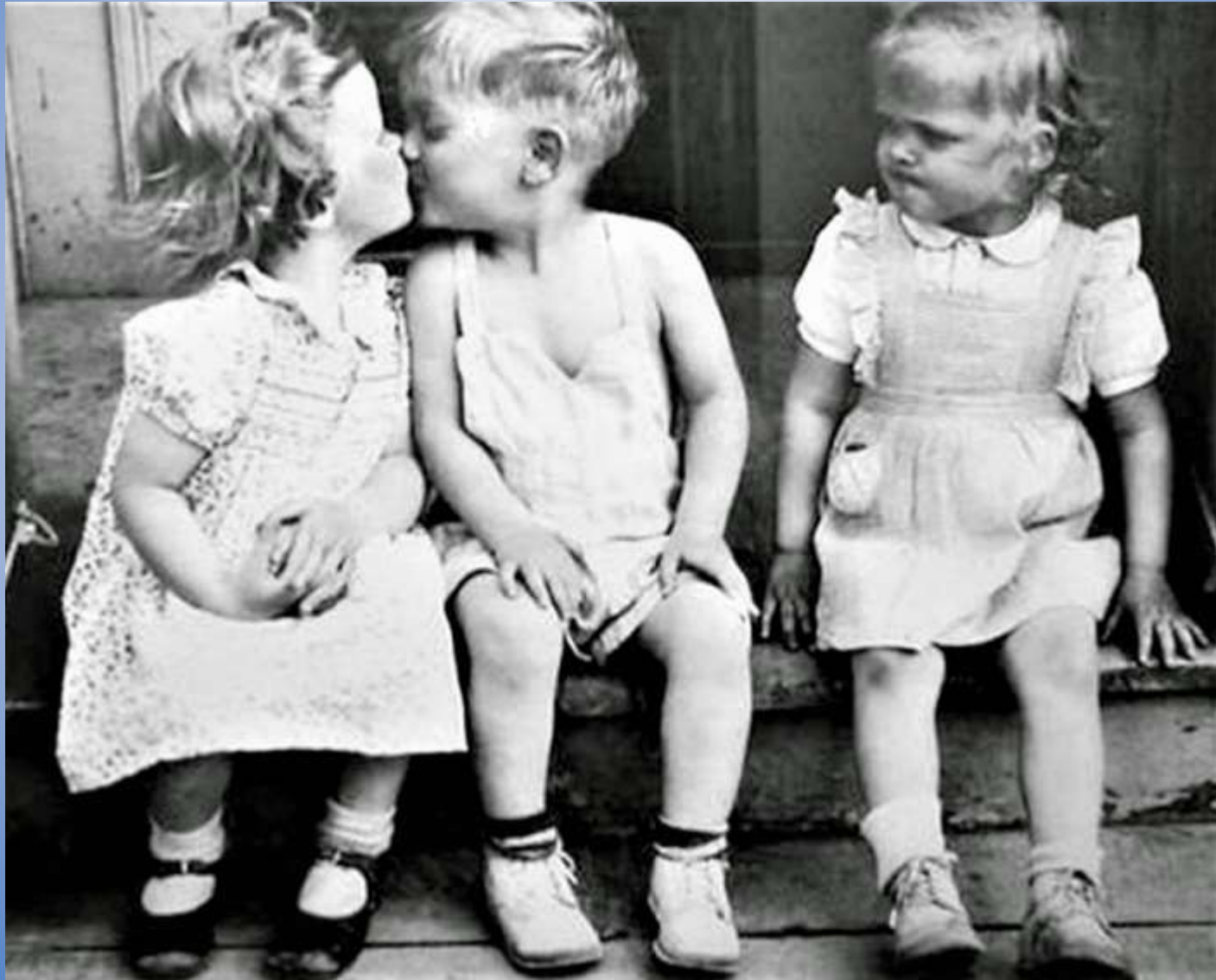
The Gift of Singleness



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The Gift of Singleness

The Growing Population of Singles

- **Not yet married (i.e., a young person).**
- **Widowed.**
- **Divorced.**
- **Separated.**

