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*"Me, myself and God"*

A study of Singleness in the CCCS

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### Abstract

This thesis investigates the phenomenon<sup>1</sup> or state of "Singleness" and the reasons, consequences and issues it postulates. This project looked at the feasibility of single male graduates of Malua Theological College (training venue for Ministers of the Congregational Christian Church in Samoa) forming a *unique* singles ministry or ministry team of ordained single ministers to assist with the pastoral work of the CCCS.

Over a period of 9 months, a qualitative/ action research approach was employed to garner information utilising relevant literature and the oral interviews of CCCS church leaders, ministers, lecturers and present day students of Malua Theological College. I also interviewed five Roman Catholic priests to ascertain their views on the Roman Catholic Church's celibate clergy ministry.<sup>2</sup>

The results of this study showed that there is little support from fraternities of the CCCS for a singles ministry in the CCCS. However this only verifies the point that there needs to be more information on the subject made available to authorities and churchgoers. I do not discount the possibility that a singles ministry in the CCCS will one day eventuate.

The research findings led me to conclude that:

1. There is a need for the CCCS to provide viable options (e.g. vocational, academic,) for single graduates of Malua Theological College.
2. There is no biblical basis or pretense to justify the prohibiting of single men from being ordained by the CCCS.

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<sup>1</sup> The Oxford English Dictionary (1995 Edition) Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1995. p769 'defines *phenomenon* as "a fact perceived by the senses and/or by the mind"

<sup>2</sup> see Appendix A.p56 and Appendix B.p57.

- 3 A Single Ministry in the CCCS is not an unrealistic option (in the future) for the church in alleviating some of the social afflictions that are impeding the lives of those church members who are unmarried.
- 4 The singles celibate ministry of the Roman Catholic Church is not a verifiable option for the CCCS in terms of forming a similar *singles* Pastoral Ministry team
- 5 Single people are valued, productive and essential members of the CCCS community.

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## **Foreword**

Several years ago, a social science researcher "discovered" if you are a single woman over the age of 35, you might as well convert your hope chest into a coffin because you are out of luck in your husband quest.<sup>3</sup>

This small piece made me chuckle, not because I derive pleasure in the misfortune of others but rather I know so many single people who embrace this type of thinking! Whether this type of reasoning is the result of an innate belief or it was forged from their social conditioning these people still choose to embrace such a view. Nevertheless, despite the humorous element in this work it still illustrates a prevailing truth or a prevalent attitude that is found in society today concerning singles. This dissertation will show that singles are not luckless for not being married. For some of these unmarried people it is a *blessing*.

I wrote this paper as a final year single student at Malua Theological College and many of my experiences and thoughts are the viewpoint of someone who has spent over 30 years as a single. I do not need researchers with government literary grants telling my fellow single brethren and me that I will never marry. I happen to know the Master (God) of all research and development can change anyone's marital status at any given time.

Coming to grips with singleness has been an interesting process for me. I have learnt to be content in my vocational and personal life.

God has blessed me with many special people with whom to share my life in the confines of platonic relationships. I have to wonder if I would have developed these friendships if I were married.

Like many Samoans I acknowledge my biological family has given me much for which to be thankful. Before coming to Malua, my parents and I shared a home in New Zealand, which some people found odd when they considered my age at the time (I was 26), but it worked well for my family. Sure, there were times I would have appreciated more private space and less interference from my mother. However I enjoyed having someone around when I came home from a hectic day at work and needed to vent my frustrations to.

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<sup>3</sup> Mitchell, Kate (Ed), *Stories for the Single Christian Woman*, Forbes and Davies: New York, 1987.p1

My nephew and niece (sister's children) have given me the opportunity to exercise my parenting skills by cooking for them, nursing their wounds, and listening to their concerns. If they argue with me, I can send them back to their parents (an option a parent does not have).

How could I ever forget my single Malua "brothers," those men who truly understand from where I come from and the problems that I am facing as a single minister in training. Many men, including our fathers, tell us how fortunate we are to be able to serve God without having to divide our time between studies and domestic chores. They mean well, and they are correct in some regards, but I know that some of my single brothers would be willing to sacrifice some sleep for the sake of having a wife and children. My married friends (at Malua) and I span our differences with our common faith in *Jesus* and this has worked well for us.

"Thirty and Single" is not exactly the title I like at this stage of my life. I still pray to God that one day I will find someone to marry. Whether or not that happens, I recognise the most important title I could ever gain is now mine "*child of God*".

Within recent years, many churches have become more accepting and active in ministering to singles. This is an encouraging sign, especially in view of the scriptural teaching that elevates singleness. I embarked on this paper in the hope that it may be the catalyst for some changes in the CCCS pastoral ministry in its approach to singles.

One of my lecturers in Malua<sup>4</sup> said to me that I, like many of his prior students, possess a passion to change a multitude of things in the CCCS ministry. He (lecturer) carefully reminded me that my youthful enthusiasm and zest was not always matched by my reasoning because of my limited life experience. However the CCCS must prepare itself for the deluge of questions by Samoans who were raised or socialised in places like New Zealand who with their educational background are now beginning to challenge traditional Samoan structures and viewpoints that have been the *foundational pillars* of the CCCS<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Rev Dr Featuna'i B Liua'ana is a lecturer in Church History and Ministry at Malua Theological College.

<sup>5</sup> Taule'ale'ausumai Fei "The Word Made Flesh: A Samoan Theology Of Pastoral Care." in Culbertson Philip *Counseling Issues and South Pacific Communities*, Accent Publications: Auckland, 1997.p174

Furthermore, he (lecturer) was expedient to remind me that I should be prepared to accept the fact that change may not be on my terms or that it will happen in my lifetime. Therefore I readily acknowledge the real prospect that change in the CCCS may be a slow and tedious process. My lecturer also noted that for any academic, they must confront the real truth that their ideas are open to be challenged, disproved and discredited as this is standard practice in the world of academic scholarship. Hence, throughout the commissioning of this paper I remained realistic that this was an academic exercise first and foremost and not a crusade to confront church authorities

I am overt in stating that I do not pursue preferential treatment for any group in society at the expense of others. However as a proponent of liberation theology<sup>6</sup> and egalitarian principles I believe in fairness therefore I conclude that equality is the best practice for ministry workers in this period. I have never been an advocate for the rendering of unmerited privileges or unfair advantages for single people in the clergy and accordingly I have tried to maintain an objective stance during this paper.

To be single is not to be second class or second best. Singles have every potential for developing full meaningful Christ centred lifestyles. The church and individuals can make this possibility a reality. In fact I believe it goes beyond the call of duty but it should be something inspired by love. The love for Jesus who was single himself

One of the things that continually baffles and torments me is why single graduates of Malua Theological College even after serving the CCCS for two years are precluded from being ordained. Without ordination these men will not be able to conduct or lead a congregation in communion. This seems a sad irony as Jesus who was single himself conducted the Last Supper from which our present day communion is derived. This sad state of affairs leaves me frustrated and despondent

As I stated from the outset of this paper I never wrote this paper to spite CCCS authorities nor was a plea to justify my displeasure at having to adhere to procedures that I found obsolete and brutish in today's modern world. I never had any personal agendas or internal vendettas that predicated my desire to write this paper.

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<sup>6</sup> see *Appendix J*.p70



There may still be some lingering doubts from the wider community as to why after four years a graduate of Malua has chosen to remain single. Those who are ignorant or oblivious with the single persons reasoning may cast allegations of homosexuality and sexual deviancy upon the single graduate. Even as a torrent of false allegations and spiteful ridicule are directed at me for my beliefs as a single I still campaign undeterred for their cause. However I must admit that at certain times I have contemplated the convenient way out and marry someone for the sake of maintaining peace. This will spare my family the ignominy of having to answer queries on the reasons why I choose to remain single. It will also spare me the wrath of the Elders Committee who has been unequivocal and transparent in their demands that I marry before I graduate from Malua.

One of the modern day triumph stories is at the present time (2002) a single or unmarried lecturer is on the staff of Malua Theological College (Aukilani Tuia'i). I recall that the last single lecturer at Malua was Kuatemanu Ulutui<sup>7</sup> who vacated his position in 1991 still unmarried. I spoke to one present lecturer whose scholarship to Fiji was provisional on the condition that he would be married before the end of his four years at Malua. He (lecturer)<sup>8</sup> told me that he thought that there were economic advantages for singles being sent on scholarship rather than married couples, as this would be much inexpensive for the CCCS in terms of sponsorship. Also, the lecturer believed that a single person would be less distracted than the married person whose time is taken with matters on the domestic front. This argument could be easily countered with those opponents saying that other things can easily sway a single person. One thing that I must acknowledge is that lecturer whom I interviewed holds no regret that he did get married and in hindsight he sees it as a positive move.

Presently academic scholarships offered by the CCCS are based on academic merit and ones marital status is not at all a determining factor.

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<sup>7</sup> Rev Kuatemanu Ulutui was a lecturer at Malua Theological College from 1989-1991. At present he is the parish minister for the Apolima-Uta CCCS congregation.

<sup>8</sup> Expressed permission not granted by the lecturer for his name to be included thus his wish for anonymity is respected.

If someone (reading this paper) was to follow my lead and choose not to marry before their study tenure here in Malua ends then he does so knowing full well the consequences of his actions and that ultimately he will have no recourse of appeal.

### **Rationale for This Study**

I believe this paper is the first formal study of its kind on singleness in the CCCS. I restate from the outset that this is a study of singleness in the community with special emphasis of "singleness" in the church. I believe that one must study both singleness in the secular realm and singleness in church as the Christian fraternity is an inevitable part of the wider community.

The issue of singleness presents a challenge to the *EFKS/ CCCS* to at least re-evaluate its position in regards to single graduates of Malua Theological College and their role in the ministry.

The primary reason why I believe this paper has a justified mandate, as it is one of the pertinent issues facing single graduates of Malua Theological College and their future in the ministry of the CCCS. At the end of years there may be some still facing a future of uncertainty as they are not permitted to become parish ministers.

At the start of the 2002 academic year, Malua Theological College had 36 unmarried students out of a school roll of 85 this constituted 40 percent of the student body.<sup>9</sup> This figure alone warrants that singleness is an issue for Malua Theological College.

At the end of a student's four years at Malua if a student chooses to remain single then they should be made fully aware of the consequences of this. A single cannot be the minister of a congregation and although not stipulated in the constitution they are highly unlikely to be ordained thus prohibiting them from conducting communion, baptisms and other duties that an ordained minister of the CCCS is allowed to perform

I have accepted without reservation or qualification the CCCS stance in regard to single men being unable to be sole pastors of a parish/congregation as they are seeking a married pastor to form a partnership.

I surveyed the opinions of current and former graduates of Malua Theological College and harvested their views on this subject area and their experiences relevant to this topic.

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<sup>9</sup> Malua Theological College Handbook 2002. Malua Printing Press, Apia. Samoa. 2002

Ironically at the time when I first contemplated this paper, a single ordained Minister from the Lutheran Church in Denmark visited Malua Theological College. This added momentum to my zest to start and complete this study.

I am firm in my belief that rather than retreat from the sensitive issues, the church mission involves the welfare of whole of society and the destiny of particular individuals. The church in some instances whether covertly or otherwise has not been too benevolent to singles too with many facing ostracism and alienation from within the church family.

It is ironic that we(CCCS) preach sermons to ourselves and we speak of tolerance yet we fail to accept singles in some of our church ministries<sup>10</sup> This may be an over dramatised rendering of the situation yet it does holds some merit especially if a person is single and has experienced such persecution in the wider community and in particular the church .

This study will look at singleness in terms of those Malua Theological College (MTC) graduates who have never married and those who were formerly married but have lost a spouse through death or divorce. The group includes parents without partners, widows.

This study will also endeavour to look at the groups of celibate priests and nuns, homosexuals and separated people who are still married but are living apart from their mates, those who have chosen not to marry, and others whose lives are spent pondering and hoping for the day when they will walk to the altar. Yet I repeat that the scope of this study does not include husbands whose marriages have disintegrated to such an extent that the spouses reside under the same roof but live isolated lives that in practice could be classified as single.

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<sup>10</sup> Bridges Charles The Christian Ministry "An Inquiry into the Causes of its Inefficiency" The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh Scotland, 1959 p 158.



No exact figures<sup>11</sup> could be found to be as to how many single people there are in the CCCS (as members) but a solid estimation would lead us to believe that it would be a considerable number. This was the mandate that formed my drive and determination to start this study and for it to have meaning for the singles in the CCCS.

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<sup>11</sup> 2002 official Samoan Census figures not yet available at time of completion of this thesis. It is the contention of the author that unofficial figures would only lead to further speculation.

### Approach and Methodology

I have always ascribed to the belief that research requires a clear and constant purpose, which both defines and precedes the choice of means; that the means be exactly and consistently followed; and that no revision takes place until the sequence of steps is completed. Action is tentative, non-committal and adaptive. It concentrates upon the next step, breaking the sequence into discrete, manageable, decisions. It casts events in a fundamentally different perspective, evolving the "future out of present opportunities, where research perceives the present in the context of the final outcomes."<sup>1</sup>

As Creswell<sup>2</sup> has observed, there is no recipe or formula for making research design decisions.(see *appendix C.p59*). Designing evaluation research is as much an art as a science. The art of designing evaluation research entails creating an approach and methodology that is appropriate for the particular research purpose, the people involved, and the research context and situation. This is appropriate in my case due to the sensitive nature of the subject and the cultural aspects surrounding those who I wanted to interview and their status in the Samoan community. (see *appendix D.p61*)

### Research Techniques Used

This section of my interpretation provides a rationale for the research design. The interpretation/rationale refers to documented theoretical and practical research perspectives to provide the context and support for my adopted design.

As someone not too familiar with Samoan communities and organisations in Samoa<sup>3</sup> I had to cautiously select the methodology and/or research methods - that would allow for an objective and culturally sensitive manner approach. I preferred the subsequent three Qualitative Methodologies as the most appropriate for this dissertation.

The three different qualitative methodologies were as follows:

- Individual semi-structured in depth interviews
- Personal observations and experiences

<sup>1</sup> Baker, T.L. "Evaluation research" in *Doing research*. McGraw Hill: United States, 1988, p46

<sup>2</sup> Creswell, J.W. *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Sage: London, 1994, p7

<sup>3</sup> The author has only been living in Samoa for three years from 1999.

- Material from reputed and validated sources (i.e. literature, internet)

### Documentary research

This research utilised three main qualitative research techniques: this included literature research, "face-to-face" interviews and the use of relevant personal experience seminar presentations. I have chosen to use qualitative methods for this research because its style or mode data collection is consistent with the indigenous Samoan style of research, in terms of being a less perspective methodology. The research design consists of six phrases:

### Research Procedures

I recognise the importance of providing open, honest accounts of the research process. The importance of this becomes immediately apparent if one accepts qualitative tenet that the process of reaching conclusions is fundamentally a social process

#### **Phase One**

The initial stage may of this thesis involved a review of the research literature to find out what can be learnt from comparable studies, their objectives, procedures and problems encountered. The next stage involved a modification or redefinition of the initial statement of the problem stage one it emerged in the form of testable hypothesis; or as a set of guiding objectives. The following stage was concerned with the selection of research procedures - sampling, administration, choice of materials, methods of teaching and learning, allocation of resources and tasks, deployment of staff and so on. The concluding stage was concerned with the choice of the evaluation procedures that was eventually used. Consideration was given that evaluation in this context will be continuous.

#### Preliminary Literature Review (what literature is currently available and relevant)

Discussion of the research topic with my supervisor and "appropriate" academic staff at Malua. The final list of books for literature review (the sources used to verify my assertions) was finalised and consequently confirmed.

#### **Phase Two**     *Literature Research and Review*

**Phase Three** *Face to Face Interviews* with selected people (to be discussed in chapters three and five respectively). The major purpose of the interview is to learn to see the world from the eyes of the person being interviewed. As the researcher I sought to provide a framework within which interviewees could respond in a way that accurately represents their worldviews.

Individual interviews that I undertook for this paper varied in style and format, on a continuum from structured to unstructured.

Structured interviewing involves exposing each informant in a sample to the same questions. The premise is to control the input that impels each informant's responses so that the output can be reliably compared. The most common form of structured interviewing is the questionnaire (see Appendix Ap56). At the other end of the continuum is the unstructured interview, whereby the topics to be covered are developed by the researcher as the interview proceeds, in response comments made by the respondent.

I consider semi-structured interviews to be the method best suited to accruing information about stakeholders' perceptions and experiences of participation. Thus it was the approach that I used for this thesis.

In using this approach, I was not bound by a rigid questionnaire as in the structured approach. This allowed me as the researcher the flexibility to follow up interesting ideas introduced by the informant, dimensions of problems and to secure vivid, accurate inclusive accounts that are based on personal experience. I considered using the "passive, end directive" approach where I would ask a few questions and probes on a limited basis. This approach is exemplified by the brainstorming technique. In this technique, there is no preplanned question structure. At the other end of the continuum, I had at my disposal the authority to exercise considerable control over the direction of the interview by administering a structured and ordered set of items and by constantly directing the interview. I favoured none of these approaches as it contravened my beliefs that *ministry* is a discipline whereby people should feel uninhibited to voice their opinions. However, the interviews that I conducted were completely unstructured. I used an interview guide, which specified the number of open-ended questions (Appendix A p56) with a number of possible probes. This enabled me to appraise the meaning of emerging data on



participation and use the resulting insights to phrase new questions that further developed the implications of this data. Yet, there was some structure to the interview without too much formality that it stifled the whole atmosphere. As the interviewer I was able to deduce the parameters of the interview and make the appropriate decisions that were needed to be made for the sake of the interview.

**Phase Four** *Data Analysis from interviews and primary sources and interpretation analysis.* This will be discussed in chapters' three and five

**Phase five:** *The drafting, editing and writing of the Report* The penultimate stage embraced the implementation of the project itself (over varying periods of time). It included the conditions and methods of data collection. The final stage involved the interpretation of data; inferences were drawn and overall evaluation of the project. Discussions on the findings took place in the light of previously agreed evaluative criteria. Errors, mistakes and problems were discussed with my supervisor (Rev. Prof Perelini) and remedied. Two important components of this approach is the collection of data and the interpretation of that data

#### **Stage One: The analysis of the Data**

Most of the data from the review of the literature and interviews had to go through the following processes:

##### *Collection and Sorting of Raw Data*

The first stage involved the identification, evaluation and preliminary discussions and negotiations among the concerned parties - lecturers, researcher, advisers, the Head of ministry department at Malua that culminated in a draft proposal. This also included a statement of the questions to be answered. I had to categorise the data as in accordance with research questions and the tropical subheadings and/or the appropriate chapters and sections. Using a computer I was able to categorise the information.

I first collected the data from the literature and critically reviewed and analysed it. Data from the review of the literature did not have to be translated. (i.e. from Samoan to English). Nevertheless, there were some selected verses of my informal interviews that

needed to be translated from Samoan into English or vice versa. The next step was the translation of the interview data into English.

