



# AFFIRMATIONS AND DENIALS ON SINGLENES

## REGARDING CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND STATUS

Whereas God created humans as male and female in his image and desired for human prosperity to occur as reflective of his glory, we believe that human flourishing can occur as single and married people uniquely reflect God in their lives (Gen. 1-2; Matt. 19:10-12; Eph. 5:31-32; 1 Cor. 7:7; 32-34).

- We affirm that marriage and singleness should both be viewed as gifts from God (1 Cor. 7:7; 27).
- We affirm that singles face unique fears and challenges in life and the Church.
- We affirm that singleness provides opportunities for life and ministry that marriage does not (1 Cor. 7:32).

- We deny that being single is easy and without unique challenges.
- We deny that marriage automatically solves problems singles face.
- We deny that singleness requires a special calling (empowerment from God).

## REGARDING SEXUALITY, RELATIONSHIPS, AND INTIMACY

Whereas God created humans to be relational beings (as he is relational), we believe that the primary relationship of humanity is with our Creator and Redeemer. We must also have horizontal relationships of great intimacy in the proper context with other image bearers such as spouses, family, friends, church members, and others (1 Sam. 25:42; 1 John 5:15; Eph. 5:31).

- We affirm that friendship is a path to deep intimacy (1 Sam. 25:42).
- We affirm that the Church is the eternal family of God for every true Christian (Eph. 3:21).
- We affirm that married people need friendship beyond their spouse (1 John 4:21).
- We affirm that sex is a small and temporal glimpse of intimacy between Christ and the Church (Eph. 5:31).
- We affirm that singleness can be a powerful demonstration of the sufficiency of Christ (Phil. 4:11-13).

- We deny that singleness excludes a person from familial relationships.
- We deny that marriage and sex are the only means for human intimacy.
- We deny that singles cannot experience relational intimacy.
- We deny that sexual expression is the purpose or goal of marriage.
- We deny that singleness and celibacy are a waste of sexuality.

## REGARDING MINISTRY

Whereas God's church is made up of redeemed humans of diverse giftings, backgrounds, and life situations, we believe that the assembly should reflect these realities in leadership and all ministries as God provides the people (1 Cor. 7:35; 1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4:1-16).

- We affirm that singles should be integrated fully into the life of the Church (1 Cor. 7:32).
- We affirm that singles can be used by God in Church leadership roles (1 Cor. 7:8).
- We deny that singles should be relegated to specific ministries in the Church.
- We deny that a person must be married in order to be a pastor, elder, or leader in the Church.



## REGARDING IDENTITY

Whereas God is the Lord who has the final word on our purpose and value in our lives, we believe that a person's fulfillment, purpose, identity, and meaning in life come primarily from their relationship with the God who created them and desires to redeem them (Gen. 1:26; Phil. 2:1-4; Phil. 3:1-11; 4:11).

| We affirm that the gospel is the only true answer for human hope and fulfillment (Phil. 1:21).

| We affirm that the presence of Christ is the only true source of contentment for every Christian (Phil. 4:11-13).

| We deny that marriage makes a person more significant or valuable to the body of Christ.

| We deny that marriage is a sign of maturity or worth.

## CONCLUSIONS & GUIDELINES FOR CHURCH PRACTICE

1. We are committed to encouraging singles to be in leadership at all levels at College Park Church. This includes considering singles for eldership.
2. We will encourage the integration of singles into the church body as a whole: including our main areas of ministry, community, and service, such as Small Groups and serving teams. Since we believe that the church body is a spiritual family, we will encourage singles and marrieds to consistently integrate their lives in both organized and informal ways. However, we are also open to creating opportunities for singles to engage in ministry, community, or service with other singles at our church.
3. We will actively affirm singleness as a valuable life status in God's sight, and we will continue to acknowledge that there are certain struggles and opportunities that may be felt by singles that are different than those felt by married men and women. We will seek to encourage singles in their status through preaching, teaching, resources, and conversations.
4. We will protect an understanding of sexuality among our people that all singles are called to joyful celibacy. While we will seek to shepherd our brothers and sisters through the challenges of celibacy, we will actively affirm celibacy as a satisfying life expression that allows for healthy, deep intimacy, especially with other brothers and sisters in the Lord.