

Fran & Jesus - Singleness

Air Dates: July 4-8, 2022

Day One

We continue the story of Fran and Jesus, as Fran, a single woman, learns some tough lessons about relationships with men and trusting the Lord. While this episode is directed to single women, I think it will be helpful to men and marrieds as well.

Fran is a young widow with two school-aged children. Since her husband's untimely death, she has struggled to earn a living and be the mother she wants to be. It takes most of her time and energy, but there are times when she feels lonely and really wishes there was a man in her life. She did have a brief relationship with a man named Barry, but that didn't work out.

As she heads to the church for a singles dinner, she says to the Lord, "You know, I never thought I'd be part of this singles' scene again, Lord. And here I am, going to a dinner for singles. I'm not real comfortable with it, but at least I don't feel like a square peg in a round hole when I'm with the singles. I just don't seem to fit in anywhere here at the church anymore."

As she pulls into the parking lot, Fran's new friend, Patsy, pulls in beside her. "Hi, Fran, glad you came tonight," Patsy calls to her. "You'll meet lots of nice people here—who knows, Fran, maybe even a man."

"Yeah, right, what man wants a woman with two kids to raise?" Fran asks with a laugh, but inwardly hoping that there might be some man here tonight who would find her interesting.

She and Patsy decide to sit together across from a man who introduces himself as David, new to the city and the church. He looks about 37, nice looking, clean-cut, and Fran enjoys their conversation.

"You know," Fran thinks, "he really seems to be interested in talking to me. And I've already told him I have two kids. Didn't seem to scare him off." Fran is a little excited.

"Fran," Jesus seems to say to her, "you don't have to worry about your kids. They're great kids and the right man will not find them a problem."

"I wonder if David might be that man." Fran thinks.

Quickly she admonishes herself not to let her imagination run wild. "You've just met him," she says to herself. "Just talk to him like any other person, be interested in him because he's a person, and don't start projecting about a possible relationship. It's much too soon." But she can't help thinking that he is paying a lot of attention to her.

Day Two

Our friend, Fran, is learning some valuable lessons about her singleness and her trust in the Lord. She attended a singles dinner at her church and met a nice man, David, who was at her table.

After the dinner and program, David asks if Fran can have a cup of coffee with him at the coffee shop down the street. She looks at her watch and remembers that she promised the sitter to be home by 10:30—but she can't resist. "Well, sure David, I can talk for a few minutes," Fran replies, and they start the short walk to the restaurant. All the time Jesus tries to send a warning to Fran, but she's not paying attention. She thinks: "It's a public place, and I met him at church. What harm could there be?"

The next hour flies by, as Fran and David talk. She learns that he is an engineer, just transferred to the city, and is divorced. He has two sons, ages 11 and 13. He became a Christian after his divorce five years ago.

Suddenly Fran looks at her watch. "Oh, my goodness, it's almost 11:00. I must go; the sitter is expecting me." David walks her back to the church parking lot, and as she rushes to her car, he takes her hand and starts to put his arm around her. It makes Fran uncomfortable, and she pulls away. He asks if he can call her, and she gives him her number.

On the way home, her heart is flying high. "He liked me; he really liked me. And he was so easy to talk to. Got a good job, obviously the divorce wasn't his fault and besides he wasn't a Christian then. Nice guy." As Fran thinks about David, she suddenly realizes that Jesus is there, as he always is, and so she says to him, "Well, there was no harm in that, Jesus, right? It felt good to have some male attention. It's been a long time."

"No, nothing wrong," Jesus says. "Except you were inconsiderate of your sitter and you almost allowed a man you don't even know to kiss you."

"Oh, I don't think he was trying to kiss me, Lord, really..." Fran responds without conviction. "But don't I deserve some fun once in awhile? Good grief!" Fran expresses her frustration. "Do I have to always be the responsible mother?"

She is reminded by that inner voice of God's Spirit just how vulnerable she is right now. She's been by herself for quite awhile and any male attention is going to start the chemistry going. She seems to hear Jesus say, "Please, don't let your need for male attention cause you to abandon all your common sense."

Fran hurries in the house, apologizing to the sitter, who is obviously worried and upset. She pays her a little extra and watches as she walks home across the street, feeling guilty for being thoughtless.

Day Three

Fran has just met a man at a singles dinner at her church, and because he bought her a cup of coffee and asked for her phone number, she's all excited about the potential of this relationship.

She crawls into bed but can't sleep. She re-lives every minute and every word, and in her imagination, the importance of the occasion grows. The next morning, she sits down with her Bible to spend some time with Jesus, but finds her mind is totally uncontrollable. Finally, she just gives up, and rushes to get to work on time.

Several times during the day she finds herself staring at some papers, while daydreaming about David. Wonder if he'll call tonight? Jesus tries to get her attention, but she doesn't notice. She's enjoying her fantasies.

She leaves right at 5:00, rushing to her car, again ignoring the presence of Jesus. The kids seem more demanding than usual this evening, and she hurries them to finish their homework, do their chores, get their baths and get ready for bed.

As she's putting a load of laundry in, the phone rings, and Fran's heart stops. Maybe it's David! She finds her cell phone and waits until it rings one more time. Then tries to casually answer, only to discover it's not David, it's Patsy.

"Hey, Fran, I saw you leave with that new guy—what's his name?" Patsy asks.

"David," Fran replies, and they chat about the past evening a few minutes. Her mother calls and wants to chat, but Fran pretends to be busy in order to get her off the phone and free it up.