### *Translation of Interview Data*

The data from the interview group was translated from the Samoan language into English. It took several days to complete this job with the assistance of qualified interpreters who were also well versed with the academic vernacular used in the literature and were fluent in the Samoan vernacular.

### • *Stage Two: The Interpretation of Data*

The process of interpretation went like this:

The most appropriate information had to be selected

The information obtained from the interview and appropriate research papers/ presentations/ seminars was sorted out and matched with the data in the literature review

The selected data from the interview group was used to reinforce the research topic. *Data Collection*

This process contributed not only to practice but also to a theory of ministry and teachings of other workers in the pastoral ministry of the church

## **Introduction**

For many Christians Jesus was a single man. However this belief is being challenged, as there is no documented referencing in the Bible that categorically affirms the fact that Jesus was not married. The point that there is no citation in the Bible of Jesus' wife has been taken by some as an inference that there was a possibility that Jesus was married. However I subscribe to the notion that Jesus was indeed single and did not marry. The unmarried Jesus has proven to be a point of inspiration and motivation for myself and my personal goals in the pastoral ministry of the CCCS.

The book by John Tallach titled God Made Them Great tells the stories of some remarkable people who were single and the impact they had in the mission field.<sup>4</sup> This serves as a timely reminder and as an inspiration to the many single people in the ministry who may bemoan the fact that they are single and they see it as a impairment in the work in the ministry. This is not to say there are not a multitude of married missionaries who have been just as impressive in their credentials and the work they have done in the mission realm

Jesus to one Samoan student as quoted by Taule'ale'ausumai was "*liken to a warm fire on a cold night*".<sup>5</sup> The character of Jesus is indeed a source of comfort and warmth for those single people who are faced with the chilling attitudes of those who disapprove of their single lifestyle. The single Jesus will be discussed further in chapter two.

Some people will charge that humans should never seek to make comparisons between themselves and God incarnate (Jesus). Yet the fact that Jesus was a single man who initiated and maintained a successful ministry is a comfort that offers firm encouragement and motivation for me and my future endeavours in the Congregational Christian Church in Samoa (CCCS). Although the respective contexts of Jesus' ministry and today (2002) are vastly different (even polarised) I fervently contend that a prosperous ministry conducted by single people in the CCCS can be achieved.

<sup>4</sup> Tallach John God Made Them Great The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, 1974.

<sup>5</sup> Taule'ale'ausumai Fei "*The Word Made Flesh: A Samoan Theology Of Pastoral Care.*" in Culbertson Philip Counseling Issues and South Pacific Communities, Accent Publications: Auckland, 1997 p174



*"Singles as well as married couples can be very narrow in their perspectives"*<sup>6</sup> For myself remaining single is not to spite church authorities or even to substantiate a moot point but rather it is a personal conviction that "sits" comfortably with me and the present situation of my life.

In the course of this paper I wish to explore the possibility of a single men's ministry within the CCCS infrastructure who deal with problems facing single people and even those problems encountered by married people.

This ministry would take the form of peer role modeling, mentoring, and counseling which would provide a support network and companionship for singles. Hence, I believe a single men's ministry can assist in the process of alleviating the "social ills" which mar the ministry today and society in general.<sup>7</sup>

I believe being single should not be perceived in a pejorative fashion. People who are single should not be marginalised or ostracised for choosing their own particular life-style that best suits their needs. *"Single or married, we all live in the same world, we are all part of a family (biological or church) whether present or removed, and shouldn't we have common interests and concerns?"*<sup>8</sup> The Christian principles of inclusiveness and equality are strained and even compromised when a particular group of people (i.e. singles) have justifiable cause to protest that they are not being afforded the same quality of treatment as enjoyed by their married peers.

*"There is nothing special about being single"*<sup>9</sup> From observation and personal experience I know that being a single male does not give one elevated status or added prestige in the CCCS church. In fact, it is a source of ridicule and innuendo as people lay charges of homosexuality, unattractiveness, or even misogynistic ideologies.

<sup>6</sup> Collins, Gary *Christian Counselling: A Comprehensive Guild*, Word Publishing: Dallas, USA, 1988 p361

<sup>7</sup> Please note that the CCCS at present only ordained men however this may change in the future which may allow the possibility for a ordained singles women's ministry.

<sup>8</sup> Collins, p361

Such is the scorn that some communities have for single people that many who are in the situation never accept their singleness viewing it as a curse and something negative. Consequently, they waste their energies resenting their status as single men or women.

From the outset of this paper, I would like to set the parameters of this study. Due to time, resource and word constraints, I have had to limit the scope of word "single" to meaning "those unmarried graduates of Malua who are heterosexual currently not in defacto, same sex or transgender relationship. Solo fathers divorcees and widowers are also precluded.

This thesis will challenge the CCCS and the church in general to express its character as a community of faith who holds forth the ideal of the kingdom of God. The Church should be at the fore in challenging society to attain a higher level of justice by establishing political and economic structures that provide for a more humane society.

Furthermore the church will always know that it will never achieve the ideal society yet the position of the church is strengthened if society sees the church striving to attain that goal of a fair and just society that is the prescribed norm of the Bible.

### Chapter Breakdown

Chapter One: *The World of Singleness* will deal with the myths and misconceptions about singleness and the reasons why people actively choose to be single. This chapter will also cover some of the positive and negative points about being single.

Chapter Two: *The Bible and Singleness* will examine what the Bible has to say in terms of singleness, marriage and celibacy. Within this chapter relevant Biblical verses will be exegeted which pertains to the issue of marriage and singleness. Furthermore this chapter will examine the figure of Jesus as a single and its impact. Ending this chapter will be a summary and some relevant personal reflections.

Chapter Three: *The Roman Catholic Church: Celibate Ministry Praxis*: In this chapter a look at the singles ministry of the Roman Catholic Church will be undertaken which emphasises on how this ministry looks beyond the realm of physicalism (or outside of the human body). Some poignant examples of Celibate role models will be critiqued, as is

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<sup>9</sup> Collins, p361

the transformation of the Roman Catholic Church and liberation theology in modern day celibacy ministries.

Chapter Four: This chapter titled *Singles in the Church* will discuss means in which the church can overcome barriers in relating to single people and avenues in which to avoid problems associated with the single population of the church. I have also included a section, which deals with issues surrounding singles and the Church. I conclude this chapter with some personal reflections and a conclusion.

Chapter Five: *Towards a CCCS Singles Ministry*. This chapter elucidates the position of the CCCS and its constitutional stance towards the "single" graduates of Malua. This chapter also looks at how the church should overcome the barriers/problem facing single people in general. This chapter will investigate options for single graduates in terms of the possibility of forming a singles ministry that will cater for the needs of all church people.

I hasten to add that I am also prepared to concede that if at the conclusion of this project that my research shows that there is no need for a singles ministry then I will be accepting of this. I conclude this thesis with a candid and objective discussion on the possibility of a "singles" ministry for the CCCS.



## Chapter One

### THE WORLD OF SINGLENES

#### **1.1 Introduction**

When researching this topic I came across the following reading, which amused me and stimulated further my interest in the subject of singleness in the Church ministry.

*Most of his boyhood friends were probably married by the time they had reached thirty, but not him. He had friends of both sexes, but no wife or children. He was able to relax in other people's homes, but he had no home of his own. He knew what it was like to care for an aging parent, but he never knew the joys and challenges of being a parent himself. He knew who he was, where he was going although he was considered different, a threat to other people, and a social misfit. He was a healthy young man with all the sexual urges and temptation that human beings experience, but he never had a wife with whom he could be sexually intimate. He knew how to laugh, how to hold his own in heated debates, and how to play with little children, but there were times when he cried and sometimes he felt very lonely and alone. Usually we don't think of him in this way, but Jesus was a **single** adult.<sup>21</sup>*

This chapter will look at singleness and what it entails for those who favour to remain unmarried.

This section will deal with the societal perception of single people and the problems they face in coping with the singles lifestyle.

Some people may believe that being single is a choice yet there are other more complicated issues pertaining to this subject that merit a closer examination. The negative points of being single will also be discussed and critiqued in this chapter.

#### **1.2 Being Single**

One unmarried lady wrote, "There is nothing special about being single...everybody is single at least once and often single again...only the duration and quality of singleness

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<sup>21</sup> Collins, p362

differ".<sup>22</sup> This statement holds truth in the fact that singleness is a universal phenomenon, which is not restricted to those of one gender, culture, race, socio economic class, age group, or even religious order.

Collins also notes that "... Single or married, we all live the same world".<sup>23</sup> As Christians we believe we are all part of a family whether present or removed. Though many singles may not have their own children, it does not limit their concern with the success of their friends in raising theirs.

Singles as well as married persons can be very restricted in their perspectives. People can be wrapped up in their own concerns and with little interest in the world around them.<sup>24</sup> This reiterates one of the fundamental aims of this dissertation; to give an objective view of "singleness" and not in any fashion portray marriage as the antithesis of singleness or even to paint a disapproving picture of marriage.

Whether singleness is temporary or permanent, voluntary or enforced in all cases, the designation "single" is a term denoting social status that acquires largely through the negation of the legal term *marriage*. It is a residual category inferring an alternative type lifestyle that is not which is the prescribed norm for society.<sup>25</sup> Whether a person is married or single is incidental: the crucial point is, one can control the quality of their life. For the Christian individual, this should have particular and significant meaning. Streiker believes that there should be solaced gained by the Christian in the realisation that God will give the desire purpose of our lives so there is need to panic or for them to be anxious that they are indeed single.<sup>26</sup>

Involvement and participation in the wider concerns of the community should be emphasised to the single person. Ryle believes that the single person like all people in society should live in society "free from the fear of man (sic)".<sup>27</sup> This may seem simple and unrealistic request on behalf of the singles fraternity. Reinforcing positives within the

<sup>22</sup> Collins p362

<sup>23</sup> Cargen, L *Singles, Myths and Realities* Sage: BeverlyHills, California, 1982.p34

<sup>24</sup> Hunter, R *Dictionary of Pastoral Counselling*, Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1990.p1181-83

<sup>25</sup> Streiker D. Lowell *Family Friends and Family* Abingdon Press: Nashville,USA ,1988. p26

<sup>26</sup> Streiker, p 26



single person should be the norm knowing that they can make a difference in their part of the world.<sup>28</sup> However there are many singles that never accept their singleness and tragically squander their energies frivolously resenting their status. This is appalling waste of a life, as one should not regret being single when in essence it can be seen as a positive.

Ryle talks about suffering as being part of the process by which the sons of God are sanctified.<sup>29</sup> Surely suffering in this case does not mean for single people to endure pain because of the choices they have made to be single. Hunter<sup>30</sup> comments that singles may not feel lonely, depending on personality strengths and social conditions, but there is little doubt that single people must come to grips with the situation that comforts them.

### 1.3 Misconceptions about Singleness.

Although official figures could not be found, I believe that the ranks of single adults are swelling rapidly. Fueled by a high divorce rate and a trend toward later marriage, the exploding singles phenomenon is altering housing markets, changing societal values, and inspiring scores of new services and products ranging from internet dating to specially packaged foods that come in "single servings".<sup>31</sup>

Sometimes singleness is seen as a swinging, no-strings-attached, carefree lifestyle. This image of the single person may be true in some instances, but I believe it is laden with fantasy and not an accurate description of the life that the single person is living.

For many singles, nothing could be further from the reality. In New Zealand where I was raised, most people walk in pairs. If a person is alone, many will see them as eccentric and/or an embarrassment. To married people sometimes, trusting a person who is single is a burdensome task and it is difficult finding means to include them in activities.

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<sup>27</sup> Ryle. John Charles Practical Religion Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, 1878. p418

<sup>28</sup> Ryle, p 418

<sup>29</sup> Ryle, p 418

<sup>30</sup> Hunter, p1182

<sup>31</sup> Collins.p362

This reflects the fact that the whole subject of singleness is still searching for a positive moral interpretation in society today.<sup>32</sup> If other people distrust you, you wonder if something is wrong with you, people do not accept you, dismiss your opinions, or will not have you as a marriage partner. These types of adverse mentality can demoralise the self-esteem of the single.

Plagued by loneliness, insecurity, low self-esteem, and sometimes rejection, many singles face frequent reminders that they are out of step with society. A society that sees marriage between a male and a female as the norm.<sup>33</sup> That norm is predicated on the belief that God created males to be companions of females and vice versa. This according to Stewart is *"God's created order or what the Protestant reformers would call the natural order from which comes the social rite or institution we call marriage."*<sup>34</sup>

Many of my single brothers at Malua Theological College will testify that meeting the ideal partner for oneself can be a predicament. Consequently, some singles turn to the church for relief and support in this regard. Collins duly notes however, that some single people are unwelcome or at best tolerated by church members who do not understand, and do not know how to relate to singles<sup>35</sup>. It was my belief that it is singles that could relate best to other singles<sup>36</sup> in terms of assisting with their problems<sup>37</sup>. As a consequence, I had mooted for the formation of a singles ministry team in the CCCS to assist with the problems encountered by single people in the ministry. Tournier<sup>38</sup> in his writings describes different types of spiritual ministries. Whatever the realm (e.g. singles ministry) they can still minister for God. What is important to note as espoused by Cryer is within that ministry that examples of good counselling exist for those in need with issues like the marital status of the minister irrelevant.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Hunter, p1182

<sup>33</sup> Hunter, p1183

<sup>34</sup> Stewart, Charles William, *The Minister As Marriage Counselor*, (Rev). Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1970. p205

<sup>35</sup> Collins, p368

<sup>36</sup> Collins, p369

<sup>37</sup> Collins, p369

<sup>38</sup> Tournier Paul *The Person Reborn* SCM Press : London, 1966. p229

<sup>39</sup> Cryer S. Newman (Ed) *Casebook in Pastoral Counselling*, Abingdon Press: New York, 1968 p13

If in the future this team was ever to eventuate then I would hope that it would be led by an ordained single minister or if this is not possible then a single graduate of Malua Theological College.

#### 1.4 Why people choose to be Single.

Why are some people single? Each individual has an answer to this testing question. To answer this question, Collins<sup>40</sup> exhorts us to look at some of the possible rationale of a person choosing to remain single.

The *women's rights* (feminist) movement has over the years gained momentum in terms of promoting and instigating changes for the promotion of equal rights for women in society. *Political correctness* inspired legislation has helped make it acceptable and financially feasible for women to live on their own and experience independence before settling into a marriage. The rise of the women's liberation movement and the drive for equality coupled with the economic independence for young people and a more liberal attitude towards sex has led people to either postpone marriage or choose not to get married at all.<sup>41</sup>

Often young people want to travel and explore the world, to get recognised in their careers, or to otherwise experience the freedoms of adulthood before taking on the responsibilities of a spouse and family. Taylor also notes that the legal/social, personal/clan, economic/financial implications of marriage has made it an unattractive option for some people who prefer the independence of being single.<sup>42</sup>

More liberal social attitudes about sex (even in Samoa) have led many to conclude that there is no need to formalise a relationship through marriage. This added numbers to the singles ranks.

Bertrand is unequivocal in his belief that in today's world "sexual love has become trivial." Furthermore there is no desire on the behalf of many to remain faithful to one

<sup>40</sup> Collins, p362

<sup>41</sup> Taylor Harold *Tend My Sheep* SPCK : London, 1983. p185

<sup>42</sup> Taylor, p174



sexual partner.<sup>43</sup> The Apostle Paul (to be discussed in the next chapter) wrote that people who cannot control themselves should marry. However today most people in our society reject that kind of teaching, concluding instead those people who cannot control themselves should surrender to their urges and have sexual intercourse without regard or thoughts for marriage.<sup>44</sup>

It is an accepted fact that some singles prefer not to marry. This may be a conscious decision to remain single or it may come as a measured awareness and receipt of the fact that marriage is improbable. Another reason for choosing to remain single as noted by Collins<sup>45</sup> is a conviction that this is God's calling. A person may also remain unmarried as this fulfills a desire for continuing freedom, or there is a sincere lack of interest in marriage. Additional reasons for remaining single may be a preference for living alone, or the belief that there is a shortage of eligible marriage partners. Others may conclude that singleness is preferable because they have had bad experiences with marriage, have watched their friends go through painful divorces, feel shy and self-conscious with the opposite sex, or are afraid of intimacy. Jacobs believes that whatever the reasons that has led a person to choose to be single, society and especially the pastor should respect peoples choices and not in any way make them feel inadequate at the fact that they have chosen a lifestyle that differs from the norm.<sup>46</sup>

I concur with Afoa who writes that in the past people did not "understand the economic, sociological, physiological demands of marriage."<sup>47</sup> Yet in today's world people are now becoming aware of these demands and requirements for marriage thus it has discouraged some from contemplating marriage. Therefore it should not come as a surprise that one should choose singleness as their preferred lifestyle as opposed to marriage, however the general public, including church members may not understand this. Sometimes observers<sup>48</sup> determine that the single person must have problems that prevent them marriage (for example " He's probably a pedophile" or "she cannot cope away from

<sup>43</sup> Bertrand, J quoted in Lasch Christopher Culture of Narcissism, W.W Norton and Company : New York, 1979. p187

<sup>44</sup> Smoke, J Suddenly Single, Revell Publishing :New Jersey, 1982. p87

<sup>45</sup> Collins, p363

<sup>46</sup> Jacobs Michael Still Small Voice, SPCK : London, 1982.p67

<sup>47</sup> Afoa Asalele Ioane "Marriage and Divorce Among Samoan Couples" in Culbertson Philip Counseling Issues and South Pacific Communities, Accent: Auckland, 1997, p174

home")<sup>49</sup> At times, a single person may feel an immense amount of pressure to get married that he or she enters into a relationship that is not coveted and for which the individual may feel unsuited. Even without such pressures, people who are single by choice sometimes wonder if the conclusion of others might be true. "Perhaps I am afraid of commitment, gay, too choosy, or even a social misfit."<sup>50</sup> These thoughts that are permeating in society are in fact reinforcing negativity within the mind of the single person. Such possibilities must be considered genuinely and evaluated realistically; contrarily they can silently persecute the unmarried person for years. Some commentators like Streiker are less sympathetic with his exhorting that those in positions where they face the scorn of society should not blame others for their own situation and misfortune.<sup>51</sup> I think that this attitude non-chalantly dismisses the feelings of the single population.

Some have other reasons for singleness – below are just some of the categories that diminish the likelihood of marriage.

These include homosexuality, real or imagined that occasionally motivates people to spend life alone and at other times leads them into same-sex relationships that have no legal or economic ties, little social sanction, and great potential for breakup with subsequent pain and loneliness. This is a very sensitive issue for the CCCS church and for my colleagues at Malua (MTC). Any allegations or inference that a person (especially a Malua student) may have homosexual tendencies is treated with scorn or brushed off with disdain. It must be realised that anyone in MTC who openly confesses to having homosexual inclinations will be reprimanded accordingly.

