## Heavenly Help DURING THE HOLIDAYS

By Darren Washington



One of the most exciting but also depressing times of the year for singles can be the holiday season. This realization will depend on whether you look at your cup as half full or half empty. During this time of year many of us will spend time with family and friends, to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. However, the season can be a challenging time for many singles in the area of relationships. Many of us see engaged couples, married couples and others with that special someone enjoying the holiday season. We also have the pressure from family and friends with questions such as "You are a great catch, I can't believe you're not married yet", or "When are you going to get married so I can be blessed with grandchildren?" I know you may have heard many others, but questions like these can cause you to ponder possibilities.

The possibilities will depend on how you view yourself, your choices, your future, and most importantly, how you see your cup? This self examination will consist of your past, present, and possible future relationships. Jesus is not concerned with our past as much as he is with our possibilities. Forget the past and the possible guilt, and let's shape our present to set us up for a fantastic future. Don't allow the feelings of being alone this holiday season cause you to seek after something that can lead you to heartache and disappointment in yourself.

I believe the best option for all singles until marriage is to live a lifestyle of sexual abstinence. Sex has become a billion-dollar industry, and it is having a negative affect in the way males view females, females view males and the way we view ourselves. The world's view of sex is also having a negative affect on the family structure, infidelity and divorce rates are continually climbing. We need to remember that God designed sex for three reasons:

- 1. To procreate the human race
- 2. To seal a Blood Covenant between two humans (male and female though marriage)
- 3. To allow sex to be enjoyed to its maximum potential without repercussions within marriage.

When we indulge in sex outside of marriage, we sin against our bodies...because we belong to God. We are also called to glorify God in body and spirit. (I Corinthians 6: 15-20) God does not want us to be driven by our selfish desires and lust, but calls us to be holy and pure. He puts this call on our lives because His Holy Spirit dwells within us (1Thessalonians 4:1-8), and He knows the repercussions that can and will occur when we disobey Him. We cannot have intimacy with God while having sexually immoral relationships. As singles we must desire to have companionship with God, through an intimate relationship with him. Consistently reading His word, believing His word, acting on His word and spending time talking as well as listening to God, will aid us in finding His perfect will for our lives.

During this season the thought of sex for both men and women will begin with the need to feel close to someone. Men are givers and women are receivers. It is my prayer that you do not give or receive a legitimate need in an ill-legitimate way. Do not allow a temporary situation or feeling to possibly cause you a lifetime of discomfort. Lust is always about pleasing yourself and your desires outside the will of God. Love is always about pleasing the other person, and being a servant to others. I am not saying abstinence will always protect you from a broken heart, but abstinence will help you deal

with that broken heart much better than also having to deal with the stress of sexually transmitted disease, feelings of guilt, damage to self-esteem, disappointment, depression, doubting salvation, and soul ties.

As we approach the New Year many of us are excited about the opportunity to "Start Over." When you make the decision to start over, you must be willing to "die" out to some things in your life so God can take you to the next level. You must be willing to die out to everything that is keeping you from an intimate relationship with Him. Are you willing to make the necessary changes to please God? God created male and female to dominate the earth and rule together in dominion, not to dominate one another. Since we are so valuable to God that He would send His only Son as an offering to die for our sins, can't we die to the things that are preventing a closer intimate relationship with God?

I want to encourage you during this holiday season to strengthen your relationship with God. As singles look at the cup as half full, because as mighty men and woman of God we are worth the wait. We now have the opportunity before marriage to get our houses in order to be a blessing to our spouses. As a single satisfied man of God who is waiting on God's blessing, I must admit that sexual abstinence has provided me with benefits such as:

- 1. Free of sexually transmitted disease (I also believe in a God who can heal any disease);
- 2. Having a clear mind when needing to make serious decisions about relationships that are not working;
- 3. Being able to distinguish between potential mates who are "serious" or only "curious".

When you are challenged during the holiday season, I would like to provide you with some words of wisdom:

- Ladies, when a man is honest about what he wants from you, don't make the mistake of thinking you can change his mind.
- Men, it is not wise for you to develop friendships with women that you know desire more from you just to get special benefits. You must be respectful, honest, and let her go so she can focus on God's blessing for her life.
- Be honest with people from day one. They may not like what you have to say, but you will gain their respect for being honest and open.

I pray that your faith fail not during this holiday season, because God is ready to take us to the next level for his glory. The perfect beginning in an imperfect world, is building a better you.



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