The Gift of Singleness

The Growing Population of Singles

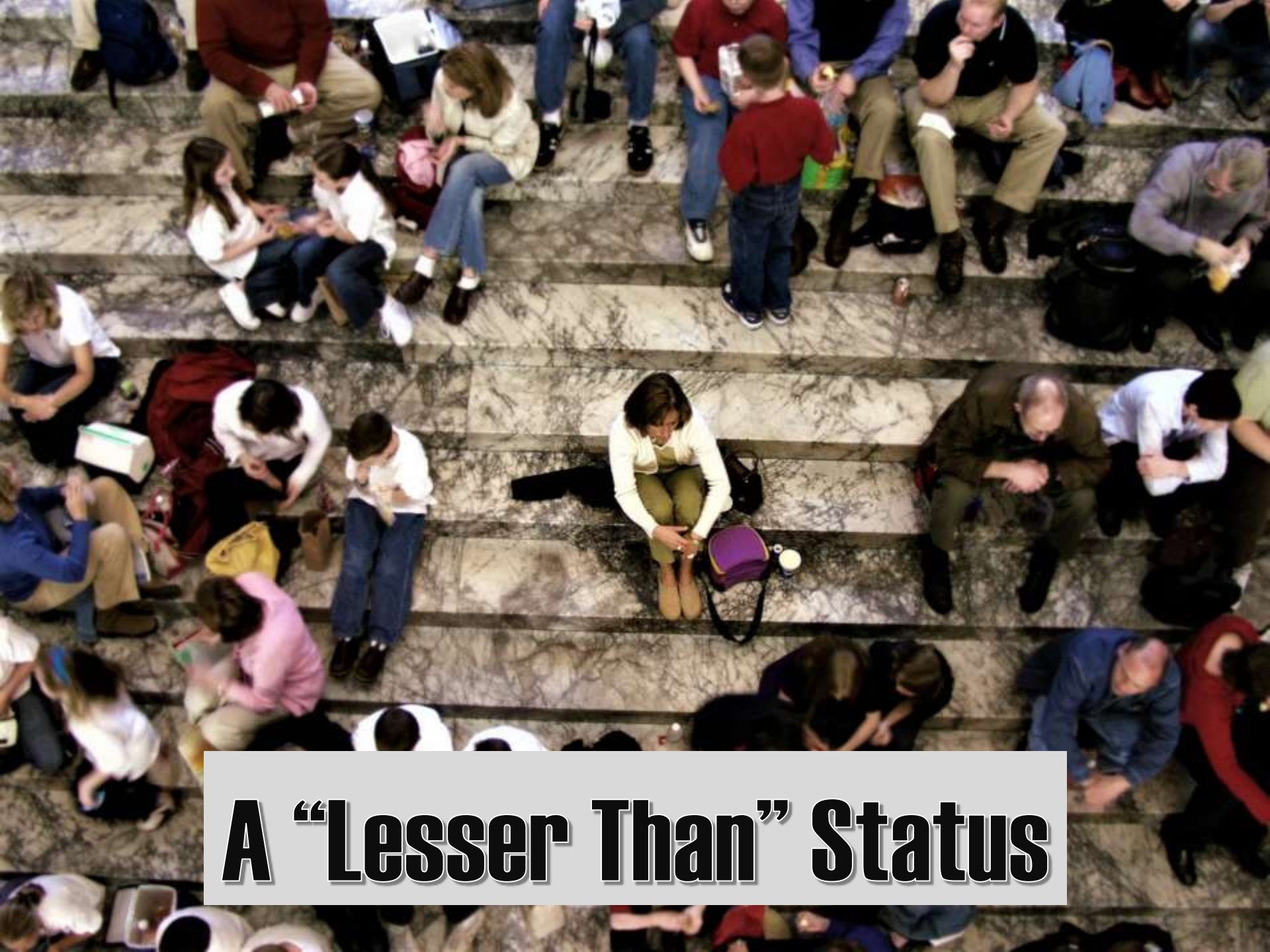
“All the trends indicate this part of our demographic (singleness) is growing at both ends—people marrying later and marriages ending sooner.”

— Sam Allberry

The Gift of Singleness

The Growing Population of Singles

- **Not yet married (30s, 40s, 50s).**
- **Previously married.**
- **In-between marriages.**
- **Will never be married.**
- **Shifting cultural definitions of marriage, sexuality, etc.**



A “Lesser Than” Status

The Gift of Singleness

A “Lesser Than” Status

“Please don’t take my community for granted. My network of close friends is as critical to me as your spouse is to you. I would like you to take my needs for rest and intimate connection with my network of friends as seriously as you take your commitment to be with your spouse.””

