



Jesus, Single Like Me: He Understood Loss
by Kris Swiatocho

Jesus lived his life as a single adult till his death. Because he lived his life as a single adult, he understands every aspect of what you and I are experiencing today. This series examines the "singleness" of Christ in relation to our singleness with the hope you will be encouraged to walk this journey you have been given. A journey that not only leads to the cross for our salvation but to his resurrection for our future.

"We wish you a Merry Christmas..we wish you a Merry Christmas. ..." The radio was cranked loud as I listened to Christmas music on my way home for Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving would be different this year. I drove up the driveway and quickly got out of my car, almost racing to get in the door. My younger brother was there with his three kids. One after another came up to me and gave me a big hug, and then I gave them a smooch. "Yuck," said my nephew. He's four and believes that kisses are gross. His entire focus is Woody and Buzz from Toy Story. "To infinity and beyond," he yelled racing past me.

I hugged my mom as she started to explain what food was ready to eat. I dropped off my suitcase in the spare room, throwing my coat on the bed. I then walked into the living room, expecting to see my dad in his recliner. He loves his recliner. Snacks on one side, Diet Coke on the other and his cane within reach. He's not there. Hmmm, maybe he's in the bed. The last couple of years his health has gotten so bad that he has been forced to stay in the bed. I couldn't wait for his hugs and kisses. I can still smell his English Leather cologne mixed with baby powder (he believed in staying dry).

I peeped into his room, but he was not there. Maybe he was in the restroom. Then it hit me. It's all so surreal. He's not there, Kris. He's never going to be there again. All I could do was hang my head and start to cry. Although it had been a year since my dad's death, for some weird reason I still expected him to be there. I just couldn't believe he was gone. The pain is worse today than the actual day he died. I miss him so much.

My dad was an amazing man—not just because I say so, but because he was. You see, my dad (Henry) was not my biological father. He was my step-dad. My biological father was not the best person in the world. Between his abuse and adultery, my mom endured many years of pain—not to mention me and my younger brothers. My mom finally got the courage to leave my father. It was a tough time in our lives, from trying to understand what was happening to trying to make ends meet. While working at the local hospital in medical records, my mom met Henry. Henry was also in the middle of divorce. Two very lonely and lost souls, destined to meet. After a period of friendship, they started to date and quickly knew each other was the "one." Both fearful of making some of the same mistakes in their first marriages, they both made a commitment that God would be the leader in this marriage.

Henry married my mom and proceeded to raise four, sad, hurting, and angry children—children who felt abandoned by their biological father. Children who felt confused. Children who were overly dependent on their mother. Henry, somehow raised us with love, compassion and acceptance. He never abandoned us. He never abused us. He loved us as his own with a love that could have only come from the Lord.

Henry, my dad, reminded me of another man who loved beyond his ability. His name was Joseph—Jesus' step-dad. I don't think that anyone really acknowledges the role that Joseph had in Jesus' life. God chose Joseph to be Jesus' earthly father—a father who would have to raise him just like his other kids. A father who would love him as he loved his other kids. A father that the world only knew was his biological father until Jesus' ministry became public.

So what kind of man was Joseph to have been chosen by God? A very special man of God, I would have to say. We know that Joseph was a carpenter and that Jesus became one as well. How many hours they must have spent together while Joseph taught Jesus his craft. Can you see Joseph, putting his arm around him, helping him, caring for him, all the while knowing he was God's child and not really his? But no one knew any difference of Joseph's love for Jesus over the other children. I am sure Jesus loved Joseph even though, like me, he knew he wasn't really his biological father. As time went



on and Jesus began his public ministry, we do not hear about Joseph anymore. We can assume from Scripture that Mary was now a widow. At the cross as Christ was dying, he asked his friend John to take care of his mother indicating that Joseph had died. Jesus was making provision for his mother in his last breaths. Jesus knew his loss, his death to his mother, would be difficult. He knew this because they both had experienced the loss of Joseph and others.

Jesus Understood All Kinds of Loss:

- Jesus suffered the pain of losing his friend Lazarus whom he loved. Even though Jesus had the knowledge of knowing he would raise him from the dead, he still felt the pain not only of his loss but of those around him. Jesus knows our pain of losing friends. Friends from our childhood to adulthood. Friends who we may think have died too young or for no reason. Friends and family who sometimes just leave. Please know you are not alone in your loss, your pain, your grief.

When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" (John 11:32-36).

- Jesus suffered the lost souls when people would hear the message and not receive it. As Jesus traveled from town to town, he would share the Gospel. Some would receive it while others rejected it. Jesus understands the loss we feel when we witness to our family and friends only to be rejected. We work and pray so hard to see little results. However, we must focus on the ones who do receive the message and want salvation. We must leave the rest to God for he tells us when people reject the message, they are not rejecting us but instead him.

Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 4:8).

