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Adult Ministries

Single Focus

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.
2 Corinthians 5:20

TAKE FIVE

The Single Focus Adult Ministries will begin a new section of the Take Five program in October. Our Bible studies encompass each area of Take Five:

- SHIELD** Make Jesus Christ a part of every life decisions. Take time to seek Him in all areas of life.
 - Sexual Purity** No sex before marriage—God has a better way to find love, stay in love, and grow in intimacy for a lifetime.
 - Marriage Is Forever** This will be a study based on the movie **Fireproof**. Participants will decide if they can live up to the **Love-Dare Challenge**. All married couples and marriage minded single adults will be invited to attend this series.
 - Be the Master of Your Money** Learn to be in control of your money.
 - Surround Yourself With the Right People** Learn how to set personal boundaries. Discover how to love yourself and have healthier relationships with others.
- Sexual Purity**—We've just completed this part of Take Five as we concluded our course in **LOVE, SEX & LASTING RELATIONSHIPS**, a 10-week study, by Chip Ingram.

In review of

Love, Sex & Lasting Relationships

This is an in-depth study of God's purpose and design for sexual intimacy. During this series we learned how the our culture today sees love and how this view of love impacts each of our lives. Each of us who participated in the class were amazed at how much influence we are exposed to and how different the plan is for the way God intended for love to be realized in our lives. A couple of paragraphs from the lesson plan sum it up this way:

"Our culture today suggests that successful relationships are built on finding the right person, falling in love, and fixing your hopes and dreams of future fulfillment on that person. But, relationships aren't working, marriages are failing, and we're left wondering—Why?
God has a plan. He has given us a way to build a relationship that honors the other person—a way to build on love, not lust, a way that results in deeper intimacy and long-term commitment."

Remarks from the class

Ronda Welsh — If I have to narrow it down to the one thing I found most valuable in the Love, Sex and Relationship Bible study we just completed, it would have to be the following:

Why do you tell your child not to play in the street? Because they could get ran over. Why do you not want them to get ran over? Because they could get hurt. Why do you not want them hurt? Because you love them. So you set boundaries with your children about where they can play to keep them safe because you love them *(continued on page 4)*



Up-Coming Events

- Single Focus Bible Study: Fireproof / Love Dare Challenge — 6-week study begins Sunday Oct. 11th
- Judgment House — Sunday Oct. 25th
- Single Focus group members will begin the rotation to clean Life Church once a month.

Creating Quality Relationships

Single Focus Adult Ministries is introducing a new monthly column, *Creating Quality Relationships*, authored by Ronda Welsh, our team lead for Single Focus Adult Ministries. Ronda brings her experience as a Relationship Coach to offer guidance for creating and sustaining meaningful relationships. Through her articles you'll be encouraged to look for the opportunities that God has in store for you—you'll take on a different perspective of life.

Ronda Welsh began her career as a legal assistant in 1994 when she received her Associates Degree in Legal Assistant at WSU and shortly thereafter joined KALA. She received her CLA in August of 1995 and her CLAS in civil litigation in September 1998. After trying on several areas of law for size she found the one she loved the most.. domestic. For approximately the last eight years she has been helping people through divorces and custody cases when she discovered she could delve even further into this passion by becoming a mediator for the divorce courts. She is Kansas Supreme Court approved in Core and Domestic and is in the process of finishing certification for Parent/Adolescent mediation.

Two years ago Ronda stumbled on another career path that is a step even deeper into her passion - relationship coaching. She completed relationship coaching training with Center for Right Relationship in April 2009. She specializes in helping single people who are frustrated with the dating scene, create quality relationships. She has become known as "the relationship guru" to many. She has written a book partly on dating and being single, which is expected to be published soon.

"When I have helped a client get through the emotional divorce process and they see hope at the end, or when I have completed a successful mediation where the parents are not going to be putting the child in the middle, or when a coaching client has a major breakthrough about relationships, I experience such gratification I cannot even describe it. I know it is completely a God thing every time!"

She has been a Kansas resident her entire life. She has been a single parent for approximately 19 years and successfully raised a daughter, now 22, and son, now 20. She spends as much time as possible with her three year old grandson blowing bubbles and building sand castles.

This column will serve two purposes. One, I will give you valuable information or tools to enhance your relationships, and two, you can submit your questions and I will reply in the column.

Wishing you not just lasting relationships but deeply gratifying ones.

Relationship Ronda

To submit questions email me at ronda@resolveittogether.com

What relationships in your life are keeping you up at night?