Finally at 11:00 she drags herself to bed, feeling disappointed. For the first time the whole evening, she's aware of Jesus beside her and begins to talk to him. "Lord, I was really hoping David would call," Fran admits. "If he really was interested, don't you think he'd call tonight?" "Fran," Jesus says, "I want you to think about what you've done since meeting David last night. What did you think about all day?"

"David," Fran says rather embarrassed.

"And what kind of thoughts did you have? Were they true?" Jesus asks.

"What do you mean? There was nothing wrong with my thoughts, I was just kinda daydreaming, I guess. Thinking he would call, what I'd say, where we'd go, what I'd wear. Just daydreaming; no harm done," Fran answers.

"That kind of daydreaming does some harm, Fran," Jesus teaches her. "You see, you were allowing yourself to imagine all kinds of things based on one very short, very casual conversation. Frankly, Fran, I wouldn't call that truthful thinking." It's a painful lesson, but one Fran needs to learn about herself.

Day Four

Did you ever let your imagination run away with you? Our friend, Fran, is having that problem. She met a man at church who showed her some attention, and from that she's already thinking it will be the beginning of a new, good relationship. Though she waits hopefully all evening, David doesn't call, and now she's finally talking with Jesus about it. Though she doesn't hear an audible voice, the Spirit of God residing in her imparts truth to her as though it were directly from the lips of Jesus.

He reminds her that she has allowed herself to blow this whole episode up into something much more than it ever was. If you let your imagination run wild, it easily gets into untrue thinking and that kind of thinking can cause you to do things you normally wouldn't think of doing.

"So, what you're telling me, Jesus, is that I'm beginning to make a fool out of myself over this man," Fran says quietly.

"Well, you're not at that stage yet, but you're headed in that direction. You've let your imagination read a lot into one brief conversation with a man you really don't know, Fran," Jesus explains to her.

"But it felt so good to have that male attention," Fran says, brushing away a couple of tears.

"I know," Jesus responds. "I understand your need for male attention; but you can trust me to meet your needs, and even if there isn't another man in your future, I am capable of fulfilling you and making your life very meaningful. Will you trust me?"

"Yes," Fran says, with the tears freely flowing now, "I will trust you, but I can't imagine living the rest of my life without a husband. I'm lonely; it's not fun being single in a married world."

"Well, you don't have to live the rest of your life, Fran," Jesus says very kindly, "just today. I've gotten you through the last few years, I can get you through today."

"But, Lord, I want to know: are you saying I may have to be single forever?" Fran asks, with fear in her voice.

"I'm saying you can trust me, whether single or married," Jesus replies.

"But, Lord, if I just knew someday I would be married, I could be happy waiting, even for lots of years—if I just knew," Fran says.

"And if you knew, you would never have to walk by faith, would you Fran," Jesus says. "Besides, you don't need to know the future; you just need to know that I'm going to be with you through all your futures, and I've promised to take care of you. Furthermore, I've told you that I have good plans for you; you can trust me."

"But what if your plans are for me to be single?" Fran repeats. Her fears of singleness are showing, and she struggles to understand how to trust Jesus for her future.

Day Five

What is it about your future that frightens you? Our friend, Fran, is struggling with her fear of being single forever. Jesus is trying to help her understand that as long as he is with her, there is no need to fear anything, including being single but that's hard for Fran to believe. As she meditates on her situation, she can almost hear Jesus talking to her, speaking truth that can set her free.

"Fran, if my plan for you is to be single, I guarantee that I can make you happy and contented," Jesus says, "if you will trust me. You see, Fran, if you live in fear of what might or might not be, you'll be miserable. I would never give you a spirit of fear, and right now you're fearful of being single forever. Can you realize how that makes me feel to see that you can't trust me for your future?"

"How you feel?" Fran is stunned. "You mean, it hurts you when I get upset about being single?"

"It hurts me to realize you don't really trust me with all your life," Jesus responds. "Have I ever failed you?"

"No, never," Fran replies. "I guess I never realized that this fear of being single is really a lack of trust in you, Lord. And I guess I never thought about how awful it is not to trust you, because you are totally trustworthy. Can you please forgive me?"

"Done," Jesus says. "You know, this is the same issue you faced when Jim was alive. Remember when you were worried that Jim had found someone else?"

Jesus reminds Fran of that terrible time early in their marriage. "Oh, yeah, I'd almost forgotten. Because Jim was working lots of overtime, I got to imagining he was in love with someone at work."

"You lived in a lot of fear for a few weeks, remember?" Jesus says. "And what was it you finally had to learn?"

"I remember you told me I wasn't trusting you. Trust is really important, isn't it, Lord?" Fran remarks.

"Yes, because without faith it's impossible to please me," Jesus explains. "And it's also good for you to remember that fear of the future is not limited to single people. Single people aren't living some second-class life, Fran. And married people don't have it all easy. Don't forget that."

"You're right, Lord; you always are. It's amazing how easy I forget that as much as I loved Jim and miss him, it wasn't always fun to be married," Fran replies. "You know, I'll probably have this same struggle again sometime before long."

"And I'll be there to remind you that I'm trustworthy," Jesus says. And with that, Fran smiles and closes her eyes for some much needed sleep.

The worst thing you and I can do is not to trust Jesus. He is God, he is all powerful, he loves us and has nothing in mind for us that isn't for our benefit. I hope, like Fran, you'll learn to trust him more and let go of your fears, whatever they are.