

## The Intimate Relations of Single Mission Workers

### Things single mission workers can do to embrace their singleness

- Maintain a healthy spiritual life. It's harder to give in to sexual temptation or feelings of loneliness or self-pity if you're walking closely with God.
- Learn Bible verses which promote self-esteem. Write them on post-it notes and leave them in handy places. Reflect on what it means for you to be a 'eunuch' for God (Matthew 19:12), even a reluctant one. Consider the impact Daniel had for God, though he may well have been a eunuch.
- Read scripture and develop a positive theology of singleness. Did you know that Christianity is the only major world religion with a high estimation of singleness (in theory at least!). Barry Danylak's book *Redeeming Singleness* is very helpful on this.
- Be accountable. Find a friend who you can confess to and pray with. Do this by email or skype if necessary, but it's better to do it face-to-face. Install an internet accountability monitor on your computer.
- If you feel you need a sexual safety valve like masturbation, ask yourself whether you control it, or it controls you.
- Develop a healthy activity such as a sport or hobby to help you feel a sense of achievement.
- Be an active part of community. Even if you're an introvert, you need friends. Good friendships help us develop intimacy, which creates a positive sense of connectedness and belonging.
- Understand your need for physical contact and find a way to be hugged in a safe context.
- Get to know yourself. At what times of the year, month or day are you most vulnerable? What causes your vulnerability or makes it worse? What gives you strength?
- Be careful what movies you watch or music you listen to. They can create unhelpful desires which you find difficult to deal with.
- Don't use success at work as an avoidance technique. Many people work long hours because they don't want to go home, or strive hard to achieve success so they don't feel so empty.
- Get on with serving God in your singleness. It's what you were made for! Don't put your ministry on hold till you find a partner.
- Develop positive, healthy, committed relationships with families. Invest in their children.
- Avoid locations which could be a source of temptation, like red-light districts, singles bars or gay quarters.
- Don't mistake strong, supportive same-sex friendships for romance.
- Be physically active. A tired body will be more likely to want to sleep than find sexual fulfilment.
- Find resources. Member Care Media have some excellent podcasts about healthy sexuality ([www.membercaremedia.com](http://www.membercaremedia.com), click on *Emotional Health* and then *Addictions and Dependencies*). *Every Single Man's Battle* by Fred Stoeker and Stephen Arterburn is a good book for men to read.