Following are four top reasons it is important for you to work on improving and maintaining your relationships:

1. The darn things (relationships that is) are everywhere! To name just a few places they show up: in your reality, in your family, at work, at church, in your leisure activities, on vacation, in daily tasks like at the grocery store, in causes or non-profit organizations you are a part of, at the gym, and most certainly in your dreams!
2. "The quality of your life is the quality of your relationships."
Anthony Robbins
3. Pain in your relationships permeate every area of your life: financially, socially, emotionally, physically, mentally, and spiritually; shedding light on disconnection like the die used in a catheterization procedure highlights blockage.

Here is what one article and study said about the affect fighting can have on your health:

"Nasty arguments between couples increase the risk of clogged arteries. In a recent University of Utah study, women's hearts suffered when they made or heard hostile comments; men's hearts reacted badly to domineering, controlling words."

"It's normal to have a fight with your spouse -- it's a matter of how you fight," says Ronald Glaser, Ph.D., an immunologist at Ohio State University. What he and his wife, Ohio State clinical psychologist Janice Kiecolt-Glaser, Ph.D., put off-limits:

Other Events

Judgment House — Sunday Oct. 25th

We are going to Judgment House Sunday the 25th of October at 7:00 p.m. I need to register everyone that wants to go so we need a head count by October 11th.

FIREPROOF— Sunday Oct. 11th

We are going to start the Fireproof 8-week Bible study series Sunday October 11th at 9:00 a.m. Married, dating, engages, and single adults are invited to join us.

Clean Life Church — Monthly

Single Focus group members will begin the rotation to clean Life Church once a month. See Annette if you can join us in filling this need. The more we have the faster we will get the church cleaned.

"Getting nasty, sarcastic or personal, or using body language like rolling your eyes. It's better to simply agree to disagree."

I am starting to see a theme to this article...it appears that somehow relationships and heart are tied together.

4. It is God's will that you have healthy and happy relationships.
*"Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you."
Matthew 5:48 (The Message)*

"Love from the center of who you are; don't fake it. Run for dear life from evil; hold on for dear life to good. Be good friends who love deeply; practice playing second fiddle.

Don't burn out; keep yourselves fueled and aflame. Be alert servants of the Master, cheerfully expectant. Don't quit in hard times; pray all the harder. Help needy Christians; be inventive in hospitality.

Bless your enemies; no cursing under your breath. Laugh with your happy friends when they're happy; share tears when they're down. Get along with each other; don't be stuck-up. Make friends with nobodies; don't be the great somebody.

Don't hit back; discover beauty in everyone. If you've got it in you, get along with everybody. Don't insist on getting even; that's not for you to do.

"I'll do the judging," says God. "I'll take care of it." Romans 12:9-18 (The Message)

What relationship does your heart ache to mend or improve so you can sleep more peacefully at night?



Surviving Church As A Single

Single adults, I have failed you. Although I've written a handful of ideas about being single at church, I've never really done that topic justice. So today, I created a list of all the different stereotypes and challenges singles have to navigate when they go to church. From the "get married right this second" friends to the "this guy has a pulse and so do you so maybe that's enough in common to fall in love". Friends, it's all here. And I can't take credit for it. I read your comments about real things that have happened to you at church, got ideas from my single friends, and received a great email from a pastor named Jeff. I took it all and created a point based scorecard.

Ready to play?

The **SURVIVING CHURCH AS A SINGLE** Scorecard:

