



HELPING THE SINGLE PARENT GET UNSTUCK

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By Linda Ranson Jacobs

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Many divorcing single parents seem to get stuck in dealing with finances, in relationships, in the past, in helping their children and in many other ways.

Have you ever thought about how to get those single parents unstuck? I just had a long conversation with a single mom who feels like she is stuck and can't get unstuck. She has reached out to her church where she is a member. She has reached out to the church where she attended [DivorceCare](#).

One of the Christian women said to her recently,

"I don't understand why your financial situation hasn't changed? What's wrong with you?"

YIKES! This loving woman is married and has never had to make it on her own. My comment was how would this woman ever understand walking in the shoes of a single mom? She can't nor will she ever until she experiences something similar.

I've heard similar comments from other single parents. People have said,

1. Why aren't you out there dating and trying to find a father or mother for your kids?
2. You are such a nice young man, how come you can't find another wife?
3. You seem to be tired a lot. Maybe you should go to bed earlier at night.
4. I can't believe you aren't going to your son's soccer games.

The problem with many of the above statements is the lack of empathy in understanding the single parent's dilemma of parenting alone. Let's address each of these, and hopefully it will help you understand the life of a single parent.

1. Many single parents simply don't have time or energy to try and get out there and date. Other single parents are concentrating on raising their children. A spiritually and emotionally healthy single parent knows they can never replace the child's other parent. Perhaps someday they will find someone to marry and start a new life with but it will be for them, not the child.
2. Statement number two makes a single parent feel like there is something wrong with them. It might be they don't want another wife at this moment in time. Respect the single parent and encourage them in their singleness. They might be enjoying their singleness.
3. Many single parents would give their right arm to get a good night's rest.
4. This single parent might have to work on the nights of the soccer game or perhaps the mom and her new boyfriend are always at the game and they just can't stand to see them together.



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Perhaps the issue isn't getting the single parent unstuck but in understanding the single parent's life. If the single parent is having financial problems then the solution might be to host classes in budgeting and financing. The solution isn't giving the parent more things or giving them funds, but helping them obtain a better position. Occasionally a single parent might need assistance with rent or food temporarily until they get on their feet - or they may need assistance with emergency situations.

For the single parent that is exhausted maybe members of the church could help out by taking the children for a weekend. Or, if the single parent can't attend the soccer games or the school concerts, church family could stand in the gap.

For single parents who really are stuck in the past, then seminars or a support group such as DivorceCare is helpful. Bible study classes or group support groups such as [Single & Parenting](#) that teach them how to parent alone will also be helpful.

If this post has helped you better understand the single parent life, share your thoughts with us.

Linda Ranson Jacobs is one of the forefront leaders in the area of children and divorce. She developed and created the DivorceCare for Kids programs. DC4K is an international program for churches to use to help children of divorced parents find healing within the arms of a loving church family. As a speaker, author, trainer, program developer and child care center owner, Linda has assisted countless families by modeling and acting on the healing love she has found in Jesus Christ. Linda offers support, encouragement and suggestions to help those working with the child of divorce. She serves as DC4K Ambassador (<http://www.dc4k.org>) and can be reached via email at ljacobs@dc4k.org. You can find additional articles from Linda on her blog at <http://blog.dc4k.org/>.

Free articles and devotions for single parent families in your church can be found at Linda's website Healthy Loving Partnerships for Our Kids (<http://www.hlp4.com>).