Another reason is "immaturity" and included in this is the inability to give and an unwillingness to accept responsibility or to make commitments in a relationship with someone of the opposite sex.

Some singles have an unrealistic views of what members of the opposite sex are like.<sup>52</sup> This distorted view of the opposite sex is further compounded by the lack of social interactive skills that may have been caused by some traumatic experience in ones early

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<sup>48</sup> Broomley, Geoffrey Introducing Christian Ethics Eerdmans: Michigan, 1988.p265.

<sup>49</sup> Broomley, p265

<sup>50</sup> Witte, K Flying Solo Abingdon : Nashville, 1988.p54.

<sup>51</sup> Streiker D. Lowell Family Friends and Family, Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1988 p22.

years. So these single people delay marriage opting to wait for the day they meet the *perfect* partner..

Some singles subscribe to the belief that cohabitation or a defacto type of relationship is better than marriage (even though some recent legal decisions have shown that common-law marriages have a number of traps and potential problems).<sup>53</sup>

### 1.5 The Effects of Singleness

It is important to emphasise that singleness in itself is not a problem for all unmarried people. Some single people maintain a quality of life that they would enjoy if they were married. Just as some married people have marriage problems while others do not, conversely singles have singleness-related problems that do not bother others.

Like married adults, singles also have problems with job stress, finances, getting along with difficult people, managing time, controlling weight, and finding one's direction in life. Some issues appear more frequently with singles yet it would erroneous to term these problems as being unique to the singles fraternity.

Sexuality and sexual expression can be agonisingly problematic issues for the single person. Sexual relationships can be meaningful and congruent with the level of commitment. Undoubtedly the failure of the Church to provide a constructive sexual ethic for single people contributes to the problems and uncertainty in the life of the single person. The church as a type of moral police has the ability to influence what people ascribe to, their beliefs consequently those who are outside the norm are accordingly ostracised.<sup>54</sup>

When God created male and female, he made them with hormones. God made sex a part of human experience and planned that men and women, within marriage, would enjoy each other's companionship and bodies.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Buber, Martin Charles, *I and Thou* (2nd Ed) Scribners: New York, 1958.p 106

<sup>53</sup> Evening, M quoted in Collins, G *Christian Counselling : A Comprehensive Guide*. Word Publishing Dallas, 1988 p54

<sup>54</sup> Cargen, L *Singles, Myths and Realities*. Sage: Beverly Hills, 1982 p16

<sup>55</sup> Cargen, p16



A challenging question is "what does the single person do with these God-given sexual urges?" (To be discussed in chapter three). Margret Evening wrote, "next to the problem of inner loneliness comes the problem of how to cope with sexual gifts and energies, and the finding of a proper outlet for them. No one can presume to give all the answers for "no one knows them!"<sup>56</sup> The venting of these sexual energies (i.e. sexual intercourse) outside of marriage will result dire consequences for the unmarried Malua student.<sup>57</sup>

As someone who has worked in the social work realm<sup>58</sup> I have seen some singles engage in promiscuous relationships in an attempt to find instant intimacy to feel loved, to bolster self-esteem to give feelings of sexual potency and sometimes to express anger and frustration. To compound my frustration I have seen singles move into homosexual relationships. Undoubtedly many singles, including Christians, fantasise and masturbate at least periodically. Guilt and complications are the result but does not solve the problem of sex, for singles who often follow these behaviours.

The underlying issue for Hunter<sup>59</sup> is how can we claim to experience the love of God in a culture or a society that stipulates that a person's social status and identity are felt to be under suspicion.

## 1.6 The Positives about Singleness

I believe that there are many benefits for a person remaining single in not only the ministry but also in their general life.

Firstly, there are no dependents to care for (spouse). Although a single may have not have legal obligations to care for a wife and children they may still have moral duties to look after members of the extended family group.

<sup>56</sup> Cargen, p16

<sup>57</sup> Malua Theological College Handbook 2002 see section pertaining to the expected moral conduct of all students

<sup>58</sup> The author was a youth social worker for 6 years in Wellington, New Zealand 1993-1998

<sup>59</sup> Hunter, R Dictionary of Pastoral Counselling, Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1990 p1183

Assets accrued by a single person are the sole property of that person. The single person has at his/her discretion the autonomy to disseminate those assets to whom s/he chooses. Unlike married people who face acrimonious divorce proceedings to the rights and equal division of assets accumulated during the tenure of their marriage<sup>60</sup>. It is expected that those in a marriage relationship are expected to contribute financially to the costs incurred by either one of the parties (eg a husband can be liable to pay for debts incurred by his wife).<sup>61</sup>

An unmarried person has the freedom to do things (travel) without regard or the need to consult or even to seek approval from a spouse.

Paul Jersild forwards the belief that a single has the advantage of maintaining his/her unique identity when compared to the person who is married.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore in a marriage a person is faced with losing one's identity in marriage especially females who are expected to take the surname of her husband.<sup>63</sup> In this patriarchal society where people are seen not as individuals, this is a distinct advantage.

Having a spouse can be seen as inhabitant or a distraction in a person's spiritual endeavour. A devout Christian may marry someone who does not embrace with the same intensity and fervour the Christian faith. This could prove costly for the Christian person who may lose momentum in his/her Christian odyssey due to their partner's lack of passion for the Christian faith.

Older singles face the difficulties of trying to build a social life when there are constrictions caused by loss of friends or failing health. These singles may look to God and the church for comfort, support, solace and sympathy or even an endorsement of their single status. This is an inescapable reality for the CCCS and those affected members await a response from CCCS leaders.

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<sup>60</sup> Hunter, p1183

<sup>61</sup> Hunter, p1183

<sup>62</sup> Jersild T. Paul and Johnson A. Dale, Moral Issues and Christian Response (4th Edition)  
Holt, Rinehart and Winston : New York, 1988. p75

<sup>63</sup> Jersild Paul and Johnson Dale, p75



## 1.7 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the whole subject of singleness is a complex and complicated one, which conjures diverse arguments and opinions from the greater community.

Banished are the days of singleness being rendered a "disease" that is easy to cure but experience shows it commands from all ministry workers the need to look at the reasons pertaining to one's singleness and the consequences.

Singleness may be a choice for some whilst it may be enforced upon others- what exacerbates negative stereos-types about single people is ignorance and a person's unwillingness to research the "state" of being single and its effects.

Ultimately being single will make others happy whilst it will depress others - this thesis will endeavour to explore the vexing question of whether single men should have their own ministry in CCCS.

As this chapter has shown, singles or unmarried individuals face many and varied problems and obstacles in their lives. These problems are not exclusive to them as some married people may face similar problems.

It is the belief of the author that the subject of singleness needs to be understood in the church and the wider community this in essence could be the start of the healing process for those misunderstood singles who have faced persecution in the past.

The next chapters will elucidate the position of the Bible in regards to singleness and marriage.

## **Chapter Two:**

### **The Biblical Perspective of Singleness, and Marriage.**

#### **2.1 Introduction.**

The Bible remains the definitive word and the ultimate guide for all Christians on these issues. However as the Bible is a document of Faith it is therefore always liable to scrutiny by all that choose to critique it.<sup>64</sup> It is the hope of the author that this chapter using Biblical references will elucidate some of the questions and queries that have perplexed and frustrated many Christians on the subject of marriage and singleness

This chapter is an investigation on what the Bible promulgates on the subject of singleness and marriage.

A survey of the Old Testament prophets from Isaiah to Malachi will show that there are not many if any references to them having wives. This does not discount the possibility that they may have been married yet it strengthens the belief that their ministry was formed and enhanced through the fact that they were single and wholly committed to their prophetic work. The single in this modern era will point to this fact and may use this as Biblical justification that a singles ministry has its origins in the work undertaken by the "unmarried" prophets in the Bible.

If we are to subscribe to the belief that marriage is God's gift to men and women this further heightens the status of marriage. I subscribe to the belief that the status of singleness is not the antithesis of marriage nor does it enjoy less status and prestige (when compared to marriage) from the viewpoint of the Bible. It is the contention of the author that marriage and singleness are special gifts from God and both have distinct advantages and disadvantages that allow a person to serve God.

#### **2.2 The Bible and Marriage.**

Marriage can be duly recognised as a covenant relationship entered into by a single man and a single woman. *"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh"* (Genesis 2:24).<sup>65</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Bowers C. William The Living Bible. Harper and Brothers Publishers: New York, 1936.p5

<sup>65</sup> Gerhold L. Lemke Exegesis of Matthew 5:32-33 and Matthew 19:3-9 Prepared for the Dakota-Montana

Sometimes Christians define marriage as an "order of creation (i.e. the way intended that men and women should live) I believe that this stigmatises those who are not married<sup>66</sup>.

Thus it adds unnecessary duress to the minds of those who are not married.

Marriage is an interpersonal union between a man and a woman who have made commitments to each other to live together which is then recognised by society as a life time bond.<sup>67</sup> The marriage relationship is permanent not in the sense of being eternal, but in the sense of being lifelong. In the marriage services I have attended the words, "...As long as we both shall live," or, ". Till death do us part" or both said by the bride and the groom. This is to demonstrate that marriage is something that is not to be taken lightly and is not temporary.

Jesus declares, "*What therefore God has joined together, let not man divide,*" (Rom. 7:2,3) as the true meaning of the sixth commandment. When Jesus taught about the lifelong nature of marriage the disciples were unequivocal in their response. Matthew 19:10 "*His disciples said to him, if such is the case of a man with wife, it is better not to marry.*" This overtly indicates that marriage is not to be viewed as an institution that is trite and trivial."

Ironically, Jesus gave the highest estimate to marriage, but he did not give it the ultimate loyalty, "*Whoever loves father or mother more than me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*" (Matt 10:37).

Jesus' reaction to his family's claim on him would be enough to drive a wedge through most families but it does show that Jesus did not perceive marriage as being the ultimate<sup>68</sup>.

### 2.2.1 Exegesis Genesis 2:18

For the Christian fraternity/community at least Adam was the first person to experience singleness, but this was only a temporary hiatus in his life.<sup>69</sup> God overtly declared that it

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District, Eastern Conference Fall Pastoral Conference, November 6-7, 1973

<sup>66</sup> Taylor Harold *Tend My Sheep* SPCK: London, 1983 p178

<sup>67</sup> Stewart.p204

<sup>68</sup> Buber, M. Charles *I and Thou* (2nd Ed) Scribner: New York, 1958.p68

<sup>69</sup> Collins, G. *Christian Counselling : A Comprehensive Guild*. Word Publishing : Dallas, 1988 p362



was "*It is not good that man should be alone*"<sup>70</sup> so the female gender was created in the manifestation of Eve, and Adam became the first married-man<sup>71</sup>. God said, "*It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as for his partner.*"<sup>72</sup> Evidently, it can be interpreted that marriage was God's intention for the human race.

Then the Lord God said, "*It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.*" (Genesis 2:18). So out of the ground the God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the person to see what he would call them. The story would have us believe that God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "*This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my*

*flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this was taken. Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.*"  
Genesis 2:23-24

Genesis 2:23-24. These verses introduce one of the thorniest problems in the whole discussion of the roles of man and woman in the Bible. Both Biblical languages have only one word, *אִשָּׁה* or *γυνή*, where English requires the two distinct terms, woman and wife.<sup>73</sup> Both Biblical languages have only one word, *אִישׁ* or *ανὴρ*, where English requires the two distinct terms, man and husband. Since we have two words in English, we constantly feel compelled to choose one or the other in the translation of the Biblical terms. However these distinctions were not so clear in the minds of the Biblical authors. They blended the two concepts, wife and woman, into one word. They blended the two concepts, husband and man, into one word.<sup>74</sup> Perhaps we would do well to start with the translations woman/wife and man/husband when these terms arise. Perhaps we should be

<sup>70</sup> Please note that most Biblical references and quotations will be from the NSRV version.

<sup>71</sup> Childs, Timothy Introducing Christian Ethics. Broadman : Nashville, USA. 1987. p12

<sup>72</sup> Refer to Genesis 2:18

<sup>73</sup> Albrecht M An Exegesis Of Genesis 2:18-24: In Light Of The Current Discussion On The Role Of Man And Woman Michigan District Southwestern Conference, Pastoral Conference, Michigan, February 24, 1981

<sup>74</sup> Albrecht pxi



very cautious in excluding either notion in preference for the other. This highlights that there was no distinguishing between the woman and wife.

The same could be said for the husband and man. It was like that all men were husbands or were to husbands in due course, as was the case with woman/wife. This demonstrates the belief that men and women gravitate towards the married life as if it was the norm and something that was to be expected. *one flesh* principle in marriage *ibid*<sup>75</sup>

Ishshah- **אִשָּׁה**, of course, combines our concepts of wife and woman. In the verses immediately following (v. 24 & 25), **אִשָּׁה** is translated "wife" by almost everyone.<sup>76</sup> This certainly would be a fitting name for this individual, and we notice that throughout Genesis 3 **אִשָּׁה** is the designation given to this one individual woman, Eve. As for the reference to her creation out of **אִדָּם**, perhaps the preceding line offers commentary on what Adam meant. Adam calls this creature "bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. "This demonstrates the closeness of the bond between the two. These first person suffixes certainly are specific. Perhaps Adam chose the name **אִשָּׁה** for this individual creature because he thought it was fitting name for someone who had been taken out of himself, an individual **אִדָּם** ("male"). At any rate, one wonders whether we are able to read Adam's mind with absolute certainty at this point.<sup>77</sup>

Genesis 2:18 is understood principally as God's intention to make an individual helper for his individual **אִדָּם**, the first man. The relationship in Genesis, then, is a relationship primarily between husband and wife because the only two people involved in the narrative are husband and wife. However, there certainly may be wider implications and we would expect such implications because Adam and Eve are the progenitors of all humankind. However, such implications will have to be clarified and more specifically defined for us in the New Testament.

<sup>75</sup> Stewart W. Charles, *The Minister as a Marriage Counselor*, Abingdon Press, Nashville. 1983. p205

<sup>76</sup> Albrecht. pxi

<sup>77</sup> Albrecht pxi

Paul's central concern is for the preservation and protection of marriage (see appendix E.p63 for *background on Paul's teachings*). However, Zerbst<sup>78</sup> says, "It is a fundamental consideration for him (Paul) that the preservation of marriage always depends also upon the deportment of the unmarried". The demeanour of the unmarried, woman, for instance, is not a matter of indifference for the preservation of marriage. One may perhaps say, therefore, that every declaration concerning the relationship between the sexes in general is decisive also for marriage

Stewart claims that today we see "the liberated women in marriage...the effeminate man and the masculine women. This infers that the family is in a flux and it connote pessimism but it merely reflects the dynamic change of the institution"<sup>79</sup> This may be a deterrent to the single who is contemplating marriage yet can be interpreted as a positive change in the family institution.

We can envision a statement that would start with marriage in defining man/woman roles and then go on to explain how these roles are also to be reflected elsewhere in God's church and in society at large.

In Genesis 2:18, the Lord states, "*I will make a helper as his partner.*"

It is frequently pointed out that the Hebrew word for "helper." עֲזָרָה does not necessarily imply subordination in the marriage. The word is often used of God as help for human beings. This adds impetus to those who argue that the institution of marriage subjugates women who may have been better off single. However, Professor Lawrenz<sup>80</sup> and Mays<sup>81</sup> contends that in this context the word indicates subordination. The woman was made to be a helper; that is, the purpose for her creation was to be a helper for the man. This can be interpreted as a negative portrayal of marriage. The term helper has positive connotations connoting that women are in a complementary role in the partnership that she shares with men. So the first observation is very significant: man was created first,

<sup>78</sup> Zerbst C cited in Forbes Mitchell *"The Beginning" The Genesis Story*, Langston Bros Publishing : Austin, Texas, 1993.p14.

<sup>79</sup> Stewart William Charles, *The Minister as a Marriage Counselor* Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1983 p13

<sup>80</sup> Albrecht.pxi

<sup>81</sup> Mays, James (Ed). *Harper Bible Commentaries*. Collins Publishers, New York, 1988.p88

then the woman. This points to a leadership responsibility for the man, especially in view of the other observations that follow.

There may be those who espouse the notion that the order of creation means nothing because in Genesis 1, for example, the animals were created first and then man. So if order implies responsibility for leadership then the animals should lead man. Women are not to be subordinate to their husbands rather they are to be subservient to Christ first and foremost.<sup>82</sup> I believe that female singles especially who think that this is ample warrant to stop then from getting married can not use this line of thinking

In the New Testament Jesus and Paul, when they use the Old Testament to answer questions about how man and woman should relate to each other, go back to what things were supposed to be like before the fall. It is intended that we look at the dysfunctional relationships of Genesis 3<sup>83</sup> and not make them the normative. Paul instead comes back to Genesis 2 and talk about how it should have been from the beginning.

### 2.2.2 Exegesis 1 Timothy 3

In chapter three of *1 Timothy* the Apostle Paul has just outlined for his co-worker, Timothy, what the proper conduct ought to be for the leaders of the church. He describes both bishops and deacons as men married to only one woman, but not necessarily unmarried. They are to be Christians who are temperate, self-controlled, and not given to much wine; but not necessarily abstainers from certain foods and drink.<sup>84</sup> Paul's outline of behavior for the pastors and teachers of Christ's church counsels moderation and sanctified common sense without swerving to either extreme, that of over-indulgence or that of asceticism. This is the kind of example that the believers in every congregation ought to be able to look up to in its leaders. Those in marriage are to peerless in terms of their moral conduct. Paul is adamant that this task is not easy as the responsibility and expectations that the people have for their church leaders are high.

<sup>82</sup> Stewart, 1983.p13

<sup>83</sup> this is reference to the *first sin and punishment*

<sup>84</sup> James J. Westendorf *Exegesis of 1 Timothy 4:1-5* [info@floralheights.org](mailto:info@floralheights.org)



In 1 Timothy 4: 3: "*Forbidding to marry, (and commanding) to abstain from foods*" The construction Paul uses here is called a zeugma by the grammarians<sup>85</sup>, defined as a first term which fits exactly (marry fits with forbid), and a second term which does not fit (forbid to abstain is not Paul's meaning), and yet the sense is perfectly clear. Paul speaks the same way in 1 Corinthians 3:2. One of the prevailing characteristics of the doctrinal system of these false teachers would be their proclamation that asceticism, abstaining from earthly pleasures and relationships, is a superior, yes, even more holy way of living. Celibacy is morally superior to wedded life. Refusing to eat certain foods, such as meat, is more holy than eating everything. Work righteousness very quickly becomes a part of the system too, application to the Roman Catholic Church is obvious; but the doctrines here condemned describe many other systems of false doctrine as well.