1. Your church doesn't have a singles ministry. **(you get 1 point)**
2. Your church has a singles ministry but it's combined with the college ministry which creates opportunities for conversations like this:
Student: "My roommate bought a microwave for our dorm room. I love being a Freshman!"
Single: "My 401K is underperforming." **(you get 2 point)**
3. Your church has a singles ministry but it's a triad that combines college, single adults and divorce recovery. **(you get 3 point)**
4. Your church has a singles ministry but it's the dreaded quad, combining college, single adults, divorce recovery and retired widowers that refuse to move to Florida. **(you get 4 point)**
5. Someone pays you the world's most backhanded compliment, "I just don't understand how someone as great as you isn't married yet." **(you get 1 point)**
6. Someone told you, "If you stop looking for love you'll find it." **(2 points for each time you've heard that!)**
7. At church, people give you weird looks if you refuse to sit in the "singles" section of the sanctuary. **(you get 1 point)**
8. When people introduce you, they say, "This is Matt, my single friend." **(you get 2 point)**
9. When people introduce you they feel compelled to list out your accomplishments, "This is Sally, my single friend who owns her own home, drives a luxury sedan and has a very, very stable job." **(you get 3 point)**
10. Your friends that have been married for 15 minutes act like they suddenly don't remember anything about dating and therefore can't give you any advice. "It's been so long since I dated, things have changed so much. I'm just out of that whole scene." **(you get 2 point)**
11. People are constantly volunteering you for things because, "you're single, you've got so much free time." **(you get 1 point)**
12. People at church act a little surprised when they ask you, "How are you doing?" and you respond with, "Things are great right now. I love my life!" **(you get 1 point)**
13. Married friends try to live vicariously through you, asking questions like, "What did you do this weekend? Road trip? I bet you went on some crazy cool, singles road trip, right?" **(you get 2 point)**
14. Someone you just met for the first time said a sentence like this to you, "If you want to get married, you need to _____." **(you get 2 point)**
15. Whenever married friends call you at noon on a Saturday, they start the conversation by saying, "Did I just wake you up?" **(you get 3 point)**
16. You assume that if you don't get engaged by final exams of your senior year in college you'll never get married. **(you get 2 point)**
17. You've secretly always wanted your own cat but are afraid that ownership of a single kitten will become some sort of gateway drug to becoming "the cat lady." **(you get 2 point)**
18. You've ever given an impassioned, enraged monologue on the injustice that men who are single get to age gracefully and be considered "bachelors" while women are instantly judged as "crazy cat ladies." **(LOOSE 3 point)**
19. You've got a "don't perpetuate the cat lady stereotype," monologue locked and loaded at all times and have already stopped reading this post so you can put it in the comments section. **(LOOSE 5 point)**
20. Someone has quoted the "it's not good for man to be alone" Bible verse to you. **(you get 2 point)**
21. When friends invite you to their church they start the invite by listing both the quantity and hotness of the singles that go there. **(you get 1 point)**
22. That friend was named Jon Acuff and he said, "No one in Atlanta should ever involuntarily remain single with so many awesome single people at North Point Community Church." (I've said this a lot. My bad.) **(you get 3 point)**
23. Your married friends tip toe around you during February because they think you're too delicate to handle the completely made up holiday, Valentine's Day. **(you get 1 point)**
24. You are too delicate to handle Valentine's Day and have been known to describe it with a rich tapestry of words no Christian should even know exist, never mind actually say out loud. **(you get 1 point)**
25. The person that leads the singles ministry at your church got married in 1964. **(+10 points for each decade they've been married)**
26. Someone told you, "Maybe you need to focus on being more like a Proverbs 31 woman." **(2 points for each time it wasn't sincere encouragement!)**
27. You didn't know you were supposed to be unhappy as a single adult until you went to church and found the singles ministry to be akin to a support group. **(you get 3 point)**
28. Upon hearing that you went on a first date with someone, your single friends at church stop inviting you to the single events because "you're in a relationship already." **(you get 2 point)**
29. Upon hearing that you went on two dates, your married friends at church start telling you, "I'll be praying that this is the one!" **(you get 3 point)**
30. Your best friend of 15 years gets married and then suddenly acts like a magical gap has opened up between you and decides that until you get married too you can't be close again because you just don't understand each other anymore. **(you get 3 point)**
31. To justify giving a four week marriage sermon series to a congregation that is 60% single, the pastor throws out one blanket statement like this at the beginning of the series, "And you single people listen up to this too, this well serve you well when you get married too." **(you get 2 point)**
32. You set your alarm to "not going to church today" after the first week of the marriage sermon series. **(LOOSE 2 point)**
33. The only time your married friends invite you over is when they need a babysitter. **(you get 3 point)**
34. Someone throws the "Paul was never married" card on **(you get 2 point)**
35. Friends assume that the only qualification that matters to you when it comes to finding a date is that she's available and set you up with people you have nothing in common with. **(you get 2 point)**
36. You've ever said the rhyme, "I'm a bachelor 'till the rapture." **(you get 1 point)**
37. During a prayer at church celebrating wedding anniversaries, the person praying says a special prayer for all the people that are still single and lonely. (True story) **(you get 1 point)**
38. You have a friend that feels like creating a dating profile on eHarmony is a sign that you might not be trusting God enough to provide a soul mate. **(you get 1 point)**
39. You've developed highly sensitive, "They're about to throw the bouquet" radar and know exactly when to leave a wedding. **(you get 2 point)**
40. Instead of saying that you're "single" your friends describe you as "Not married yet." **(you get 2 point)**

How did you score? Did I miss any? Have you experienced some that just weren't on that list?

