

Singleness & Marriage | Imago Dei

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Introduction

God created humanity in his image (i.e., Imago Dei), and God embodies a perfect relationship—the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). We were created to reflect that relational God in our human relationships with others. However, since the beginning, the intention of our relationships has become and continues to be distorted and desecrated by the adversary of God. Relationships have become an idol—something that takes the place of our dependence on God. Our society defines marriage as the result of compatibility, chemistry, and convenience. Even the church has elevated marriage to an unhealthy “arrival status,” while a single person is considered “less than.” How do we recapture the original intent that God has for our relationships?

Summary Statement

Life Canton will Reclaim our Identity in Jesus and not define our identity by human relationships. Relationships are important to God, and He created us as relational beings, but whether we are single or married does not change our status as temples of the living God . We must submit all of our relationships to God.

Singleness: We are blessed to be in relationships with one another, but we believe there is no Biblical mandate to be married. Jesus himself committed to a life of celibacy and ministry, while Paul encouraged those in the church to remain single to be “concerned about the things of the Lord (1 Cor 7:32).” The intent of singleness is to fully dedicate their time to justice and love in our world. We will empower those who are single to have a seat and a voice at the leadership table of our church. Like all followers of Jesus, He called us to be in community as we engage in discipling relationships. This call is our mandate from Jesus in the Great Commission and is a strength for single people.

Marriage: A God-honoring marriage is between a man and a woman who submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. God establishes this union in creation. While marriage has a purpose in procreation, we believe that a marriage without kids can still honor God. The intent of a God-honoring marriage exists to point us to the attributes and activity of Jesus towards the church. The church is the bride of Christ and marriage reflects this beautiful relationship (Eph 5:25-27). A marriage should only be pursued if this purpose is upheld. This has nothing to do with compatibility, chemistry, and convenience.

We acknowledge there are same-sex unions and partnerships that exist in our culture and in our church. While these unions do not reflect the intent of God for marriage, we will create belonging and point everyone to the grace in Jesus and the transformation of his Holy Spirit.

Primary Texts

Genesis 1:27-28
Genesis 2:22-25
Genesis 3:6-19
1 Corinthians 7

Secondary Texts

Matthew 19:5-6, 12
2 Corinthians 6:14
Ephesians 5:21-33
Revelation 19:7

In keeping with our intent to utilize the work of the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC) when available, we recommend the following resources where significant work has already been done. [Human Sexuality and the Marriage Ethic](#) and [A Theology of Singleness](#).