We can conclude that Paul warns against two opposing extremes. Firstly *extreme asceticism* - The natural world and man's physical body that is a part of that world is inherently evil. To enjoy material things is evil. Secondly, Paul warns against *extreme naturalism*<sup>86</sup> Materialism is neither good or bad so how we use it is a matter of indifference and cannot harm us. This point will be reiterated later in the work of the Apostle Paul in relation to the Parousia<sup>87</sup>(see Appendix F.p64)

When Jesus was challenged by the Pharisees on the subject on the termination of marriage in Matthew: 19 he answered on the basis of *Genesis 1:27*, and God's words through Adam in *Genesis 2:24*. Matthew Henry summarises Jesus' reply: *If husband and wife are united by the will of God, they are not to think lightly of separation. 1) For Adam to put away Eve would have meant putting away a part of himself. 2) If parents may not abandon children, then consider this, that marriage is an even closer union. 3) "One flesh" makes the marriage union equivalent to the perfect union that exists between two members of a body.*<sup>88</sup> This makes transparent the demands of marriage are not to be

<sup>85</sup> Westendorf, [info@floralheights.org](mailto:info@floralheights.org)

<sup>86</sup> Mays, James (Ed). 1988.p88

<sup>87</sup> Barrett, C.K *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*: A.&C. Black: London, 1968 p379

<sup>88</sup> Henry, Matthew *Matthew's Henry Commentary in One Volume*. Zondervan; Grand Rapids, 1960 p1299.



taken lightly hence who know that they are not able to fulfil these obligations should remain single and not contemplate marriage as an option until they are ready.

### 2.3 Paul's Teaching on Love

To understand the apostle Paul's teaching on the subject of marriage and love in general we need to take a look at the Greco-Roman world in which the Apostle Paul lived so that we can better comprehend his ministry. Understanding the historical context helps us to gain such a perspective. Extenuating factors such as religion, philosophy, the family unit, and the social morality of the Hellenistic culture (see appendix E for closer discussion on the factors that shaped Paul's views) were factors that shaped the apostles view of Marriage <sup>89</sup>

Today, ethics and religion are again separate. And the results are being seen. However as in the first century, Christians today have a message of grace for our society: God not only tells us what is good, God also enables us to be good in our conduct.

*"I wish that all were as I am myself". (1 Corinthians 7:7)*

Paul intends to express a wish that he knows is unattainable. When Paul knows that this is unattainable he uses the imperfect tense of the verb and conversely if he knows that the wish is attainable he would that use the perfect tense<sup>90</sup>. Since this command is attainable Paul therefore expects people to follow and adhere to this command. As noted by Barrett *"what he wishes cannot be mere celibacy but rather the capacity to resist all sensual allurements such as indicated by his life example"*<sup>91</sup>. Paul has indeed lived without marriage and he does not bemoan this fact.

Paul's theological advice with respect to marriage is basically similar to the advice he gives to slaves. It was quite possible to live a Christian life as a married person, if that was the state that one lived when one became a Christian, although Paul prefers the

<sup>89</sup>Rev John Richardson Annotated Notes on Issues in Human Sexuality Statement by the House of Bishops of the General Synod of the Church of England, December 1991 Church House Publishing : London, 1991

<sup>90</sup> refer to verses 12 and 16 respectively and view how Paul uses the perfect tense in relation to wives.

<sup>91</sup> Barrett, C.K. The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A.&C. Black: London, 1968 p379.

marriage free Christian life over the married state<sup>92</sup>. This comes to the fore throughout the whole chapter but especially in his advice to the unmarried. If sexual desire compels them, they should get married. However it is better not to get married and to remain in a married free state. If the unmarried and the widows cannot exercise self-control, they should marry in the church: but in Paul's opinion they "*would be happier if they were to remain free from the constraints of patriarchal marriage*".<sup>93</sup>

#### 2.4 Exegesis 1 Corinthians 7

Paul teachings are very much influenced by the erroneous concept of the Parousia. I reiterate that Paul's teachings on celibacy and marriage was conditioned by his own time<sup>94</sup>. Paul has been asked some questions from the *Corinthians* (1 Corinthians 7:1).

We do not have access to the exact wording of the questions that were sent to Paul by these brethren, however, by examining the answers given, we could ascertain within reason what the questions were.

The question is simple "should the unmarried marry?" (1 Corinthians 7:8-9). The answer to this is not an easy one for Paul. In light of the "present distress" (verse 26), and temptation of fornication, Paul recommends celibacy for those who were able to hold to it. This answer for people today is hard to fathom. I have never been a proponent of celibacy as I think it is unnatural. The next chapter will deal with this issue of celibacy and the clergy.

However, marriage is permissible for eligible partners who feel that they are unable to so contain themselves.

Again, marriage is the only place in which sexual intimacy is authorised. Therefore, Paul reasons that despite the extenuating circumstances<sup>95</sup>, it is better for individuals to marry than to commit fornication, endangering themselves to eternal damnation.

<sup>92</sup> Mays, James (Ed). 1988p1179

<sup>93</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> appendix E, F and G gives full treatment on this issue.

<sup>95</sup> Beek Van Der, James *An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament*, SCM Press: London, 1968, p85

Paul says will be more fulfilled spiritually if they stay single. Whether they embrace remarriage or singleness, it must be in the context of their relationship with Jesus Christ.

A splendid analogy or an enlightening parallel from the Bible is the following: "*In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.*" (Ephesians 5:28-30). This is the magnitude or the amount of love that God expects of us when we are to love our wives and husbands. Marriage is indeed a commitment, which merits determination, dedication and love from both parties concerned.(see Appendix H.p66)

As a Samoan who comes from a communal family background for one to leave his/her parents is a substantial commitment yet s/he is expected to love his/her spouse with the corresponding intensity as s/he would his/her own parents<sup>96</sup>. Any person who is entertaining thoughts of marriage must consider seriously these factors as listed above. These are some of the considerations that the single must consider before marriage is conceived yet this is not always the case.

## 2.5 Jesus the Single.

An interesting point is why does the Christian Church prefer a single Jesus as opposed to a married one. As stated earlier the fact that Jesus was single is now in dispute.

There is no conclusive evidence either way on whether or not Jesus was married, although it does seem unlikely that the New Testament authors would have left out such an important piece of biographical information. On the other hand, we only know that Peter was married from indirect references (Matthew 8:14 and parallels, and 1 Corinthians 9:5).

Those who believe that Jesus was married charge that there is a large history of Jesus as a child and none between the ages of 14-29 that is covered in the Bible. These very opponents of the single Jesus believe that his married status was deleted in 500 AD when the church decided on celibacy.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Holmes, D Lowell *The Samoan Village*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston : London, 1974.p14

<sup>97</sup> Wade, Rick *The World of the Apostle Paul*, Probe Ministries International ,[www.probe.org](http://www.probe.org) ,2002



Some people may bemoan the fact that Jesus was single. The question will always linger as to the reasons why Jesus remained unmarried thus not experiencing the experiences of married life.

If Jesus was the *perfect* human being then surely coping with marriage would have been no problem to him. Yet we can only speculate why Jesus remained single and what factors contributed to this fact. We can only theorise to the reasons pertaining to this and whether or not a married Jesus would have been effective or as potent as a single one or whether this would have led to a compromise of his ministerial work.

Jesus not being married also ruled him out from having children and experiencing the trials and joys of parenthood. Being a good parent and husband whilst engaged in ministry work would have been the consummate challenge for the *Son* of God. However who better than God incarnate to deal with this onerous task.

Conversely, Jesus the nomadic wanderer-the itinerant teacher whose enigmatic lifestyle would have been a task of epic proportions for a potential wife to deal with. Thus it may have been better that Jesus was single.

Would Jesus have had to compromise or share his love for his father if he had chosen or been allowed to marry? These questions are all interesting tangibles with many variables not allowing us to really know the answer.

In Jesus' time, a single man, wandering the countryside in the company of a group of other men, would have been viewed with some suspicion. He certainly would not have had much credibility as a Rabbi.<sup>98</sup> So far as it is known, amongst conservative Jewish communities in the ancient world (and to this day) a Rabbi is expected to be a married man, by definition. In Judaism, Mishnaic Law says, "An unmarried man may not be a teacher"<sup>99</sup>. Some scholars have argued that Jesus, being Jewish, would not have been permitted to preach had he not been married

Jesus would have been seen as an abnormal Jew if by his early 20's he had not married. Jesus was a Jew.<sup>100</sup> and he would not have been a Rabbi unless he was married. Why?

<sup>98</sup> Bowker.G *Jerusalem in the time of Jesus* SCM: London.1947.p33

<sup>99</sup> Wade Rick *The World of the Apostle Paul* Probe Ministries International [www.probe.org](http://www.probe.org) ,2002

<sup>100</sup> Fitch Alger *What the Bible Says about Preaching* College Press: Missouri, 1989 p241



The reason being that one of the first orders of God to man was to go forth and multiply his kind (ref to Genesis:1). For the Jew, that is an order. For a Rabbi not to follow Gods order would be sacrilegious. The only thing that makes it a question mark is that Jesus was a man who did not always follow the rules as the Temple priests interpreted them. He would not have gained apostles unless he was married.

Jesus Christ is a powerful example of this kind of singular focus in the intimacy he had with his heavenly Father, in the submissive, loving relationship that nurtured him every day of his life. Jesus in essence said, *"I do nothing without checking with my heavenly Father"*<sup>101</sup>. Jesus gave himself wholeheartedly to twelve men, and then to a circle of seventy people. Jesus was not lonely or isolated. He gave himself away for his Father's sake to men and women. Bear in mind, in Matthew 12 there was a point in his ministry when his mother and brothers came. It seems that Jesus is embarrassed about the extremism in his life, they(mother and brother) tried to call him out of a meeting where he was teaching. Jesus said rhetorically, *"Who is my mother and who are my brothers?"* and then answered the question: *"Whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother."* (Matthew 12:48:50.)

Single men and women, must be made aware that they have a spiritual family that is as wide as the heart allows, if they want to follow the Jesus. Loneliness does not have to be a part of their life.

## 2.6 Conclusion

As stated earlier in this chapter the Bible as a document of faith is open to interpretation and dissection in the message it is advocating.

The issue of singleness of the clergy has exacted unyielding debate based on certain Biblical texts yet uniformity in terms of consensus on whether the Bible promotes singleness (as opposed to marriage) still remains unresolved.

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<sup>101</sup> see John 5:30; 8:28-29; 12:49-50; 14:9-10; 14:31

As stated throughout this chapter, God has an elevated perception of marriage. Despite the fact that not all marriages are blissful and some end in separation or divorce. This should not be a hindrance or deterrent to those who contemplating getting married.

Being single is not the antithesis of being married. In fact singleness can be seen as a step or a stage progressing on to marriage. Yet those who chose to remain single should have their wishes respected and not face recrimination from within the church.

The challenge both for single people and for married people is to be able to rejoice in either their gift of singleness and the freedom that comes with that, or the gift of marriage and the responsibilities that come with that. They both come from God's hand. The challenge is to commit together as singles and married couples to pleasing and serving the Lord.

Whether as singles or married people, we are all called to contentment, to fulfilment through the Lord Jesus. "*Learning to live a fulfilled life with unfulfilled desires.*" It comes from the writings of a South African marriage counsellor named Walter Trobisch.<sup>102</sup> There will always be things that are unfulfilled in a person's life, no matter what state you find yourself single, married, divorced, married or widowed. The calling in Christ is to learn to live in fulfilment, and changing stations in life will not make that true.

Paul the Apostle, with the heart and soul of a single man who loves singleness, says this: "*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your forbearing spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*" (Philippians 4:4-7.)

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<sup>102</sup> Trobisch, W. cited in Neil, S.D The Christian Pastor. Westminster: Philadelphia, 1983, pxi

### Chapter Three: Celibate Ministry Praxis:

#### The Roman Catholic Church

##### **3.1 Introduction**

When the topic of celibate ministries is raised focus inevitably shifts to the Roman Catholic Church and its model. Some may charge that this model is the epitome of a singles ministry whilst others will charge that it is the extreme and severe end.

This chapter is dedicated to defining, discussing and evaluating the Roman Catholic Churches mandatory celibate ministry. Whilst others amass praise upon this ministry structure others lump scorn on it for reasons that this chapter will discuss.

One may ask why I have chosen to spend an entire chapter on this issue of the Roman Catholic Church and its Celibate ministry. Undeterred I quip that people who are so expedient to praise the discipline and commitment of the Roman Catholic Church for this particular ministry should first be made aware that all is not as unsullied as this ministry would have us believe. It would be wrong to say the Catholic Church does not have a clergy consisting of married people yet it does not enjoy the same parity in terms of status as the celibate single clergy.<sup>103</sup>

The law of celibacy has repeatedly been made the object of attack, especially of recent years. Although we do not find in the New Testament any indication of celibacy being made compulsory either upon the apostles or those whom they ordained, however the Roman Catholic Church believe that they have ample warrant in the language of Jesus, and of Paul for looking upon virginity (abstaining from sexual intercourse outside of marriage) as the higher call, and by inference, as the condition befitting those who are set apart for the work of the ministry. Christ clearly commends those who, "*for the sake of the kingdom of heaven*", have held aloof from the married state, though He adds: "*Let anyone accept this who can*"<sup>104</sup>

<sup>103</sup> Martin, Kerry *New Testament Theology*, Clarendon Press : Oxford, 1978.p11

<sup>104</sup> Martin,.p2



I am forthcoming in my resolute opposition to enforced or mandatory celibacy in the ministry throughout ones entire lifetime. I believe that if a person embraces to be part of a celibate ministry, then that is the choice of the individual but if during the duration of their ministerial tenure that particular person desires to marry then I believe that person should be granted their wish without repercussions or detriment of their clergy status.

This chapter will show that in the Bible God does not explicitly demand celibacy for the ministry. Hence the issue as to why does the Roman Catholic Church still insist on this draconian practice, which is outdated and pitiless (there is no room for one to contemplate marriage at any stage).

I would be the first to acknowledge that any "*Christian founded*" or "*biblically*" based singles ministry must be a celibate one (abstaining from sex outside of marriage). However I am loathed to condone the enforcing of mandatory lifelong celibacy on those who have a change of mind during their ministerial term and decide to marry. Compulsory celibacy in my opinion is cruel and unnatural and I have little sympathy for those who freely choose to partake in this system. If people have been subtly coerced into this ministry by extenuating factors (e.g. family pressure) then I reserve for them a "grain of compassion".

The Roman Catholic Church (Ekalesia Katoliko Roma) in Samoa has an operative singles (celibate) ministry in the form of its nuns, monks and friars. This renowned and much vaunted form of ministry has for years been the focus of fierce debate in regards to its merit. To fully comprehend the premise pertaining to the rationale of the formation of this unique order one must first study its historical origins and the key people who moulded it.

### 3.2 Celibacy of the Clergy

What is Celibacy? According to the Catholic Encyclopaedia "*Celibacy is the renunciation of marriage implicitly or explicitly made, for the more perfect observance of chastity, by all those who receive the Sacrament of Orders in any of the higher grades*".<sup>105</sup> The character of this renunciation is differently understood in the Eastern and

<sup>105</sup> The Catholic Encyclopaedia Vol.3 Rob Appleton, New York, 1907. p481 'an international work of reference on the constitution, doctrines, and history of the catholic church.'



in the Western Church. Speaking, only of Western Christendom, the candidates for orders are solemnly warned by the bishop at the beginning of the ceremony regarding the gravity of the obligation, which they are incurring. The bishop overtly tells them " *You ought anxiously to consider again and again what sort of a burden this is which you are taking upon you of your own accord. Up to this you are free. You may still, if you choose, turn to the aims and desires of the world. But if you receive this order it will no longer be lawful to turn back from your purpose. You will be required to continue in the service of God, and with His assistance to observe chastity and to be bound forever in the ministrations of the Altar, to serve who is to reign.*"<sup>106</sup>

The candidate in his act of stepping forward, when invited to do so, and by co-operating in the rest of the ordination service is understood to bind himself equivalently by a vow of chastity. He is henceforth unable to contract a valid marriage, and any serious transgression in the matter of this vow is not only a grievous sin in itself but incurs the additional guilt of sacrilege.<sup>107</sup>

The principle that underlies the Roman Catholic Church's action in enforcing celibacy is not limited to this utilitarian aspect but goes even deeper.

From the earliest period the Church was personified and conceived of by her disciples as the Virgin Bride and as the pure Body of Christ, or again as the Virgin Mother, and it was plainly fitting that a virgin priesthood should serve this Virgin Church.<sup>108</sup> Among Jews and non-Jews the priesthood was hereditary. Its functions and powers were transmitted by natural generation. However in the Church of Christ, as an antithesis to this, the Holy Ghost in the divinely instituted Sacrament of Orders imparted the priestly character<sup>109</sup>. Virginity is consequently the special prerogative of the Christian priesthood. Virginity and marriage both holy, but in different ways. The conviction that virginity possesses a higher sanctity and clearer spiritual intuitions seems to be an instinct-planted deep in the heart of people. Even in the Jewish cultural regulations where the priest begot children to whom his functions descended, it was nevertheless enjoyed that he should observe

<sup>106</sup> The Catholic Encyclopaedia New York, p482

<sup>107</sup> The Catholic Encyclopaedia New York, p483

<sup>108</sup> Thompson, K *The Roman Catholic Church*, Holt and Rinehart: New York, 1968, p22

<sup>109</sup> Whitall Smith, H *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, Christian Witness Co, Dallas, 1996, p55

continence during the period in which he served in the Temple. No doubt a mystical reason of this kind does not appeal to all, but such considerations have always held a prominent place in the thought of established and consolidated the Church.<sup>110</sup>

Turning now to the historical development of the present law of celibacy as upheld by the Catholic Church, we must begin with Paul's direction (discussed in the last chapter) that a bishop or a deacon should be "the husband of one wife". These passages seem fatal to any contention that celibacy was made obligatory upon the clergy from the beginning, but on the other hand, the Apostle's desire that other men might be as himself precludes the inference that he wished all ministers of the Gospel to be married. (I Cor., vii, 7-8)

I have chosen to forward the Franciscans as an example of a celibate Catholic clergy (see *appendix I*, p68). A study of church history since the eleventh century will depict a picture of the Roman Catholic Church as the fore-leader in terms of its enforced celibate ministry. The leader or pioneering group in this regard was the Franciscans.

One of the pivotal Saints of the Roman Catholic faith is St Francis (whose teachings inspired the order) whose profound and pronounced effect on the behavior and lifestyle of the clergy was evident. For a more detail explanation of the Franciscans (see *Appendix I* for further treatment)

### 3.3 The Philosophical Stance of the Roman Catholic Church

The Franciscans are still active today yet there are some factions in the Roman Catholic Church who are seeking to re-evaluate its stance in relation to celibacy.