Singles of the world unite and post your score proudly and when someone tries to stereotype you, tell them

Razzle - Dazzle Razzle - Dazzle


(continued) and do not want them to suffer the consequences that stepping outside of those boundaries could result in.

The same thing applies to why God wants you to wait until you are married to have sex. Why does God not want you to have sex until you are married? Because you could get your heart broken, because you give away pieces of your heart with every person you sleep with, because you could get pregnant or catch a disease. Why does God not want those things to happen to you? Because they will hurt you. Why does God not want you to be hurt? Because you are his child and he loves you.

JoAnn Kucera — I started this study thinking that I probably really know what God's plan is—this would just be confirmation. But, as the study got underway, I got a clear picture of how a relationship should develop. God's plan is a complete opposite of what you see and hear everyday in this world. I know I don't agree with the world—in thinking such as "if you can't be with the one you love, just love the one your with". I like to think that commitment and accountability are so much more important than that. However, I was very surprised to realize just how much I really am influenced by the way the world thinks in so many ways. It's a real wake-up call.

Annette Scheaffer — This video series was awesome. It revitalized my desire to live life single God's way. It was very interesting to see God's way compared to the world's way (Hollywood way) of dating and relationship development. The revelation I had during the series was that I must be more discerning in what I am willing to accept from the world's influences. I must be aware enough of the influences (T.V., books, movies, magazines. . . even the way we talk about others in social situations) to not let such things alter my relationship with God, or alter how I view God's rules. When push comes to shove, it all comes down to the fact that God will bless your true relationship beyond measure, if you hold to your conviction to be sexually pure before marriage. This is another one of God's promises that I intend to take to the bank.

Kevin Schultz — This study changed my entire view of dating. Instead of being so concerned with "finding the right one", now my view is to "be the right one". And instead of being so concerned with "falling in love", my view is now to "walk in love." Last but not least, instead of "finding fulfillment in another person", we should "find our total fulfillment in Him."



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FIREPROOF

and The Love-Dare Challenge



Married, dating, or single adults... Please join us for this 6-week Bible study series over the movie **FIRE-PROOF** and the **LOVE-DARE CHALLENGE**. The course will begin on October 11, at 9:00 am at Life Church.

In the movie **FIREPROOF**, a couple dares to rescue their choking marriage from the flames of divorce and temptation using *The Love Dare* book as a guide. Now you can take the experience of the film one step further with your own copy of *The Love Dare* book. This daily devotional steers you through the fiery challenge of developing a strong, committed marriage in a world that threatens to burn it to the ground.

The Love Dare personally leads you through daily devotionals, records your thoughts and experiences, and ends each day daring you to perform a simple act of love for your spouse. This 40-Day journey equips you to melt hardened, separated hearts into an enduring love that can withstand the flames of fear, pride and temptation. *The Love Dare* book will help you reinforce and enrich your marriage, earn back a love you thought was lost, and hear more about the One who not only designed unconditional, sacrificial love—He illustrated it.

In a world that attacks, devalues, and redefines relationships every day, learn how to rescue and protect your marriage from the firestorm. Take *The Love Dare* and **FIREPROOF** your relationship.

Topics Discussed in The Love Dare Book

In **FIREPROOF**, *The Love Dare* covers the topics of relationship parasites (addictions like pornography and gambling) and unconditional love. *The Love Dare* devotional book expands and extends the topics addressed in the film's plot to include such vital issues as:

Why Marriage? Explore the blessings and challenges of godly marriage.

Contract or Covenant? Examine the difference between the world's design for marriage and God's original intention.

Clean Fighting. Learn how to fight the fires of conflict effectively and respectfully. *Leading Your Heart, Instead of Vice Versa*. Practice choosing love when it isn't your instinctive response.

About the Authors

Alex and Stephen Kendrick serve on the pastoral staff at Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, GA. They began working in film when surveys showed how churches respond so positively to film as a ministry tool. They have since founded Sherwood Pictures, a production company dedicated to bringing Christian life-change to moviegoers all over the world. Their last film, *Facing the Giants* (2006), has been called "the surprise theatrical hit of 2007" and drew positive feedback from viewers in the ministry and secular film industry alike. Go to <http://thelovedarebook.com/> for more information about the *Love Dare* challenge.