

# *Biblical Singleness*

QUICK THEOLOGY WOMEN'S ISSUES



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Published by Every Woman a Theologian LLC

Cover design by Eric Novak.

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Printed in the United States of America.







## Introduction

This little book is dedicated to all the single readers of *Every Woman a Theologian*. My season of singleness may have been shorter than what some of you have walked through (or are currently walking through), but I remember so vividly how I felt during it.

Before we dive into this topic I want to acknowledge that I am a married person talking about singleness, and I understand how frustrating that might be. But I want to address a sentiment I hear occasionally, which is: “If you have not experienced what I have experienced, then what you have to say is not worth listening to.” In this case, some might think that if I have not experienced singleness as long as they have, then what I have to say about singleness is not as impactful.

I understand that sentiment. I was not single into my 30s, 40s, or beyond—and I acknowledge that such an experience is a different journey that I cannot speak

into as effectively as someone who has lived it. But what I am endeavoring to do in this book is simply to address Scripture's hope in regard to singleness. This is not about my experience or your experience; it is about what Scripture says. Even though I am married, I was single at one time. I did feel those emotions; I struggled with loneliness, hopelessness, lust, and a broken heart. Regardless of how different our singleness journeys are or the fact that I am now married, I hope we can unite in hope around what the Bible teaches on the topic.



## Feeling Barren

I am going to start with a verse from Psalm 113. It's one I prayed often during my single years. I made a commitment not to date in high school (a common practice in Christian culture at the time), and while I am glad I made that commitment, I did *not* like being single. I desperately wanted to date somebody! As a teenage girl I read Psalm 113 because one day I hoped to be married. I did not know if it would happen, but I was encouraged by Psalm 113:9, which says: "He gives the barren woman a home, making her the joyous mother of children. Praise the LORD!"

This verse is specifically talking about a woman who is infertile—a barren woman. But I drew encouragement from this verse because I was an unmarried woman with no children. While that application may not have been originally intended by the author, in my walk with God it was an encouragement to pray that verse and pour out to God my desire for a relationship, a home, and a future. In

fact, I prayed this verse for years until I met my husband.

I am not saying everyone should apply this verse the way I did, but I want to start with it because I think for many women singleness can feel like a form of infertility. It can feel like a barren wilderness. You are looking to the left and to the right and it seems like nobody is a fitting partner for you.

Or maybe you date a few people and it ends in heartbreak or disappointment. That can feel barren! It feels like all that time, emotional energy, and anticipation gave birth to nothing. In that sense I think this verse can be applied in your prayers as you pour your heart out to the Lord. Holding the desire to have a family while that desire remains unfulfilled for a long time can feel like giving birth to nothing. The principles of this verse really do apply, and, for married people, recognizing the weight of this pain can help us to have compassion and empathy toward single friends who long to be in a relationship.

That said, not everybody who is single wants to be in a relationship! But many do. We are starting out with this particular longing because I—as a female minister with many single women reading my books, sending me emails, and sitting in my living room—know that being single in today's world is *hard*.

I was encouraged in my own walk with God by being



honest about the barrenness I felt.

To the married woman reading this: You have probably heard some of the ways the church has hurt our single friends. In fact, in this book I will talk about five ways the church has failed singles, whether in comments made, underlying attitudes and actions, or vestiges of purity culture left over. I hope in reading this book you will come to know how to serve and love your single friends well.