

Single Adults Have Much to Contribute

Scripture Reading — 1 Corinthians 7:7, 32-35

All these [spiritual gifts] are the work of one and the same Spirit, [who] distributes them to each one.
— 1 Corinthians 12:11

Noting that many churches tend to favor married adults over singles, Leanne Doornbos Nagel wrote (in our church magazine), “Church culture has made being an active young adult member difficult.” For example, her church grouped her with teenagers, even though she was a 24-year-old single adult who taught at a local high school. But her church included her 20-year-old married -brother with adults.

She argues that a church culture that embraces both married and single adults mirrors God’s hospitality, making “room for marginalized members.” In addition, “a welcoming culture that respects its members retains its members.” She reminds readers that single adults have much to contribute to congregational life. They are equally as gifted as married members, and they may have greater freedoms such as opportunities to “travel, study, and work in colorful landscapes, cultures, and jobs.” In addition, many single adults have fewer obligations tied to dependents.

Nagel encourages church leaders to use singles’ “experiences and knowledge by adding them to groups and committees” and by listening “when they share ideas or ask questions.” This is good advice not only for engaging young adults but also for engaging people with disabilities and anyone else who tends to be pushed to the margins. The healthiest churches engage all their members.

Prayer

Jesus, you remained single throughout your ministry on earth. Help us to value, appreciate, and engage single adults and all others in our fellowship. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Spiritual Gifts](#), [Christianity](#), [The Church](#), [Life](#), [Christian Life](#), [Community](#)

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