

Why Single Moms Don't Go To Church - The Life of a Single Mom



It is estimated that 67% of single parents in the United States do not actively attend church anywhere. Why don't they? In talking with single parents from around the country, conducting independent studies, and doing research for our ministry, here is what we found:

- **Many single parents fear they will be judged.** Whether unplanned pregnancy or divorce led them to become single parents (or some other reason), there is a fear that they will not be accepted by the congregation.
- **Some single moms carry shame from past mistakes that may have resulted in their current situation.** They fear they have somehow failed their children and forever scarred them. They cannot forgive themselves.
- **They do not feel that they belong.** The typical family that we all grew up watching on television consisted of Dad, Mom, white picket fence, and 3 happy children, right? Many churches are made up of similar families. Therefore, single parents do not feel there is a place for them. They struggle to find a place where they fit in.
- **There is no Sunday School Class, Connect Group, Cell Group, (or whatever else your church may call its small group connection) for single moms.** As is the case with all of us, we want to be with people who understand our journey. Support groups provide that environment.
- **Unplanned pregnancy, oftentimes, is categorized by the church as a more significant sin that perhaps lying, cheating, stealing, or any of the other sins that God detests.** This, in turn, leads the church to believe any type of support for the single mother may in some way be promoting a "loose sexual lifestyle."

We know that single parents can arrive at their journey in a variety of ways, just as diverse as the single parents themselves, and we know there are some amazing single parents out there thriving in their local churches. We also know that we dare not paint every church with the same brush, as there are some amazing churches out there doing amazing things for single parents.

We thank God that many of the churches around the country that have recognized the need to reach out to single parents in their communities. Many have understood the importance of the church being “inclusive” not exclusive. Many have seen that Jesus did not come to save just the finely-dressed folks that are perceptionally sin-free (however disillusioned this perception may be), but rather came so that all may have life and have it abundantly.

If you are a single parent in need of encouragement, or if you want more information on ministering to single parents in your church or community, as well as how to move past just a one-time event in your church for single parents, visit <http://www.thelifeofasinglemom.com>.

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