- Jesus suffered the loss of his own disciples not listening or following through. How many of us as teachers and/or leaders in the church spend hours guiding others only to see little results? Jesus lead his disciples for three years only to have them still not totally understand what he was teaching them. If Jesus, the son of God who was perfect, had trouble getting through to folks, then surely we are going to have trouble as well. It is because Jesus had these struggles that we are encouraged to keep going and not give up.

Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter (Matthew 26:40).

- Jesus suffered the loss of having a friend betray him. How cruel is life when those you trust betray you? Jesus was betrayed by Judas Iscariot, a disciple he chose. There are many in our lives from ex-spouses and ex-boyfriends/girlfriends to friends, neighbors and family members who have broken our trust. Jesus understands the pain from those who lie to us. The ones who make promises they will never hurt you. But even through this huge loss, God can prevail and new life can come forth. Jesus died on the cross due to Judas' actions but that death lead to our lives.

Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him (Matthew 26:49).

- Jesus suffered the loss of being abandoned. At the cross, no one showed up except John, his mother Mary, Mary Magdalene and some other women. After all this time of teaching, eating, praying, etc. with these men, where were they now? How many of you have come alongside others to only see them quit? All the hours you spend encouraging them, listening to their problems, giving them money and support only to have them abandon you when you need them most. Maybe you were abandoned by a parent or an ex-spouse, or friend. Jesus understands what you are going through. But even through



this abandonment, we have a choice on how we live the next step of our life. We can allow the pain to destroy us or make us stronger.

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home (John 19:25-27).

•Jesus suffered the loss of a future without a wife or children. As a single, Jesus' journey would not include a spouse or family of his own. And because he was fully human and fully our Savior, I know he feels what so many other singles feel. I know he understands our pain of a future without the hope of getting married or having children. But Christ's purpose was far greater than being married or having children. Sometimes the Lord allows the loss of a future spouse and/or children because he has a different path for us. A path that allows us more focus on him wholly. A path that allows us to travel, spend money and our time for the Lord's purposes without the distractions of other responsibilities. What may appear as loss may also be gain. It depends on your perspective. Are you still waiting for that right person? Maybe he's already here waiting for you to serve him with your entire heart.

The Jews then responded to him, "What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" But the temple he had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken (John 2:18-22).

•Are there things you want to finish, people you want to share the gospel with, places you want to see, or perhaps you don't know for sure if you died right now you would go to heaven but instead hell? Click [here](#) to learn how you can accept Christ and receive salvation. If you know you are saved, then be encouraged to know that Christ's loss, as well as the losses we suffer, are for his Kingdom.

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them (John 3:36).

So another Thanksgiving came and went. As we sat around the table one more time, marveling at my mom's cooking and how we ate too much, we shared what we missed most about our dad. A man who loved life, a man who lived Christ, and a man who brought Christ into our home. A man who raised four little kids who were broken and one by one with the Lord's help started the healing process. Thank you, Lord, for step-parents who sometimes turn out to be the best parents. Thank you, Lord, that through understanding loss you created a bridge to reach us so that one day we will spend eternity with you in heaven where there is no loss.

Questions for Discussion or Personal Exploration:

1. What are some of the losses you have suffered in your life?
2. How have you been able to work through these losses?
3. What particular point of loss do you most identify with and why?
4. How can you help others going through loss?

Application:

Start today to pray and ask him to reveal his truth to you. What is God telling you about yourself in regards to loss? Are there still some areas of your life you have not given to God? What is your next step that God is asking of you?



Kris Swiatocho is the President and Director of TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries and FromHisHands.com Ministries. Kris has served in ministry in various capacities for the last 20 years. An accomplished trainer and mentor, Kris has a heart to reach and grow leaders so they will in turn reach and grow others. She is currently working on her third Bible study, From the Manger to the Cross: The Men in Jesus' Life. Her second Bible study, From the Manger to the Cross: The Women in Jesus' Life, was published last fall and is available on her websites. Her first book, Singles and Relationships: A 31-Day Experiment, was co-authored with Dick Purnell of Single Life Resources.

TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries helps churches, pastors and single adult leaders evaluate, develop and support their single adult ministries through high-energy speaking engagements, results-oriented consulting and training and leadership development conferences and seminars. Click here to request a FREE "How to Start a Single Adult Ministry" guide.

FromHisHands.com Ministries is Kris's speaking ministry. If you've ever heard her speak, you know that Kris is the kind of speaker who keeps the crowd captivated, shares great information and motivates people to make a difference in the lives of those around them! She speaks to all church audiences on everything from "first impression" ministry to women's topics to singles and young adults. She can speak on a Sunday morning, at a woman's retreat or for a single adults conference. Bring Kris to your church today!

Singles and Relationships by Kris Swiatocho and Dick Purnell

Many singles are Christians who wonder if God will ever bring a mate their way or if they should just stop focusing on a future with a marriage partner and live the single life to the fullest. Kris Swiatocho and Dick Purnell offer solid biblical answers for singles in this newest title in Dick's popular 31-Day Experiment Bible study.

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