Present day theologian Bernard Lonergan<sup>111</sup> has analysed this shift in the context of history of celibacy in the Roman Catholic Church and holds that it follows from the development of empirical science combined with a philosophical shift from object to subject. It is this change in philosophy, that will help us understand the many, and varied changes that occurred in the Roman Catholic Church on the whole subject of enforced celibacy

<sup>110</sup> Thompson, 1968, p45

<sup>111</sup> see Keane, Philip *Sexual Morality*, Paulist Press: New York, 1977, p156 for full treatment of the subject

The Italian moralist, Saint Alphonsus Liguori (1697-1787), who has been honoured with the title *Doctor of the Church* came to procure a position in the field of morality that paralleled the position of Thomas Aquinas in the field of scholastic theology.<sup>112</sup> Alphonsus Liguori marked the philosophical stance of the Roman Catholic Church in the age of moral casuistry when every sexual thought, word and deed was measured against moral absolutes. When it came to sexual behavior, violations were always "mortal". It was never disputed that in the Roman Catholic Church at all times virginity was held in honour, and that in particular large numbers of the clergy practiced it or separated from their wives if they were already married.<sup>113</sup>

Tertullian comments with admiration upon the number of those in sacred orders who have embraced continence, while Origen seems to contrast the spiritual offspring of the priests of the New Law with the natural offspring begotten in wedlock by the priests of the old<sup>114</sup>

While violations of love or justice could be classified "mortal", "venial", or "imperfections", sexual violations were always "mortal". The "person in the pew" was presented with a moral system in which one size fits "all", all people, in all situations, for all time. Although the individual might get a lesser or greater sentence in the "sacramental tribunal" (confession) because of mitigating or aggravating circumstances, the physical deed itself was both the point of departure and the basis of final moral judgement.

### 3.4 Transformation: The Minds of Change.

In today's world, we are witnessing in Roman Catholicism a "revolution", one that will re-shape the sexual ethic of the church in time. Theologian Hans Kung describes revolution as "a fundamental transformation of an existing state of affairs."<sup>115</sup> Paramount to this "revolution" is the movement from an institutional faith to a more personal faith, from form and structure to substance. Many Roman Catholics received their identity from the institution. The "faithful" were those who rigidly obeyed the pope, received his credal

<sup>112</sup> Nygren, Anders *This is the Church*, Muhlenberg Press: 1952,p27

<sup>113</sup> Keane, Philip *Sexual Morality*, Paulist Press: New York, 1977, p157

<sup>114</sup> Keane, p.157

<sup>115</sup> Kung, Hans *On Being a Christian*, Collins: London, 1978 p183



instructions obediently, recognised his infallibility, ordered their sexual lives according to his instructions and their church lives according to the prescriptions of canon law. Faith and obedience were synonymous to "the person in the pew." S/he was Roman Catholic because s/he was "faithful" to form and structure. Which is why it is so vital to many Catholics to hold onto old forms and old structures. Their identities depend on it.

Indeed, we might say, their "faith" depends on it. Michael Valenti (a respected author on the history of the Catholic church) writes: *"They seek refuge from the effects of radicalisation through entrenchment behind the protective walls of an ever more adamant assertion of the old order in which ultimacy of the institution guaranteed the comfort of certainty in theological matters."*<sup>116</sup>

Nevertheless the new person in the pew views things differently. S/he is no longer dependent for his/her identity on an "institutional faith". Therefore, as s/he sees it, to question the sexual ethic of the institution does not constitute heresy. His/her whole definition of heresy is different. Anything that is anti-human is anti-God in his eyes. Many contemporary Roman Catholics can dispose of form and structure in favour of substance without feeling that they have lost their identity or their membership in the faith community. This would have been unthinkable and unacceptable to former generations of Roman Catholics, for to dissent would have been equivalent to heresy. Also, technological law in the minds of many Roman Catholics has replaced natural law, as the basis for sexual morality, while faith in Christ has replaced "institutional faith". Many Roman Catholics today base their value judgements on substance rather than on structure and form.<sup>117</sup> Thus; for instance, celibacy is judged as a distortion of the gospel because it is seen as anti-human, therefore, anti-God. Abstinence is not judged against the structure of marriage as much as it used to be. The substance of a relationship is the primary interest

I perceive that some contemporary Roman Catholics, as "revolutionaries", indeed, for they found their worth, not in what the institutional church thought of them, but in their

<sup>116</sup> Valente, Michael *The Radical View of a Catholic Theologian*, Bruce Publishing: Milwaukee, 1970. p94

<sup>117</sup> O'Connor, Elizabeth *The New Community*, Harper & Row: New York, 1976. p78



sense of having been created to the image and likeness of God. They measure the quality of their faith, not against encyclicals and canonical canons, but by the level of their faith in Christ<sup>118</sup>. This is the challenge for the Roman Catholic Church hierarchy to evaluate inwardly at what they are promoting and practising in terms of their pastoral ministry and the effect it has on the wider community at large.

So, a relevant question or challenge would be "what kind of a church will modern Samoan men, women and youth relate to?" I feel that Valente has a good answer to this testing question: *"(The) Church must exist to help men function better together as humans, not to impede that functioning ... Too often representatives of the institutional church have functioned in a vacuum. They have moved and spoken within a universe of thought and discourse populated essentially by philosophical verities and essences rather than by existential facts of life and the realities of human situations."*<sup>119</sup>

I believe that explaining this is to illustrate that contemporary Roman Catholics like some in the other Christian churches are beginning to de-institutionalise their faith. The "person in the pew" no longer feels obliged to conform to a structure (like mandatory celibacy) or to a sexual ethic (that tolerates covenant love expressed sexually in marriage only). The burden is really on the institutional church itself to speak a sexual language that supports and directs individuals in their struggle for sexual fulfillment. As Samoan people encompass and embrace a new age of scholarship they are not willing to accept all that is dictated to them from their traditional mentors. Black and white is not enough for modern women and men who know that most of their lives are lived in the gray. Questions must be answered to the satisfaction of the populace who remain sceptical or uncertain about the merits of celibacy in the ministry.

### 3.5 A Priest's View

I had the privilege to interview three Catholic priests in Samoa over a span of six weeks to extract their opinions on mandatory celibacy issue in the Roman Catholic Church. It was the hope of the author that through these interviews I would ascertain

<sup>118</sup> Kung, 1978, p183

<sup>119</sup> Valente, p100

their views and opinions on why the Roman Catholic Church insist on mandatory celibate ministries for their clergy as a life long commitment. I also wished to garner their respective views on whether a singles ministry would be effective for the CCCS. Due to the delicate and sensitive nature of the subject the respective priests requested anonymity, accordingly I have respected their wishes for the suppression of their names and personal details.

The first issue that bothers me is, are the people who insist on these archaic rules (mandatory celibacy) so impervious to the needs of their clergy who might decide that marriage is indeed for them at a later stage of their lives. Another objection, which has been urged against celibacy, is that the reproduction of the human species is a primary function and law of human nature, and therefore constitutes an inalienable right of which no person can deprive himself/herself by any vow. Although people use contraceptives and abortion as a means of birth control, yet this is the free choice given to that person and not forced upon them by regulations of the Church. In view of the fact that social conditions of every sort, as well as the moral law, necessitate celibacy on the part of millions of the race, no one takes this objection seriously. So far as any justification of this position has been attempted, it has been found in the analogy of the animal or vegetable kingdom, in which the reproduction of its own kind has been represented as the main object of created existence.

Overwhelmingly, there was a consensus from the interviewed group that they perceived little or nothing wrong with celibacy in the clergy. It was indeed their own volition and autonomy to enter this form of ministry and accordingly they happily live with the consequences with no reservations (see *appendix K.p72*).

I asked one of the priests if the Roman Catholic Church's persistence with its celibate ministry motivated by a number of covert reasons. First and foremost I believe the economic motivations whereby the church is not obliged to pay for the maintenance of members of the respective families of clergy. The comparatively slight cost of the Catholic missions with their unmarried clergy need mentioning. Bickersteth remarks that "*Roman Catholics certainly can teach us much by their readiness to bear*

*hardships. This man and his priests are at times subject to the most serious privations I should fear. In Japan a Roman priest gets one-seventh of what the Church Missionary Society and the Society of the Gospel allow to an unmarried deacon. Of course they can only live on the food of the country.*"<sup>120</sup> For one of the interviewed priests, to live the monastic life that he reveled in was based on the premise that he was in the world but not of the world. He lived in a world of sin yet he had distanced or isolated himself from the vices and temptations of this realm. Money was incidental to the work of the priest who was motivated by his faith and not by the financial rewards that were to be offered by the Catholic Church.

The same priest was resolute that living a Celibate lifestyle is a personal commitment to God and that it gratifies God to see the level or magnitude of their commitment. This commitment involved the sacrificing of material things of this world that distracted a person from serving God. Remaining single for another priest meant things such as domestic affairs that may affect those who are married did not distract him. The same priest was adamant that his single status allowed him to remain totally focussed on God.

Furthermore the priest believed after the conclusion of his outdoor duties he is able to go home to a quiet study, where there is nothing to disturb his thoughts. Conversely the family or domestic man is met at the door by troops of children welcoming his return and claiming his interest in all their little affairs. Or else the disagreements of the household demand him as an umpire and his mind is disturbed by no mere speculative contemplation of the faults and follies of humankind but by their actual invasion of his home."

However all three of the priests I interviewed for this study would not advocate a mandatory celibate ministry "for everyone" as logic will show that there needs to be people who marry and procreate for the populating of the earth.

I asked the priest how he could possibly counsel effectively someone with relationship problems. It was evident that each priest had lived such a sheltered existence away from the world-divorced from the ethos of mainstream society and I

<sup>120</sup> See "The Life and Letters of Edward Bickersteth", 2nd ed., n.p: London, 1905, p214



related to the priest the fact that people are dynamic and are always evolving and incorporating a new sense of reality. So, how can this priest who has freely chosen to distance himself from the world ever fully comprehend the feelings, emotions and mentality of the people who were coinhabitants with him in the community. The priest was expedient to quip about the perceived advantage of living privately and secluded as it gives one added focus and objectivity on certain subjects. I concluded from our interview that there must be some merit in his answers as his ministry from my observations was successful in terms of the number of people who attended the programmes and the diversity of the programmes offered.

I could not resist asking the priest about how he kept his own sexual tendencies in check. The priest was in his thirty's and was a picture of athleticism and I assumed that he would harbour the same sexual urges that most people his age kept. The priest remained coy and I did not want to cause any offence to the priest by asking a question that breached his privacy.

During my research for this project I came across the example of the well documented case of M Loyson a priest<sup>121</sup> who forsake this life (celibacy) for a life of marriage. Loyson, when seeking to justify his own marriage, does not attempt to suggest that the obligation of celibacy was beyond the strength of the average man, or that the Catholic clergy lived otherwise than chastely.

When I asked the priests of how they divorced themselves from the vices of this world they gave me an answer that I found difficult to relate to. The priest was adamant that he had transcended to a higher spiritual level that allowed him to purge his human inclinations. In essence it was likened to process of catharsis whereby their body, mind and spirit are all cleansed. As someone who has yet to attain this level of spirituality I remain skeptical.

Despite allegations of ignorance with the subject of mandatory celibacy in terms of true empathy, I still remain unimpressed with the Roman Catholic celibate clergy model. Despite their vigour, passion and vision, I remain resolute in my recommendation that for the CCCS to transpose this particular system on any future

<sup>121</sup> The Catholic Encyclopaedia New York, p483



singles ministry would be calculated misjudgment. However, to give a focused view of this subject, it needs to review the philosophical stance behind the Roman Catholic Church's irrepressible drive to make it the norm for their clergy. The anti-clerical animus that prompts a certain type of mind to rake these scandals together, and to revel in and exaggerate their prurient details, is at least as marked as the tendency on the part of the Church's apologists to ignore these uncomfortable pages of history altogether.

### 3.6 Conclusion

Eugene Kennedy has this to say: " Instead of drawing all things to Rome", <sup>122106</sup> Rome will increasingly be drawn out to embrace the wealth of diversity in the human family it serves and even to the sunny shores of Samoa. Issues such as celibacy will not be debated away; they will rather become less important and will be resolved in the context of a Church no longer strongly identified with the bitter struggles of Western Europe in the Middle Ages. The Roman Catholic Church in Samoa will not be surprised at such changes. It already feels them in its bones.

As we can see the subject of celibacy and the Roman Catholic Church is one that has been vigorously debated throughout the ages in terms of its merits. A compromise has yet to be reached that satisfies all parties concerned. The Catholic Church waits with anticipation and fervour.

Liberation theology goes beyond sexual emancipation to sexual liberation, thus making God the great liberator of the sexually disenfranchised. Would not those who are under the yoke of mandatory celibacy be numbered among the sexually disenfranchised? I believe that even if there was their own choice they would have found the reality of the matter much different to what they first envisaged. The Roman Catholic Church through its insidious policy of enforced celibacy for some of its clergy has meant that there are those left disillusioned and frustrated at the rigidity found in this policy of the Church.

It is easy to understand Rome's overt discomfort with the whole subject realm of liberation theology. While Rome still lumbers along (with the docile Samoa Roman Catholic Church in tow) with moral absolutes and dogmas that have never been reformulated so as to be relevant to the contemporary world. Applied to sexuality, then, liberation theologians are not interested in who copulates with whom, but, rather, they would see sexual expression, not so much as freedom from restrictions, but as freedom for self expression.

Although I admire those practitioners and proponents of a celibate clergy, I hope that this chapter has elucidated the fact that celibacy has no biblical foundation and merit. I believe that its mandate is not God inspired yet its continued governance and maintenance is the result of certain people. Celibacy is not a requisite demand of God in order for blessings to be rendered.

I am unequivocal in stating that a proposed singles ministry for the CCCS would not have enforced celibacy as lifetime phenomena. I believe those who wish to get married should be allowed to. Chastity as opposed to celibacy would be demanded and kept in a singles ministry.

I think celibacy is part of the problem in that the Roman Catholic Church apparently thinks their priests are capable of simply turning off their sex drive forever. I believe there is ample evidence, throughout all of history, that this has rarely been the case. It is because they are forbidden open sexuality that they turn to hidden, abusive acts. Also, the Catholic Church has been somewhat notorious in its avoidance of dealing with the problems created by this.

I believe that those in the pastoral ministry/clergy who cannot contain their urges to get married, let do so: for it is better to marry than to burn. For most of us, sex is a necessity, just like food and water. We do not need it as often as we need water, but we still need it, and if we do not receive it, we suffer. If they get married then this should have little or no bearing in terms of them part of the pastoral ministry/clergy

Within Celibacy, it has produced a type of Christian slavery, guilt, and control of mind, status and body upon its adherents, women and men survived.

However, it has never been the adults alone who suffered from a celibate ministry. It has

been the young people too. Two thousand years of little boys entered into a sick world (celibate ministry) that denied them the love and companionship of mothers, aunts, sisters, wives, daughters, and grandmothers. Instead it introduced them to hardship, denial or worse, homosexual relationships.<sup>123</sup>

Celibacy as a lifestyle is an entity that may appeal to others whilst it may appear abhorrent to some.

Personally, those who choose to part of a "single" ministry must face the reality that celibacy is a compulsory demand and/or pre-requisite for its clergy. Sexual relations outside the confines of marriage are something not condoned by the church. This factor may be the defining or determining denominator is a person committing him or herself to a singles ministry.

<sup>123</sup> The Catholic Encyclopaedia, p483

## **Chapter Four:**

### **Relating to the Single**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter will bring to the forefront some of the issues that the church needs to address in relating to single people. If a singles ministry is to be formed then certain factors need to be considered and acted upon. There are indeed certain societal barriers that need to be broken and myths deconstructed for an effective singles ministry to be realised.

The phrase "prevention is better than cure" is pertinent when one considers that single people as a distinct social grouping will not go away. Stigmatisation and condemnation of these people serves no purpose for the Christian community and society at large.

#### **4.2 Overcoming Barriers in Relating to Singles**

Singleness once was looked upon as unusual, unfortunate, unnatural and ever undesirable yet with the increase awareness of parity and equity issues forged on the belief that political correctness I believe that Singleness is "no longer a social stigma"<sup>124</sup> for the majority of people. In fact, singles enjoy greater social acceptance than ever before. The state of singleness has been exalted to equality with the state of marriage, making marital status purely a matter of personal preference. Yet the fact that the CCCS fails to ordain singles still leaves a bitter taste for people like me who still believe that there are no justifiable reasons as to why this is still the norm for the CCCS.

For some singles, this happy sense of equality exists. There are those singles who may struggle with many of the issues as discussed in the other chapters and sections of this thesis. The feelings of loneliness, anger, guilt, interpersonal relations, self-esteem, sex outside of marriage, homosexuality and even alienation from the church. As discussed throughout this paper these are some of the issues that plague the respective lives of some

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<sup>124</sup> Collins,p367



singles. As a future ministry worker in the CCCS, I believe that they must be solved for the CCCS to move forward as a harmonious unit.

There are certain singles in church community's (not all of them), who need supportive acceptance. These singles require a listening ear that will hear their stories and to understand the pain, bitterness, and struggles without condemnation. For a successful ministry the minister must equalise his communion with his flock, as s/he is a friend, father, pastor.<sup>125</sup> Those singles that may find it hard to express their problems to someone who is married has the option of a single. I believe that it is the single that can truly be empathetic to their needs. When a single experiences such acceptance, he or she may be able to deal honestly with the frustrations of singleness. In addition, they may be more open to ponder the biblical teaching that the single life is God's special calling for some people.<sup>126</sup>

#### **4.3 Preventing Singles Problems in the Church.**

There is something incongruous with a church organisation that sees single adults as misfits and has no place in the body for unmarried people, lacks programmes to meet the needs of singles and shows no understanding or desire to understand their struggles especially if the single person is divorced.

These attitudes can be challenged from the pulpit if not the meeting venue for the meeting of those who dictate church policy. Married persons can be encouraged to welcome singles into the church and into their homes.

As Christians, it is imperative that we acknowledge that we find ultimate security in Christ and the Gospel message and not in a local congregation. Christians must know for certain that they do need one another. Many would agree that for singles especially, there is a longing to find friendship and comfort in the church. I will not be ambiguous in stating no definition of family can be called Christian which does not include single people and affords them equal opportunities as those of their married peers.

<sup>125</sup> Bridges, Charles *The Christian Ministry "An inquiry into the causes of its inefficiency"*  
The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, 1959.p45

<sup>126</sup> Bridges, p45

There may be a place in the church for couples programmes and family-related church activities. Yet I maintain that there must be specific programmes for single people in the congregation. For the last four years during my study tenure in Samoa I have stayed at the Leulumoega Tuai congregation and the Apia congregation<sup>127</sup>. I have had to concede that single people dominate many of the youth group members of each of these respective churches. This demonstrates that singles are involved to some degree in activities of the church.

I believe that the Au Toeaina (Elders Committee of the CCCS) ministry workers, pastors, other church leaders and members of the congregation should bear in mind that single people are significant and equal members of the body of Christ. Therefore I am resolute in my belief that there should be some provisions made by the CCCS church in regards to their single people. Once again using my experiences in Leulumoega Tuai and Apia I see that the majority of Sunday school teachers are from the singles sector of the congregation. The same can also be said of communicant members, as many in this group are singles. In CCCS parishes there are deacons who are single and the most pleasing aspect is many of the youth leaders are single people too. The reason why *singles* are generally chosen to lead the youth group is that they have more time available to dedicate to the group because of fewer commitments on the domestic front than their married peers.

