

Getting Serious About Getting Married

By Debbie Maken

Reviewed by Nancy Wilson

Credenda/Agenda Vol. 18. Nbr. 2

I'm extremely glad that Canon Press is carrying Debbie Maken's book *Getting Serious About Getting Married* (Crossway). I think you all (whoever you are) should buy it, read it, and give it to your friends. It really is a book for everyone, not just for those most likely to read it — unmarried women.

The book's subtitle, "Rethinking the Gift of Singleness," is what the book is all about. Maken does an analysis of the modern church's view on singleness, shows where the church has gone astray from embracing the biblical mandate for marriage, and calls us to repent of our concession to the world's system of singleness.

Maken's central point is that too many churches do not teach and prepare young people to get married, do not train the young men to see their duty to take a wife, and do not guide the women who are in a hopelessly stranded position of waiting for a husband. She thoroughly dismantles the view that singleness and marriage are both "gifts" that God gives to His children, and she argues that just calling the unmarried state "God's will" does not make it so.

Why do I say everyone should read it? Unmarried men should read this because she attacks the world's endorsement of prolonged adolescence for men, leaving women to wait until past their prime childbearing years to marry. Pastors should read this because they need to teach the men that "it is not good" for them to be alone; each man needs a wife. Parents should read this too: they need to have a biblical perspective on their duty to promote marriage and to assist their children in the whole process.

With large and growing numbers of unmarried men and women in the church, it is essential that the church do more than sponsor singles' groups and singles' retreats. These are no substitute for the blessing of marriage and family, and may just prolong the problem. This book will stir you up to do more than encourage the unmarried to "be content while you wait." Maken is not shy about addressing the real problems of a culture that enables men to be lazy, exposes women to long-term loneliness, and undermines the creation mandate to "be fruitful and multiply."