

Finding Wholeness as a Single Parent

Years ago, well-meaning people would come up to me, pat me on the back, and say, “I think it is great that you help broken families.” I would graciously reply, “Thanks.”

More recently when I get similar compliments, I go on to explain that the families I minister to are single-parent families — some of them are experiencing brokenness, but most of them are not broken families. I believe that they are whole families experiencing brokenness. The factor that determines whether a person’s family is whole or broken does not depend on wearing a wedding ring, it depends solely on Jesus Christ.



Function vs. Form

What about your family? As a single parent, do you feel less than whole because of your marital status? Does your family have Christ at the center? Are you living according to biblical principles? If wholeness is truly found in Christ and not in marriage, do you still think that your family is broken? What a revelation it can be to focus more on the function of what makes a family whole, rather than hiding behind the form of marriage!

The Key to Parenting

Most single parents feel like they are not valued because they are not married. Many churches do not know how to walk effectively alongside single parents and suggest they return to the singles ministry. Yet many single parents will tell you that they have more in common with married parents (with children the same age as theirs) than single adults without kids. Single parents need to spend more time with other parents (whether they are married, single, re-married, or grandparents). Be proactive in your church if there is no single-parent ministry! Focus more on your parenting instead of your singleness.

Freedom from Remarriage

Churches need to preach this doctrine of wholeness being found in Christ, not in marriage. Your church should give you permission to stay single and not apply pressure to re-marry just so that you can become a whole family again. I believe that if you experienced that freedom, it would be life changing! Most single parents are trying to strategize a plan to re-marry so that they can fit the form of a whole family. They believe that the pressure to look like a whole family will finally go away if they could only find another spouse. Every single parent can find wholeness by giving her broken heart to the one who can mend her — Jesus Christ. This is an offer that goes out to all people — no matter their status. Receive this gift with eagerness!

by Gary Sprague. Gary Sprague is the president and founder of the Center for Single-Parent Family Ministry. This article is courtesy of ParentLife.