Another avenue to assist single people is teaching about healthy marriage and families. It may be an indirect and effective way to prevent problems that singles and married people both face on the issue of marriage. This will be discussed further in the next chapter.

As a ministry worker I realise that not all single adults have the same needs and wants. Not only do they have several groupings; they also span several generations. There may be simultaneously four generations of adults in the church.

Singles like anyone else can have a difficult time knowing what they want on a consistent basis. Researchers<sup>128</sup> have noted that the desire for nurture and growth sometimes

<sup>127</sup> The village of Leulumoega Tuai is located on the western side of the Upolu island approximately 29 kilometres from the capital Apia

<sup>128</sup> Smoke, J *Suddenly Single*, Revell Publishing: New Jersey, 1982.p98

conflicts with the longing for independence. While singles often feel no more independent than married people do.

The needs of the single population in the CCCS should be met where they are, rather than where married people think singles should be. Singles must strive to do better with the issues cited throughout this paper than their married counterparts, especially since they cope with these issues unassisted. A ministry that provides assistance with these problems will inevitably increase the numbers of singles in their group.

#### **4.4 Issues To Be Considered.**

An erroneous assumption is that marital status is always the most important thing to single people. Single adults are human beings first. They have many of the issues and concerns of any other person. For some the likelihood of marriage is not the number one issue in their lives. Some even resent being approached in this way. However as is the case with the single graduates of Malua Theological College, they realise that through not being married their options in terms of *caring* for a parish on a full time basis are diminished when compared to their married counterparts.

It is imperative that the church must understand singles as a highly diverse population that needs ministry to the whole person—spiritual, relational, and emotional. There are no easy answers for this group that will find universal approval. Understanding this is the difference between starting a ministry and being a true missionary to single adults.

With singleness being unique or a life style that is different to marriage the question is therefore asked who are the people who will help the single people and the problems they face? I am unequivocal in my belief that single people helping other single people is the ideal model for the CCCS church.

The CCCS should be honest and proactive in acknowledging that loneliness and single-person frustration are likely to persist. As these issues are discussed I realise that as a worker in the CCCS pastoral ministry, I am not to solve problems for people; I am part of the process which assists in solving problems with them. I like all ministry workers am there to empower people with the skills and knowledge to allow them to live productive and fulfilling lives as expected by God.



Once singles have been recognised, they need to be understood as individuals and not as one homogeneous group. Having statistical data about singles is important, but not the same as being literate and having an understanding of their unique *culture* and needs. The wrong assumptions on behalf of the minister can ruin even the best information causing irreparable harm. It is this basic premise which has fuelled my desire for there to be a singles ministry in the CCCS.

In addition to facing problems and dealing with them honestly, singles can learn to make clearer plans for the future. The church and its ministry can help. It is not wrong to hope for marriage or to recognise that marriage is a possibility for the future, but it is not healthy to build our lives around events that are uncertain. Instead, individuals, especially Christians, must learn both to prepare for the future and to live fully in the present. For singles, this involves facing the fact that marriage (or remarriage) may or may not be a possibility. It involves a consideration and development of one's abilities and gifts in the formulation of long-range and short-term goals and movement into a plan of action that will make these goals attainable.

An unfortunate circumstance would be if there was a division in the church community between married people and their single brethren. There must not be an insistence of a *We/they* attitude (on the singles behalf) towards married people. A sharp sense of division from couples accompanied by a lack of "fit" into social networks can grow into a root of bitterness. The fruit of this will see married couples and the church that caters to them as enemies. Churches that fail to reach out to singles have fanned the flames on this issue.<sup>129</sup>

#### 4.5 Reaching Singles / Conclusions

I believe with boundless optimism that a *fresh wind* (signifying change) is blowing in the CCCS church today. The time is here for a missionary outreach to single people. New ideas or methods are needed or the single fraternity demands simply a new approach. For there to be a successful ministry of any type the right questions need to be answered and the leaders require the humility to learn from other models.

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<sup>129</sup> Romans 12:9, Matthew 5:23,24: refer to chapter Two



Single pastors might ponder the unique impact that their own singleness could have on their single counsels. Within recent years, during my experiences in the CCCS I have noted the importance of *mentoring*. Usually this refers to the role of older and more successful business and professional people who guide younger people in their careers. *Mentors* can also be helpful in non-career areas as well.

Programmes must appeal to the interests and needs of singles and they must recognise individual differences (older- singles such as widows, for example, do not have the same needs as unmarried college students). These activities must focus on teaching, discipline, worship, social activities and service. This kind of outreach has potential for preventing many single problems and providing ways for handling existing problems before they get worse. Single pastors can show others singles that are accepted into the church.

The senior citizen living alone is totally different from the 19-year old-never-been-married. Another poignant factor to consider is the cultural differences with those Samoans in Samoa and those raised and living in countries like New Zealand and America. This places added pressure on the CCCS to provide workable and culturally sensitive measures that are workable in its makeup. Possible solutions to these problems must consider those differences in the singles population. The fact that neither has a spouse is hardly enough to bond them together. The diversity of the unmarried population presents great challenges, but also great opportunities. Leaders will have to become familiar with generation issues and develop ministry that each group finds culturally relevant.

In conclusion I believe that any singles programme (targeted at singles) should not only state the positive aspects about marriage but also restate its commitment to the family and to the institution of marriage. Within the scope of this programme there should be strong, clear, biblical teaching and preaching on marriage, the family and singleness alike.

Discourage, thinking that creates unrealistic ideals about marriage and the family, or that encourages child-centered marriages it is envisioned that Marriage and singleness are to be promoted as respected lifestyles.

## Chapter Five

### CCCS: Towards a Singles Ministry?

#### **5.1 Introduction**

After four chapters of surveying and probing the CCCS pastoral ministry system and berating the fact that it fails to provide for the single people of their church community I have decided to formulate some of my own ideas on how a singles ministry could be accomplishment. I readily realise that my ideas have yet to be tested in the real world yet I promote these ideas in the hope that they may be the catalyst in generating a singles ministry for the CCCS

#### **5.2 The Advantages of Singleness in the Ministry**

In the first chapter of this paper the advantages of being single (general outline) was outlined yet in this section we will focus on the positives aspects of being single in the context of the church and its pastoral ministry.

The church at large probably tends to make single people uncomfortable with its very assiduous focus on what the Bible has to say about marriage, children, and family life.<sup>130</sup> With the massive amount of attention given to Singleness from a secular point of view there is a lot less attention given to what the Bible has to say about singleness.<sup>131</sup>

The assumptions, attitudes, and behaviour in this regard as found in the churches of today would, have challenged the apostle Paul, as a single man. Paul gave his unequivocal endorsement of the single life in 1 Corinthians 7: 7-8 (refer to chapter two), speaking very personally, Paul says, "*...I wish that all men were even as I myself am.*" However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner [being married], and another in that [being single]. But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I."<sup>132</sup>

Paul's point is that the marital status, whether we are single or married, is a gift from God, an evidence of God's grace to us.

<sup>130</sup> Peterson, E The Message. Nav Press, Colorado Springs, 1993 p382

<sup>131</sup> Peterson, p382

<sup>132</sup> NRSV Bible

Whether a person is single or married they should learn and be content with which they are and those life opportunities as afforded to them. People should ask God to change them before we start petition God to change their circumstances. Three times Paul hammered away at this principle, in verses 17, 20, and 24: "*Only as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, in this manner let him walk...Let each man remain in that condition in which he was called...Brethren, let each man remain with God in that condition in which he was called.*" Those verses were applied in the middle part of the chapter to those in difficult marriage relationships.

There is still conjecture surrounding the issue of whether Paul being single was an advantage or not. The debate surrounds the merits of Paul's marital status and its consequential effect on the potency of his ministry. If Paul had been married during his travels would it have intensified his sufferings by his own worry about his wife and children at home, and by their tremendous anxiety for him as he was beaten, stoned, thrown in prison, and faced with impending execution. Married believers who go through the distress or peril of social turmoil can't escape carrying a much heavier emotional load than do single Christians.

The apostle Paul believes that it's easier for a single man or woman to maintain his/her focus on spiritual matters and ministry priorities. Therefore if some people among the communities that we live in choose not to get married in order to pursue that spiritual simplicity, we should honour them, not assume that there's some mysterious or illness about them. Therefore we can conclude that being single has definite and distinct advantages that will allow them to remain spiritually focussed.

The first advantage of remaining single, which is summarised in 1 Corinthians 7 verses 26-28, is because of the pressures we face in the world, both external pressures from the culture around us and the internal pressures of marriage itself.<sup>133</sup> There's also a sub-theme in this paragraph about living appreciatively with our current marital state. I think then that this is good in view of the present distress, which it is good for a man to remain as he is. "Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. (*Are you married? Don't try to*

<sup>133</sup> Boon, C The Hiding Place. Chosen Books: Washington, 1975.p67



*get separated or divorced.*) Are you released from a wife? Do not seek a wife. (*Have you been divorced? Then don't try to get remarried*). Logic dictates that this would not be applicable to all singles as each single person has a different disposition and character traits in dealing with problems<sup>134</sup>

In verses 25-40 especially 26-28 of 1 Corinthians 7 Paul unfolds some immense advantages that single people have that married people do not. The same channel of thinking as forwarded in the preceding verses anchors this teaching. . Verse 26: "...It is good for a man to remain as he is. Paul makes clear in verse 28 that marriage is a legitimate option for single people, but it is good to scrupulously considered and deliberately reflected upon the option of singleness.<sup>135</sup> Paul is speaking from personal experience in marriage. He wants to spare single people "trouble in this life," or literally, "many tribulations in the flesh".

Paul states that he does not have a clear apostolic word from God about whether single people should endeavour to stay single or strive to get married. However Paul does say that we should be able to trust his opinion. Paul acknowledges that he has experienced much of God's merciful patience in his life. Paul has experienced both states of living, and he speaks out of a great heart of wisdom and maturity.

Now look at the second advantage of singleness in verses 29-31. It may be helpful in maintaining spiritual priorities, living with an eternal perspective and values. Paul's says this, "*brethren, the time has been shortened, so that from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none; and those who weep, as though they did not weep; and those who rejoice, as though they did not rejoice; and those who buy, as though they did not possess; and those who use the world, as though they did not make full use of it; for the form of this world is passing away*" Paul's argument here seems to be that the single person will find it easier to maintain spiritual balance in life, to resist unhealthy attachments to people and institutions. There are no empirical data to substantiate the apostle's assertions yet the lack of anecdotal evidence should not lessen its merit.

<sup>134</sup> Boon, p 37

<sup>135</sup> Oates, W.E *Paul and the Law*, SCM: London, 1978, p3

A positive aspect about being single in the ministry that we can deem the third advantage is a person is free of the greater responsibilities and financial pressures that are often associated with marriage. Paul here categorically elevates the single life as a mode of living in which the person can give without distraction undivided devotion to Christ. This mode of thinking may have seemed irrelevant or draconian in its simplicity yet it still forwards some morsel of motivation for single people to remain that way if they so desire.

We know and accept that Paul is pro-marriage. Paul points out that while there are troubles in ones life that are unique to being a single person, those may exceed them in marriage. Marriage was never intended by God to resolve all the personal, emotional, spiritual difficulties in our life. Whatever struggles people bring in marriage it will be a component of the process and marriage definitely will intensify the struggles.<sup>136</sup>

Paul elaborated on this in more detail in 1 Corinthians 7 (refer to Chapter Two). This section of Scripture discusses sex and presents an exalted view of marriage, but the writer also considers singleness as something that is positive. Once again singleness is called a *gift* and the apostle, who indicates that he himself was unmarried, writes in positive terms about the single lifestyle. Marriage, he says, is fine, but singleness is even better. This serves as a reminder that singleness is not a negative thing nor should it be perceived as a handicap in ones ministry. I have tried to convince my married brethren that being single is not to purposefully spite others who are married nor is it a rejection of the institution of marriage.

Contemplate the freedom the apostle Paul had to travel in service to the Lord Jesus around the Mediterranean basin, from one end of the Roman Empire to the other, dedicated in spirit and heart, living a life of moral purity and abstinence before the Lord. It was indeed the grace and power of God in his life that led to Paul planting churches all around the Roman Empire. More importantly from our perspective, he wrote these letters that have literally changed the course of human history, all because of this singular focus in his life. For Paul, relationships were paramount. In the last chapter of the letter to the Romans, there's a list of about thirty names of people who had become cherished to him

over his years of ministry. Although he was single he was able to initiate and maintain functional relationships. This has been something that I have maintained with confidence for sometime that single people have no problem in initiating and maintaining relationships.

The single life as exemplified by Paul makes possible a degree of devotion and commitment to the work of Christ that married life does not allow. Single people have a phenomenal opportunity to minister to the needs of other people in the church, in the world, in the neighbourhood, in the work place the only question is whether they would be afforded that opportunity by the church and/or by the wider community. Married men and women have preoccupations built into the equation

We conclude this section by dwelling on Paul's thoughts, that our interests are divided if we choose to get married. That is not an adverse thing, its just reality. Married people may want to have the same passion, the same concern as their single peers and about the evangelism of the world and of their neighbourhood. A person who is not single may want to be a disciple of men and women. However they have already committed themselves to a wife and children. The call is loud and obvious a to single Christian adult, to live with spiritual abandon, complete and undivided devotion to the Lord.

### 5.3 Single Ministry

There are several ideas lingering around singles ministry that need to be abandoned.(see *Appendix M.p79*) Yet, if they are to replace then there must be feasible and workable options to take their place. This is what I am proposing in the next sections as possibilities for a singles ministry, a ministry for single people run by singles. It must be noted that no one will be forced to part of the proposed programme if they did not believe that it served their best interests.

Looking retrospectively at the archetypes used in the past by people when dealing with the single community is a farcical exercise indeed, when one considers the level of ignorance.

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<sup>136</sup> Jenkins, D.T *The Gift Of Ministry*, Faber and Faber: London, 1947. The author gives a comprehensive



### 5.5 The Challenge for the CCCS

No one model(see Appendix L.p73) is perfect for ministry when one contemplates the diversity of the humans involved. It is therefore imperative for the growth of any church organisation that from time to time there are processes of evaluation.

Rev Masalosalo Sopoaga<sup>137</sup> related to me during our interview that he is convinced that there is indeed a place for single ordained ministers in the pastoral ministry of the CCCS. Rev Sopoaga stated that in theory single pastors could work in tandem with the minister and his wife within the village setting.(see Appendix N.p79)

This problem I believe can work for the CCCS in utilising the multitude of skills and talent that single people bring to the ministry. The ramifications are there that if these singles are not used then they will go elsewhere outside of the CCCS to look for employment and spiritual fulfillment. This would be a great loss for the CCCS in terms of not managing and utilising its human resources to its fullest capacity. The CCCS must pay heed to this problem, and acknowledge the fact that singles in most instances can relate much better to single people.

One of the burning questions that challenged me whilst writing this paper was "why do Samoans insist on this policy of married pastors as enforced by the CCCS?" The idea is predicated on the Biblical belief that God created Eve to work with Adam in partnership. The second tenet is a cultural belief that the family is the heart of all things Samoan and procreation between husband and wife is a fundamental necessity for the perpetuation of the human species. More importantly it is the ideal for the furtherance of the genealogy of a family. During the course of this thesis one of the most challenging things for me was the interviewing people about their views of single pastors in the CCCS and if there

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view

<sup>137</sup> Interview with Rev Elder Masalosalo Sopoaga.

Former principal of Malua Theological College. Rev Sopoaga was a parish minister for the Solosolo CCCS congregation. Currently Rev Sopoaga is the parish minister for the Pagopago CCCAS. Rev. Sopoaga is currently the chairman of the ministry committee of the CCCAS.

Interview took place at the Kanana Fou Seminary offices. Transcript of the interview kept with the interviewer.

should be given roles for single graduates of Malua Theological College in assisting single people in the CCCS.

In regards to what CCCS people think of the issue of singles in the ministry I interviewed people in the rural areas and in the town area<sup>138</sup>. The results were not dissimilar which surprised me as I thought that the town as being in an area which allowed them greater access to educational institutions than the rural area was open to new ideas that went against the conservative thinking of the church. Yet this was not to be, as the town people were also united in their belief that graduates of Malua should be married and that those who were not then should reassess whether the ministry was for them,

All the people that I interviewed were adamant that those who entered Malua did so with the sole intention of becoming a minister.

Many people were perplexed as to why I was still single and this was to be my last year in Malua. They asked questions whether I was rebelling against the system or whether I was homosexual. The rudest of allegations was levied by one woman who said that I was arrogant and that the reason why I did not choose to get married was that I thought that there was not a Samoan girl that was good enough for me. This highlighted to me the type of mentality that is prevalent in Samoan society concerning single graduates of Malua.

When I asked them whether there was need for a singles ministry team to cater for the needs of single people this was met with a categorical "no". I then proceeded to espouse my view on whether there could be some way that single ministers could work in the same parish as a married minister as a type of partnership. Once again this was meant with a fierce chorus of "NO".

People may see this as being a rejection of my thesis and the ideas that I am promoting. Nevertheless I still remain positive that there may a time in the future that things may change and that there will be some movement within the CCCS for a Singles ministry or at least some consideration of the ordination of single ministers. Questions are now raised

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<sup>138</sup> Interviews took place at the respective homes of the participants during the 24<sup>th</sup> –31<sup>st</sup> July 2002. Copies of the questionnaire and the consent form to be interviewed can found in the appendices.

by Samoans raised in New Zealand who with their education background are now beginning to challenge the Samoan structures.<sup>139</sup>

The CCCS' insistence of all their ministers being married is more glaring when one considers that when a minister's wife dies he is given six months to find another wife or else face certain expulsion from the congregation. Although I have never been married and never experienced the trauma of losing a spouse I do know from my prior experiences in the field of trauma counseling that six months is enough time for some people to handle their grief. Although I concede the fact that one who is committed to the ministry must put God's work first and therefore must divorce himself from the grieving process. Sarcastically the CCCS must believe that there is a formula that leads them to believe that a person can disengage himself from grieving for his deceased wife.

## 5.6 Conclusion

After I had completed most of my research on singleness. I thought that it would be best to present these findings to one of the people in the CCCS who understood the *processes of change* in the CCCS because of his given position. On Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2002 I had the privilege of interviewing Rev Apelu Lelevaga concerning issues raised in this paper. Rev Lelevaga is currently the Secretary of the Elders Committee of the CCCS and is a member of the board of Malua Theological College. Rev Lelevaga has been a parish minister in the village of Tuana'i for 26 years.<sup>140</sup>

The primary purpose of the interview was to ascertain the official stance of the Elders Committee in regards to the issues of singleness. I was very much intrigued to find out what Rev Lelevaga's views were on a proposed singles ministry in the CCCS, and whether with this experience in the pastoral ministry of the CCCS was viable and merited.