— Myra

The Gift of Singleness

A “Lesser Than” Status

“Any man who has no wife is no proper man.””

— Rabbi Eleazar, 1st Century A.D.

The Gift of Singleness

A “Lesser Than” Status

“The man who is not married at 20 is living in sin.”

— Jewish Talmud

The Gift of Singleness

A “Lesser Than” Status

“For the first 1,500 years of the church, singleness was considered the preferred state and the best way to serve Christ... Things changed after the Reformation in 1517, when single people were sent to the back and marrieds moved to the front—at least among Protestants.”

— Peter Scazzero

The Gift of Singleness

A “Lesser Than” Status



The Gift of Singleness

The 'GIFT' of Singleness?

“Now as a concession, not a command, I say this. I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another.”

To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single, as I am. But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.” (1 Corinthians 7:6-9)

The Gift of Singleness

The 'GIFT' of Singleness?



IF *Singleness* IS A GIFT,
CAN I EXCHANGE IT?

The Gift of Singleness

The 'GIFT' of Singleness?

“He said to them, ‘Not everyone can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given.

For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

Let the one who is able to receive this receive it.’” (Matthew 19:9-12)

The Gift of Singleness

The 'GIFT' of Singleness?

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.” (1 Peter 4:10)

The Gift of Singleness

The 'GIFT' of Singleness?

Notable singles serving the Kingdom of Heaven:

- **Jesus**
- **Paul**
- **John-the-Baptist**
- **Lazarus, Mary, and Martha**
- **Timothy**

The Gift of Singleness

The 'GIFT' of Singleness?

Notable singles serving the Kingdom of Heaven:

- **Elijah**
- **Jeremiah**
- **Nehemiah**

The Gift of Singleness

The 'GIFT' of Singleness?

Notable singles serving the Kingdom of Heaven:

- **Ruth**
- **Joseph**

The Gift of Singleness

Uniquely Called and Equipped

“I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. But the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, and his interests are divided. (1 Corinthians 7:32-34)

The Gift of Singleness

Uniquely Called and Equipped

Paul is conciliatory that not *everyone* is meant to be either single or married:

- “As a concession, not a command, I say this...” (7:6)
- “If you do marry, you have not sinned...” (7:28)
- “I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord.” (7:35)

The Gift of Singleness

Uniquely Called and Equipped

But Paul also insists that our marital status (single or married) should be seen first within the context of God's purposes for our lives and his coming Kingdom:

*“Let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches.”
(1 Corinthians 7:17)*

The Gift of Singleness

Uniquely Called and Equipped

“There is never a place in the Bible where it says that marriage makes you happy. It says over and over again that God makes you happy.”

— Dick Purnell

The Gift of Singleness

Uniquely Called and Equipped

“Every Christian has the same primary calling or vocation: *We are called to Jesus, by Jesus, and for Jesus.* Our first call is to love him with our whole being and to love our neighbor as ourselves.”

— Peter Scazzero

The Gift of Singleness

Uniquely Called and Equipped

“For those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.” (Romans 8:28-29)

The Gift of Singleness

Uniquely Called and Equipped

“This vocation, like the others, carries its own unique kind of suffering, all of which was used by God to form Christ in [*us*].”

— Peter Scazzero

The Gift of Singleness

Uniquely Called and Equipped

“Just as a person entering into marriage will give up some of their hopes, dreams and expectations, it is OK for singles to grieve the death of dreams associated with marriage. Both require dying to self and living for others to the glory of God.”

— Dr. Henry Cloud

The Gift of Singleness

Uniquely Called and Equipped

“As in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them.” (Romans 12:4-6)

The Gift of Singleness

Uniquely Called and Equipped

“As long as you have it, it’s a gift from God... We should receive our situation in life, whether it is singleness or marriage, as a gift of God’s grace to us.”

— Vaughan Roberts

The Gift of Singleness

Acceptance, Determination, Celebration

“All singles—whether they are single for a season or for a lifetime—can know that they are complete persons in Christ just as they are, and that being single provides a special time of opportunity for building up the Body of Christ as God leads in their lives.”

— Barry Danylak

The Gift of Singleness