<sup>139</sup> Taule'ale'ausumai Fei "The Word Made Flesh: A Samoan Theology Of Pastoral Care." in Culbertson Philip, Counseling Issues and South Pacific Communities, Accent Publications, Auckland, 1997,p174

<sup>140</sup> Interview with Rev Eider Apelu Lelevaga at the CCCS manse in Tuana'i. The interviewer holds transcript of the interview.



Rev Lelevaga was unequivocal that the CCCS constitution or the *guiding principles* of the CCCS would only change if this was the desire of a substantial number of the general population of the church. If there were no murmuring in regard to this then the Elders Committee would not act. Although he was interested in the findings of this paper, he was honest enough to say that he did not foresee any changes in the foreseeable future. He pointed out that I was the only person who had ever raised this issue with the Elders Committee. As much as I want change in the CCCS, Rev Lelevaga noted the people of the church and not just one student must raise a need before any change can be realised.

One thing that raised my optimism was the fact that the Elders Committee has ordained single ministers in the past in exceptional circumstances. The exceptional circumstances being those singles who are summoned into the mission field by an overseas church and must be ordained as the host church will require a pastor who is qualified to fulfil the roles and duties of an ordained minister in that country.

Rev Lelevaga also stated that the Elders Committee believed that all those who study at Malua have the ultimate and realistic aim of one-day serving as a parish minister of the CCCS. One must consider that there is an oath taking ceremony before a person is accepted as a student of Malua Theological College and during this process the student pledges wholeheartedly to answer any call of the CCCS in any regard or capacity.

When I asked Rev Lelevaga about his personal beliefs on whether there should be a single ministry in the CCCS to meet the needs of the single people. Rev Lelevaga was adamant that in all the years that he had been a parish minister he perceived that there was no need for such a ministry.

If time had allowed and finances permitting I would have relished the opportunity to travel to New Zealand to interview a CCCS minister to find his views on the issues raised in this paper. In New Zealand the highest number of road fatalities are the group of people cast as *single young males*, I believe that the CCCS in New Zealand could help in this regard and be a part of the process that assist in alleviating some of society's ills or afflictions.

I was not too distraught at the comments made by Rev Lelevaga but it was to be expected in some regards as this study was likened to a pilot study to gauge if there was the possibility of a singles ministry in the future. I was fully aware that there was always the risk that it would not procure universal approval from all factions of the CCCS community. Yet undeterred I still see that in the future there may be some period of time whereby the CCCS might consider revising its stance on its single ministry and give it a try. I was able to see the positive things in the interview that the Elders Committee were prepared for change if that was the expressed wish of the majority of people or if the singles (singles, single ministers etc.) themselves demanded this change.

The CCCS is a church that is strict in its interning with culture and with the Samoan insistence on married ministers I see a long road for me and my adherents if change is ever to eventuate. Christianity and Fa'asamoa are so intertwined it would be separated the two from the other.<sup>141</sup>

Presently, there are employment vacancies for singles in the ministry (teaching, office work). Missionary postings are also available for single graduates if the host church demands so.

The CCCS does not have a specific singles ministry (i.e. a ministry of single ordained ministers or a ministry that caters for the needs of the singles of the CCCS church). This is not to be a sign that the CCCS has neglected the single graduates of Malua Theological College or those who are single in the congregations of the CCCS.

The CCCS has structured Youth Programmes and Homework Study Centres<sup>142</sup> that cater for the needs of younger single people. Employment opportunities are also afforded equally to single people as well as their married brethren alike. Overall the only point that has led me to query is the failure of the CCCS to ordain "singles". This may change in the future or it may never.

<sup>141</sup> Taule'ale'ausumai Fei "The Word Made Flesh: A Samoan Theology Of Pastoral Care." in Culbertson Philip *Counselling Issues and South Pacific Communities*, Accent Publications: Auckland, 1997p174

<sup>142</sup> The Leulumoega Tuai CCCS parish is a good example of a church that is currently operating youth programmes and a homework/study center.

It is my sincere hope that this paper may be the catalyst for the CCCS so it may contemplate some changes in regards to the way it deals with the single people of the church. *I wait in baited breath.*

This paper has led me to believe that some people do not want to be part of a singles ministry or to be identified as a single person in the church for personal reasons. I respect their opinions and their wishes. Some perceive singleness as being a temporary thing that is a stepping-stone to marriage and therefore have no problems with it.

I am resolute in my belief that singles can relate best to singles. Yet married people will argue that they were once single too and they also have the advantage of seeing life from a different perspective. I ask, "can a married person who was single 10 years earlier relate and be empathetic to the needs of the single person!"

Ultimately the choice of who counsels who and who helps who will be the choice of the individual yet I would hope that the singles ministry as I have presented in this thesis would at least be considered by the CCCS as an option.

As the number of CCCS churches continues to grow in terms of spreading to distant and diverse places like Missouri and Suva, it is quite exciting to see that CCCS churches are now established on the balmy shores of Maui to the icy hills of southern New Zealand. The question remains and challenges the CCCS as to whether it as a progressive institution is ready to withstand the pressures of change that these modern times demand.

The Presbyterian Church in New Zealand has ordained a Samoan female minister<sup>143</sup> whilst the Lutheran church continues to ordain its single ministers. With this mind how can the CCCS with the inexorable petitioning of an ever-intellectual westernised group of parishioners resist their demands? For these are the very people who are continually demanding an evaluation of church policies in regards to the treatment of its singles population and other aspects of the church that they find hard to cope with. Some of the current CCCS policies seems to be out of touch with the needs of new generation. Yet these allegations are usually the work of those Samoans uninitiated or unfamiliar with

<sup>143</sup>The story of Rev Fei Taule'ale'ausumai and her ordination is briefly outlined in her article "*The Word Made Flesh: A Samoan Theology Of Pastoral Care.*" in Culbertson Philip *Counseling Issues and South Pacific communities*, Accent Publications: Auckland, 1997 p174



them. I believe the reasoning why there are people who disillusioned with certain CCCS policies is they were formed and implemented by a generation divorced from the needs of the present one.

With the many different and diverse denominations available for a person to choose from, it leaves the option open to a person who becomes disillusioned with the CCCS to move to another church that better suit their needs.

I believe that traditional family ties or past links with the CCCS will not be enough for some people to stay with the church. The CCCS must face the reality of having to deal with issues of female ministers and single ordained ministers or face the real possibility of a significant exodus of people moving en mass from the church.

I do realise that some of the problems experienced by singles as outlined in Chapter One are not necessarily the result of them being singles. Whatever the reasons that have pre-empted single people to suffer it still lays down a challenge to organisations like the CCCS that they must assist in some capacity.

Upon reflecting on the whole situation of being single in the CCCS, I believe that the Roman Catholic Church and their enforced policy of mandatory celibacy for the clergy is not to be endorsed or even adopted by the CCCS if they were ever to introduce a singles ministry.

I applaud innovations taken by seminaries and church organisations that offer subjects like Eco theology, youth ministry and even singles ministry (Princeton Theological Seminary-Ohio, USA) as stand alone subjects. This is due recognition of the various groups in society and their importance and acceptance into mainstream society. Their importance is reflected in their ability to command identification as a distinctive subject and not mere components of other subjects. This I believe is the imminent direction of theology and education in general.

## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### Questions /Guideline for Oral interviews

- \*Is the whole issue of *singleness* one of importance for the CCCS?
- \*What is your understanding of the present constitutional stance of the CCCS in relation to single graduates of Malua?
- \*Should all those seeking the title FS (*fai'fau Samoa*) be married? (Why /Why not?)
- \*Should there be special provisions made for single graduates of Malua Theological College? (E.g. providing vocational, educational, missionary options etc....)
- \*Is there a need for a **singles ministry** who cater specifically for the needs and issues of single people in the CCCS pastoral ministry?
- \*If yes, then what form or structure should this ministry take?

\***PLEASE** NOTE THAT THIS IS INTENDED TO BE SEEN AS ONLY AN OUTLINE FOR TOPICS THAT CAN BE DISCUSSED DURING THE INTERVIEW.THE INTERVIEWEE HAS AT HIS *DISCRETION* THE OPTION OF RAISING ANY ISSUE AT ANY TIME OF THE INTERVIEW THAT HE FEELS IS **APPROPRIATE** AND **RELEVANT** IN RELATION TO THIS ISSUE AND THE WIDER SCOPE OF THIS PROJECT

Thank you for your time and assistance in regards to this endeavour

S.G Salesulu

Malua Theological College

## Appendix B

### CONSENT TO BE INTERVIEWED

S G Salesulu

Malua Theological College

Upolu

SAMOA

10 January 2002

My name is Siaosi Salesulu. I am a student at Malua Theological College and in my 4<sup>th</sup> year, I am working towards a Bachelor of Divinity (BD) in Ministry. My (BD) research paper is to demonstrate that a singles men ministry team (graduates of Malua Theological College) is needed in the pastoral ministry of the Congregational Christian Church in Samoa. I anticipate that we would require 30-45 minutes in total for this interview. Questions can be answered in both the Samoan and English languages'

Please remember that any of your comments you wish to keep confidential will not be individually identified. Complete confidentiality and anonymity is assured .If you so wish and time permitting you can receive a copy of my notes from the interview to check and add to, and a work in progress report of preliminary findings to comment on

You have been selected because of your knowledge and experience in relation to the subject of my research paper.

If you have any inquiries please phone me (0685 42262) or my supervisor, Rev Prof Otele Perelini (Principal of the College), Ministry Department, Malua Theological College.

Yours sincerely,

Siaosi Salesulu

BD Student



**FOR INTERVIEWEES (complete confidentiality assured)**

I \_\_\_\_\_ having read the above information consent to participate in the research project, conducted by Siaso Salesulu, by being interviewed on \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix C

#### *The institutional regulations that are used to guide the students' research design*

The institutional regulations that are used to guide the students' research design are one of the major instruments used by the higher educational institutions around the world to determine the necessary outcome of research activity. In this, way higher educational institutions (such as universities) predominantly provide few alternative ways for indigenous Polynesian students who are undertaking research.

In the past, Samoans have been at a disadvantage because literature although written about us (Samoans), appear collated and written in a form that "appeals only to a small, educated, elite...firmly confined to Universities".<sup>144</sup> Many of the theories and models used within the social sciences to analyse Polynesian societies have been loaded with western language and structures to describe our behaviour.

From an indigenous perspective, we can use some simple methods or styles for conducting the research. For example, the research design can be mixed in terms of formal and informal styles; the data collective activities can rely upon 'oral history'; and the using of statistical and graphical formats for research is not frequent. The implications of the above has assumed that the truth of the subject matter cannot solely be philosophically justified by any prescriptive pathway (research design) as required by the education institution nor by any specific paradigm. Instead, any way or appropriate method known to the indigenous student can identify the truth (reality), as long as the subject matter is unfolded. Professor Albert Wendt of Auckland University in New Zealand, a respected Samoan academic makes the comment on how Samoans have an insight into their own culture. Although it may not be objective it cannot be discounted as having academic merit. Wendt comments on how all-academic materials written about Samoans require sources from validated sources (e.g. journals, articles, and books). However, with such a paucity of material written by Samoans about Samoans, Wendt

<sup>144</sup> Wendt, A. Cited in Esera, I. "Lending learning to promote Pacific Islands student achievement". Paper presented at the National Symposium, Auckland .1996.p3

asks why should Samoans have to use literatures written from a western perspective to substantiate their claims?

*In making this contention, I am well aware that some quarters of the academic world will demand proof and corroborative evidence. I have none, other than the fact that I am Samoan.*<sup>145</sup>

Through my vocational experiences and academic training, I believe that the utilisation of 'indigenous design and methods for research in formal/higher education would help to promote and enhance indigenous education. This chapter describes the fusion of research methods used in the research design, that is the incremented stages of this investigation. Issues surrounding research into Samoan people both in Samoa and abroad.

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<sup>145</sup> Wendt, p3



## Appendix D

### Background to research on Pacific Nation's people

When one consider what has been written about Samoan people in the past (e.g. Margaret Mead, George Turner) it highlights the dangers of the author's/researcher's ignorance of the cultural practices that s/he is writing about. Tupuola is candid when she notes that researchers' theoretical and ideological frameworks may be culturally insensitive because their informants' experiences continue to be perceived within the researchers own worldview.

Qualitative research derives from the *Verstehen tradition* in the social sciences, which seeks to understand the meaning of social phenomena.<sup>146</sup> The qualitative model recognises both the historical and the subjective aspects of human experience. As Denzin explains "qualitative researchers attempt to understand behavior and institutions by getting to know the persons involved and their values, rituals, symbols, beliefs, and emotions".<sup>147</sup> It is this approach which contrasts with the positivist tradition, which seeks a scientific explanation of phenomena.

Qualitative research theory emphasises the socially constructed nature of reality. In practice, this means that in addressing a research issue, qualitative researchers investigate how social experience is constructed and conferred meaning. In contrast, quantitative studies emphasise the calculation and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes.

In stressing the socially constructed nature of reality, qualitative researchers recognise the interconnected relationship between the researchers and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. By contrast in the traditional quantitative approach, inquiry is often purported to take place within a value-free framework. During my research I employed a qualitative esitemological approach because I also hold the view that research entails an interactive process shape by the researchers' personal

<sup>146</sup> Denzin, N K and Lincoln, Y. (eds) *Handbook of qualitative research*. Sage: USA. p23

<sup>147</sup> Denzin, N K and Lincoln, Y. (eds) p23

history, biography, gender social class, race and ethnicity and those of the people in the setting.

Very few researchers have written about the bias that arises in process of interpreting data. The interpretation of data is a social process<sup>148</sup> as Ely writes, "*Researchers do not merely report social reality, they help to construct it*"<sup>149</sup>

The creation of the text of this dissertation like any other piece of academic work is not a neutral action. It consistency involves choices about audience, language, density of analysis, the positioning of theory in the text and epistemological issues. What is included and excluded? What is foregrounded? What is marginalised? Whose voices dominate? What constitutes a valid generalisation? These question concentrate attention not just on writing as a descriptive and analytic process but also on accompanying embedded processes of suppression and expansion. This will serve as a reminder for those contemplating research in the church ministry realm in the future.

<sup>148</sup> Blaunner. B. "Problems of Editing First Person Sociology". *Qualitative Sociology*. 1994. p64

<sup>149</sup> Ely, M. *Doing Qualitative research: Circles within circles*. Falmer Press: London, 1986, p6

## **Appendix E**

### *Love as Motive For Paul's teachings*

Love has no eyes except the holy law of God, no direction apart from God's commands. Paul spoke of the love of Christ constraining us. It moves us to duty. Love is the only true motive for all worship and duty, but by itself it does not define either. Therefore, we may not put love "in place of law." They belong together. Christian behaviour springs from love to God and our neighbour. If we loved them perfectly, our character and behaviour would be perfect because it would conform to God's will. Love is a motive for and expresses itself in obedient action.

Such action fulfils the law: "*Love does no harm to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilment of the law*" (Rom. 13:10). Motive and action cannot be more tightly joined than they are in this passage. If love does not constrain us to fulfil the moral law, it is not the love of which the Bible speaks. The apostle Paul made this very clear when he said that "*the love of Christ constrains us*" (2 Cor. 5:14). It is the love of God that puts the law of God into effect.



## Appendix F

### The state of religion during the time of Paul

In Paul's world, religion was an integral part of everyone's life. State-sponsored civic cults were one religious expression participated in by everybody. Historian Everett Ferguson notes that "the most deeply ingrained religious beliefs and practice in both Greece and Rome were associated with the traditional civic cult."<sup>150</sup> The state both funded and profited by these cults.

Each city had its patron deity. The city of Ephesus honoured Artemis, the goddess of nature and of childbirth. Deities such as Artemis were honoured with festivals, prayers, and sacrifices. Annual festivals included banquets, entertainment, sacrifices, processions, athletic contests, and the performance of mystery rites. Prayers included invocation, praise, and petition with the goal of receiving the favour of the goddess. Sacrifices were offered for praise, thanksgiving, or supplication.

Ephesus was also a major centre of magical activity, another part of the religious practice of the first century. In Acts 19 we read about practitioners of magic or sorcery forsaking their practices and burning their scrolls as they publicly declared their new faith.

Paul carried his message to a world with a multitude of religious beliefs, and the message he proclaimed showed its power over them. As we look at our culture with its increasingly pluralistic religious spectrum, we must remember that we, too, carry the same gospel with the same power.

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<sup>150</sup> Everett Ferguson Background of Early Christianity (2ed), Eerdmans:Grand Rapids, 1993

## Appendix G

### *The prevalent philosophy during the time of Paul*

When the Apostle Paul visited Athens, he took the message of Christ to the marketplace where a wide variety of people could be encountered. Among those he talked to were Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. We read about his encounter with them in Acts 17.

Stoicism and Epicureanism were philosophies that were developed to free people from the concerns of the present life.

Stoicism was thus deterministic. Things are the way they are and can't be changed. To find true happiness, they believed one should understand the course of nature through reason and simply accept things the way they are.

In contrast to the Stoics, Paul taught that God is personal and not a part of this universe. He also taught that there would be a judgement to come, not a giant conflagration leading to another cycle.

Epicureans focused on the individual's happiness, also, but they went in a completely different direction than the Stoics. They believed that the way to happiness was through maximising pleasure and minimising pain. Tranquillity was sought through a quiet, contemplative life lived among a community of friends.

Epicureans were materialists, also, but they weren't pantheists. They believed the universe was formed from atoms falling through space which occasionally bumped into each other accidentally, eventually forming the stars and planets and us. When we die, we simply become dissolved into atoms again. Epicureans believed in the gods, but thought they were like men, only of a higher order. The gods resided out in space somewhere, enjoying a life of quiet pleasure like that of the Epicureans.

Against the Epicureans, Paul taught that God is involved in the affairs of His creation and created us specifically to search for Him. Of course, Paul's doctrine of a future judgement did not fit with their thinking either.

## Appendix H

### *The Family unit philosophy of Paul's day*

We've given some attention to the religion and philosophy of Paul's day, but what about the social structures of the Greco-Roman world? More specifically, what was the family like in the first century?

By the first century AD, marriage was mostly by mutual consent. Historian Everett Ferguson<sup>151</sup> describes marriage this way: "Consent to live together constituted marriage in all societies, and the procreation of children was its explicit object. Marriages were registered in order to make the children legitimate." (2) Although marriages were mostly monogamous, adultery was common. Divorce required only oral or written notice.

Men had the dominant role in the family. They had absolute authority over their children and slaves. Wives remained under their fathers' authority. Men occupied their time with business interests and such social outlets as banquets. The fact that this was a type of patriarchal type of society and that men seem to dominate women was to be a challenge for the apostle to promote his view of marriage.

In the husband's absence the wife might conduct his business for him. However, managing the home was the wife's primary responsibility.

Children were not considered a part of the family until acknowledged by the father. They could be sold or exposed if not wanted. This treatment of children exemplified the moral decay that had decayed the moral fibre of the society that Paul was a member in.

Into this society the apostles brought new ideas about the value of the individual and about family relationships. Husbands were to be faithful to their own wives and to love them as their own bodies. Children were to be seen as much more than economic assets or liabilities. Masters were told to treat slaves with justice and fairness. People today who revile Christianity, as being "oppressive" probably have no idea how much it elevated people in the Hellenistic world. The values the Paul was advocating were not to meet with universal approval yet this would not be a deterrent to Paul who was fiercely determined.

<sup>151</sup> Everett Ferguson *Background of Early Christianity* (2ed). Eerdmans:Grand Rapids, 1993

## Social Morality

Everett Ferguson<sup>152</sup> notes that evidence from the Greco-Roman era indicates that many people lived quite virtuous lives. Inscriptions on gravestones, for example, include praises for husbands and wives for kindness and faithfulness.

In spite of all this, history reveals a morally debased culture in the first century. One example is sexual immorality. "The numerous words in the Greek language for sexual relations," says Ferguson, "suggest a preoccupation with this aspect of life." Adultery was common. Men often had courtesans for physical pleasure. Homosexuality between young men or between an older and a younger man was openly accepted. Temple prostitution was part of some religious cults. These acts alone and their acceptance in society fuelled Paul in his writings.

A low estimate of human worth was exhibited in the Hellenistic world. Child exposure as a way of getting rid of children. Unwanted babies--more often girls--were put on the garbage pile or left in some isolated area to die. They might be picked up to be used, to be sold as slaves, or to serve as prostitutes.

Into this world of immorality and brutality came the message of love and righteousness found in Jesus. As with Judaism before, Christianity put religion and morality together. It revealed God's standard of goodness and the sacrificial love of Christ, and it provided the power to attain that standard through the regenerating work of the Spirit based on Christ's work on the cross.

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<sup>152</sup> Everett Ferguson Background of Early Christianity (2ed), Eerdmans:Grand Rapids, 1993



## Appendix I

### Case study: The Franciscans

I have chosen to forward the Franciscans as an example of a celibate Catholic clergy. A study of church history since the eleventh century will depict a picture of the Roman Catholic Church as the fore-leader in terms of its enforced celibate ministry. The leader or pioneering group in this regard was the Franciscans.

One of the pivotal Saints of the Roman Catholic faith is St Francis (whose teachings inspired the order) whose profound and pronounced effect on the behavior and lifestyle of the clergy was evident. In the very first chapter of St. Francis' Rule (moral codebook) is the explanation and summary of what it means to be a Franciscan and to follow the Lord after the example of St. Francis.<sup>153</sup> It is important to notice the importance in the mind of St. Francis of the three evangelical counsels, those of obedience, poverty, and chastity. These three vows are the foundation of all religious life, and especially the Friars Minor, St. Francis and Franciscans.<sup>154</sup>

The Franciscans exemplified a consummate celibate ministry. The Franciscans believed without reservation that chastity is a virtue. Furthermore they were resolute in their stance that the clergy should be chaste in family and public life. A Franciscan's moral and ethical conduct was to be beyond reproach.

According to the Franciscans "without chastity, no one can get to heaven this".<sup>155</sup> Chastity for the laity means celibacy before and after marriage and respect for one's spouse in marriage. Chastity for the clergy means celibacy for life. The vow of chastity is something religious professed, and they sacrifice the freedom the laity have to marry and raise children.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>153</sup> Oxtoby, William *World religions Western traditions*. Oxford University Press :Oxford, 1996.p295

<sup>154</sup> Oxtoby, p295

<sup>155</sup> Oxtoby, p295

<sup>156</sup> Page, S *The Catholic Clergy*. Keith and Sutherland Publishing: Toronto, 1974.p22

During this period most religious men and women lived some form of the vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity. However, what distinguishes Franciscans from other religious orders is the manner and extent of the sacrifice offered by these sacred vows.

In his state of uniformed and militant obedience a Franciscan not only promises to obey his legitimate superiors in the Order in everything that is explicitly contained in the Rules and Norms of the community. The Franciscans also obliges himself to do whatever the superior might commands him so long as it is something good and licit. It is through this vow, the Franciscan religious obtains a childlike purity of heart which makes him pleasing to God and offers God the greatest of all sacrifices, that of his entire free will.<sup>157</sup>

In chastity a Franciscan not only renounces the goods of marriage, but also promises, to avoid all familiarity with women, as well as every interior and exterior act which is against virginal purity. Oxtoby observes that the Franciscan, while on earth, is expected to live an angelic life of purity that is the life of all the saints in Heaven.<sup>158</sup>

Although I admire the commitment, passion and zeal of the Franciscans it is not the type of ministry format that I would advocate for the CCCS church and a possible singles ministry to adopt. The passion and religious zeal is very noble yet it does little to inspire me to believe that it will serve the needs of the CCCS' singles population.

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<sup>157</sup> Page, p55

<sup>158</sup> Oxtoby, p295

## Appendix J

### Liberation Theology

The term Liberation is often confused with emancipation. People emancipate people. God liberates people. As we know from the testimonies of people in concentration camps under Hitler, some were liberated, though not emancipated<sup>159</sup>. Liberation is a result of intimacy with God, of a divine embrace, which gives meaning to life, even in the midst of suffering. Applied to sexuality, then, liberation theologians are not interested in who copulates with whom, but, rather, they would see sexual expression, not so much as freedom from restrictions, but as freedom for self expression.<sup>160</sup>

It is difficult to imagine that all these new attitudes to life, to the world, to human intimacy, to personalise, to liberation, will not have a profound effect on how we view celibacy and abstinence. Those who are open to read "the signs of the times" can see that we are experiencing a new Exodus and a new *renaissance* in human sexuality (people are starting to question their views on sexual matters). It is more than emancipation. It is liberation theology that is the champion of sexual equality, liberation theology goes beyond sexual emancipation to sexual liberation, thus making God the great liberator of the sexually disenfranchised. Would not those who are under the yoke of mandatory celibacy be numbered among the sexually disenfranchised? I believe that even if there was their own choice they would have found the reality of the matter much different to what they first envisaged. The Roman Catholic Church through its insidious policy of enforced celibacy for some of its clergy has meant that there are those left disillusioned and frustrated at the rigidity found in this policy of the Church.

It is easy to understand Rome's overt discomfort with the whole subject realm of liberation theology. While Rome still lumbers along (with the docile Samoa Roman Catholic Church in tow) with moral absolutes and dogmas that have never been reformulated so as to be relevant to the contemporary world, the liberation theologians have little time for "the study" of theology. They "do theology". How they "do it" is determined by the historical situation. Consequently, when it comes to sexuality, for

<sup>159</sup> O'Connor, Elizabeth *The New Community*, Harper & Row, 1976. p94

<sup>160</sup> O'Connor, p94

instance, their interest is not so much in the "material" aspects of sexuality -- whether condom use is moral or immoral -- but in grander issues like the liberation of women from a position of sexual objectification.<sup>161</sup> Also, in the area of sexuality, they reject the tradition that puts agape in opposition to Eros and libido<sup>162</sup>. In essence one must approach this subject in an objective vein especially when one considers the delicate nature of a subject like celibacy.

Liberation theologians with just cause like to dwell on the story of the Exodus for this is the ultimate tale a story of liberation affected by God, therefore, redemptive. The Exodus event has captured the theological imaginations of theologians. In Malua Theological College this is reflected in the subject of Liberation Theology being taught as a third year paper-to invigorate interest in the subject and stimulate the minds of aspiring liberation theologians. As Elizabeth O'Connor writes: "The old us fights to maintain things as they are, clinging to that which is known and secure and promises protection"<sup>163</sup> We cannot overcome our dependencies and fear, and acquire a whole new liberating attitude, and at the same time keep everything as it is But camp will have to be broken again for we are the People of the Exodus. The long trek of bondage is not over" The journey cannot reach its designated climax until the outstanding issue of celibacy in the clergy has reached a satisfactory conclusion.

<sup>161</sup> Boff, Leonard Liberating Grace, Orbis Books : 1976 p77

<sup>162</sup> Full treatment refer to Taylor, G. Rattray, Sex in History, Harper Torchbooks: 1970 p41

<sup>163</sup> O'Connor, Elizabeth The New Community, Harper & Row: 1976 p18



## Appendix K

### The reply of the Priest

On the contrary, he writes: "I am well aware of the true state of our clergy. I know of the self-sacrifice and virtues within its ranks." His line of argument is that the priest needs to be reconciled with the interests, the affections, and the duties of human nature; which seems to mean that he ought to be made less spiritual and more earthly. "It is only", he says, "by tearing himself away from the traditions of a blind asceticism, and of a theocracy still more political than religious, that the priest will become once more a man and a citizen. He will find himself at the same time more truly a priest."

## Appendix L

### Models of singles ministry

Please note that the following models or programmes are to be administered by singles who volunteer to part of the programme. No one will be forced to be a part of the programme either as an administrator or participant. The programmes are serious in its aims, objectives and content and are to be treated as such. These programmes are not to be viewed as a place or an excuse whereby some single people converge to look for prospective partners. These activities are to be administered by single people for the benefit of singles and for the wider church community in educating them about singleness.

At this stage there are no provisions made in the programme format whether groups will be divided into gender groups. I believe that each group at their respective parish can best assess their own needs and what is best for them. The aim of these models is to bring single people together to discuss issues that affect them in the church and in their everyday life. If the group agrees then these ideas can at a later time include sharing with the married fraternity of the church group. People may query how these models differ from normal programmes presently on offer by church group. The simple answer is that these programmes are initiated and administered by single people with the specific and unique needs of the singles population at the forefront of their programme design.

I readily acknowledge that these models can also be used in terms of implementing youth programmes if the need arose. Another issue, which needs to be addressed, is at what age does one classify himself/herself as a single person. I believe that all persons over the age of 18 (legal age for marriage in Samoa) are eligible to partake in the programme. If the legal age of the country or state differs then provisions can be made accordingly.

**Model 1: The Sunday school Pivot.** This model is a basic model and can be seen as starting point for a singles ministry to develop at a later stage. As we can see it only runs for two days per week but this can be developed at a later date.

- Core: A Singles Sunday school class: A class conducted by a single minister (facilitator role) or someone delegated by the group if there is no single minister in the group. I do not favor a lecture style approach but an open forum type of discussion.
- Fellowship meal or activity afterward. I think that this would be an opportune time to relax in an informal setting in comfortable surrounding at a venue agreed on by the group. People in the group can talk about what they want from the programme and what they can contribute to this programme.
- Occasional outside activities. To complement the academic activities and the eating there need to be some activities that provide for the recreational and leisure needs of the group.

### **Model 2: The Three-Generation Breakout**

- Core: A combined session for worship. The single people would conduct this service yet they would invite all persons in the community to join them in worship.
- Age-level electives: Singles have incongruous needs in relation to the generation from which they associate with. I have no qualms with all people sharing and interacting together at some stage as one group yet I feel that there are times when people feel more comfortable sharing with persons of their own generation.
- Young Adult Bible study
- Middle age/mature class
- Seniors study
- Combined Bible class and fellowship time. This could be a propitious time for the respective groups to report back on certain issues that they want to share with the wider group. A person who is not in any of the groups as listed above may still participate.

### **Model 3: The Topical Breakout**

- Core: A combined Sunday school class. I think a united Bible study that involves people of all ages and of both sexes will benefit the group. This will raise the issue of who will be in charge of this group and whether a single minister is the ideal person to facilitate this discussion. The group will discuss this and a decision finalised at a time suitable for them.
- Off-night worship event with breakout groups: A night of education where classes would take the form of group discussions rather than lecturers on relevant topics. This would not be an exercise in rousing anti marriage sentiments but rather inciting discussion on topics that the group believe are pertinent and relevant to the single people in the church and in the wider community. Some possible topics to start the group.
  - Divorce Recovery
  - Leadership Training
  - Children's Ministry
- Monthly fellowships .The purpose of this exercise is to keep all persons aware of the issues that are affecting the group and to reassess the general focus of the group. This will be an exercise in self-analysis, self-awareness and self-evaluation.

### **Model 4: Worship in Latest style or format**

- Core: midweek worship event in modern style:

Post-modern orientation. This would suit the needs of those who favour a more modern approach to worship in a livelier manner.

Music/teaching (highly experiential). The formulation of a singles choir or musical group could be seen as a positive step and very beneficial for all parties concerned. The medium of music can be a useful tool in sharing ideal on the Gospel.



Cool off-night activities like a Christian Comedy Club. Married couples are to be included and will be invited to take full part in the activities as a sign of benevolence between the married people and the singles.

Lots of direct mail promotion. This would be ineffective in Samoa but I think there needs to be a concerted media campaign to promote interest in the activities as organised by the group. The disseminating and awareness of the group should be advanced in the media in terms of the group's message, motive and objectives.

- Small groups for discipleship. These groups will help foster trust and allow for deeper levels of sharing. If the need arose for individual counseling on a one on one basis then that would not be avoided and discouraged.

#### **Model 5: The Inter-District concept**

- Core: A multiple-church coalition. Similar to the CCCS Lotu Aofa'i concept whereby all the singles from the sub districts or from the district would be invited to fellowship together. I realise that this would be a problem in organising with travel and accommodation not easy yet these matters are not insurmountable.

Monthly seeker-sensitive outreach dinner at a neutral site. An outreach type of programme where people can relax over a good meal, talk or fraternise with those singles who are not part of the church or those who are currently active. The choice of the neutral venue would allow those who are not part of the group not to feel intimidated and that are being coerced into joining the group.

- Quarterly fellowship activities
- Semi-annual missions trips and outreaches
- Joint newsletter and promotion

#### **Model 6: Mainstreaming**

- Core: "we're not married...so what?" The attitude I would like to enforce here is that being single is not to be seen and treated as something that is negative. I am in no way promoting a confrontational approach to this subject. It is not my intention to incite

singles to engage in verbal jousting with their married colleagues on this contentious subject.

- Ministry to singles is to prepare them for leadership. I believe that there must be some training provisions made for the development of singles and their maturing as leaders of the group and in the church. One thing that is fundamentally important is that there are qualified leaders who are experienced and qualified to lead the group when the need arises
- Singles are dispersed into ministry positions in the local community as a field work type of exercise. A practical exercise that allows the singles to partake in practical exercises rather than just being confined to the classroom
- Singles and couples combined in all activities. An opportunity for the whole church as a family to work together as a group with no divisions and barriers in an activity that has a stated purpose aim so people are not just there to waste time.

## **Appendix M**

### *Models of treating singles*

This model assumes that singles are misfits, refugees from couples culture who have contracted the disease of being unmarried. The core emotion is not love, but pity for these people who are unable to find a partner. The church's responsibility was to quarantine these poor creatures from the mainstream population so no one else was infected. In America this is usually done by way of a small Sunday school class at the far end of the hall, with an occasional potluck dinner tacked on. Fortunately for us in Samoa single people generally are not treated in such a vein. I believe they as a group are not treated at all as they are just dismissed as being temporally handicapped by their status. I think the church did not consider it a meritorious problem or a pertinent issue that warranted investigation

The 1980's failed further to ameliorate the situation for single people with the advent of the hospital model of the 1980s. Singles were seen largely as trauma victims in need of healing. Divorce and desertion were thought to be almost universal experiences. This ministry made use of all the tools of the leper colony, but added more fellowship time and support groups. Many times the core emotion was an alloy of compassion and condescension. I still believe some elements of this still exist today as some people see single people, as suffering from an illness that is curable. I as a single I frown upon the pity and the ill wanted patronage that people tend to give me and my single brethren because the simple fact is, singleness is not a sickness.

While many well-meaning people have done a fine job of touching the single population using elements of both models, neither adds up to the missionary enterprise that single people needs today. Both were based on a provider theory of church ministry where leadership delivers services to an audience that cannot help itself. This thinking is both unbiblical and impractical. It robs singles of their potential in the kingdom of God by making them a permanent underclass in the church

## Appendix N

### Interview with Rev Masalosalo Sopoaga

Rev Masalosalo Sopoaga<sup>164</sup> related to me during our interview that he is convinced that there is indeed a place for single ordained ministers in the pastoral ministry of the CCCS. Rev Sopoaga stated that in theory single pastors could work in tandem with the minister and his wife within the village setting. This partnership could of course create some jealousy between the two as they turn the whole thing into a competition. This partnership could entail a conflict of approaches and methodologies in the village and church scene thus negating any positives of this union.

Rev Sopoaga when asked about the issue of payment for these single pastors was adamant and forthcoming that a third of the goodwill offering or "alofa" should be given to the single pastor. I also asked about the issue of accommodation to which Rev Sopoaga noted that there are many lavish houses that are owned by CCCS congregations and surely one room could be spared for the single minister. According to Sopoaga Samoans are accustomed to communal living so this should not present a problem for all parties concerned. My sister and her husband are currently the pastors of a parish in Samoa and she is firmly against the idea of her family living together with the single pastor. She believes that this will stifle their own family's need for quality time and their need for privacy.

The main strength of the present CCCS model of ministry is partnership whereby the pastor and his wife work in unison complementing each others given roles duties and roles in light of the church context. The pastor's wife is expected to head the women's fellowship group .As a woman she is able to relate much better to the needs of the

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<sup>164</sup> Interview with Rev Elder Masalosalo Sopoaga. Former principal of Malua Theological College. Rev Sopoaga was a parish minister for the Solosolo CCCS congregation. Currently Rev Sopoaga is the parish minister for the Pagopago CCCAS. Rev. Sopoaga is currently the chairman of the ministry committee of the CCCAS. Interview took place at the Kanana Fou Seminary offices. Transcript of the interview kept with the interviewer.



women in the church. This highlights one of the major disadvantages of having a single pastor solely caring for a congregation as some people generally may feel that this person cannot relate to their needs and their particular problems. Moreover I believe that there may some women in the group who may see the single pastor as someone who has misogynistic tendencies as he has failed to find a wife after a relatively long period. Yet I embrace the belief that if the Women's Fellowship is patronised by mature women filled the Holy spirit then they should need someone like the Pastors wife to organise them in to a functional and cohesive group. without the need for someone to act as a type of figurehead

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## Interviews

\*Interviews with respective priests at their residence between the 19th May and the 28th May 2002. All personal details kept confidential to ensure anonymity as requested by those who were interviewed

\*Interview with Rev Elder Masalosalo Sopoaga.

Rev Sopoaga is a former principal of Malua Theological College. Rev Sopoaga is a former parish minister for the Solosolo CCCS Parish. Currently Rev Sopoaga is the parish minister for the Pagopago CCCAS parish. Interview took place at the Kanana Fou Seminary offices. Transcript of the interview kept with the interviewer.

\*Interviews took place at the respective homes of the participants during the 24<sup>th</sup> –31<sup>st</sup> July 2002. Copies of the questionnaire and the consent form to be interviewed can found in the appendices.

\*Interview with Rev Eider Apelu Lelevaga at the CCCS manse in Tuana'i. The interviewer holds transcript of the interview

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