



Adventist Single Adult Ministries Day May
15, 2021
Material and resources for the local church

Mission Statement

Reaching and empowering Single Adults to create Christ-centered safe places for fellowship, nurture and service.



“The Most Impactful Decision”

Suggested Order of Service

Intro:

Opening Prayer:

Opening hymn: #50, “Abide With Me”

Call for the offering:

Children’s Story:

Scripture: Responsive Reading #807, “The Lord's Work”

Sermon: “The Most Impactful Decision”

Closing hymn: #476, “Burdens Are Lifted at Calvary”

Author of Sermon



Eli Rojas Jr. is a pastor of a three church district on the North Carolina coast. He is also serving as the ASAM director for the Carolina Conference. Born into a pastoral family, he has been surrounded by many wise counselors and has had the blessing of being from many different places.

Pastor Eli received his Bachelor's degree in Religious Studies from Southern Adventist University and a Masters of Divinity from Andrews University. He strives to serve by Christ's example and live his life in a way that lets everyone see the love of God through humble service.

The Most Impactful Decision

Message for Single Adults Sabbath

Pastor Eli Rojas Jr.

Today is Adventist Single Adult Ministry Sabbath. The United States has doubled in the percentage of single households from 1960.¹ There is a tremendous opportunity to meet the needs of people in the way that Jesus did. Luke 4:18 says ““The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted...” ASAM focuses on ministry to a large group of people. Beside those who are single and searching, there are widowers who need a support group in their time of grief. There are divorcees who need compassion in their time of healing. Single parents are another large group in single’s ministry that can be greatly blessed from an active ASAM group in your local church. There are different generations, different cultures, different needs and when there are dedicated people led by the Holy Spirit, ASAM can make an incredible impact on the church. ASAM is a ministry that can be tailored to meet the needs of every single church group and community so that it looks different in each context and is equally transformative. I pray that ASAM can evolve past the mentalities of the past and be renewed in your ministry here.

I wanted to begin my sermon by asking “What you think is the most impactful decision of our life? When we are younger we think that where we go to college probably will affect us the most. After all that is where most of our adult friendships will be formed and many meet their significant other. It is where we develop our work connections that will lead to more employment opportunities. Maybe it has to do with what career we choose. After all we spend 90,000 hours of our lives working. So whatever you chose to do, you better be ok spending 90,000 hours of your life there².

Some will say that where you call home will be very impactful because it changes your way of living. Living in Miami is very different from living in Michigan. Who you decide to marry probably makes the greatest impact over that other stuff. A good marriage can give you a longer, happier, more financial stability, support, and care.³ A bad marriage can

¹<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2018/families.html#:~:text=In%202018%2C%20there%20are%2035.7,13%20percent%20of%20all%20households.https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2018/families.html#:~:text=In%202018%2C%20there%20are%2035.7,13%20percent%20of%20all%20households>.

²<https://www.gettysburg.edu/news/stories?id=79db7b34-630c-4f49-ad32-4ab9ea48e72b&pageTitle=1%2F3+of+your+life+is+spent+at+work>

³<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/the-health-advantages-of-marriage-2016113010667>

double your chances of diabetes and blood pressure.⁴ There are many other issues. So it has an enormous effect on your life.

With marriage comes a decision on whether or not to have kids. That has a tremendous impact on your life. Your time and resources become dominated by this person for the rest of your life. Even after they go off to college you still visit them and help them out and then they have kids and those bundles of joy become the most important thing in your life.

While those decisions are undeniably deeply impactful there is one decision that can impact every decision for the rest of your life. Every day, what we eat and what we drink is impacted by this decision. What we say and who we talk to is impacted by this decision. Our relationships and our money and our jobs are all impacted by this decision. I'm talking of course of following God's will.

Many of us have been Christians for many years and all that it changed was where we are on Saturdays once in a while. But for those who haven't felt the impact of being a Christian that may be a sign that for all the years of service you still haven't surrendered completely to God.

Becoming a Christian is supposed to be the most transformational decision. It's meant to fill our lives with the fruit of the spirit which is found in Galatians 5:22-25 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another."

How much would it impact your life for it to be full of supernatural love and joy and peace. But what we don't realize is that like many promises, God gives us there is a condition. Our lives get to be full of the fruit of the spirit only when we are crucified with Christ. Until we are surrendered completely to the will of God. When we die to self and live for Christ then we see impacts that permeate throughout our entire lives. This is echoed in Matthew 6 and we will study this more in debt starting in verse 31

"31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly

⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2018/jul/16/a-bad-marriage-is-as-unhealthy-as-smoking-or-drinking-say-scientists#:~:text=Conflict%20in%20a%20relationship%20can,system%2C%20previous%20research%20has%20found.>

Father knows that you need them all. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

Worry is one of the greatest evidences of a lack of surrender. Where does worry stem from? We can say that it comes from two things. The first is a lack of trust. If I'm worried about my neighbor taking care of my dog it's probably because I don't trust my neighbor. When we worry about our lives subconsciously we don't trust that God will do His part.

But the second source is a desire to maintain control. I want my hands on the wheel regardless of how well others drive. Some people just struggle being passengers. So we worry about our life because we struggle to give up control. We only let Jesus take control of our lives when things are out of control but then we backseat drive. Jesus shouldn't be our Gps or our backseat driver or our copilot, he should be driving. Our lives are better when God is in control and we surrender to Him. Can you imagine how much better your life is when you have no worries? To trust is crucial, but we must also make God's will a priority.

One thing that sin brought into this world is that every single one of us now has to deal with the fact that everything is limited. We only have so much time, money, energy. We have a limited amount of space and options. So whether we acknowledge it or not there are little battles taking place in our lives on a daily basis. We have to choose how we spend our time and our money and our efforts. Depending on many things our priorities swap constantly. The longer it takes me to do laundry the more important it becomes. The more I put off paying my bills the more important they become. So my day is shaped by what's most urgent or what I feel is most important. What we forget sometimes is that there is a war raging for our hearts and our minds. Satan is trying to drive us further from God with business and urgent tasks. I firmly believe that Satan tempts people to overwork until they are so exhausted all they can do is crash on Sabbath and so even the people who love God and want to serve Him are too exhausted to enjoy the blessings of Sabbath. That's why God issues a challenge to us. If we would put Him in first place, if before we worry about all the stuff we have to do and how we are going to have enough to do the things we need to do, then He will bless us and help us to the point that we won't have to worry about anything else.

But what happens when we leave things to chance? When we leave God till the last then there's never enough time or money or energy. And the rest of our life is more challenging because we miss out on the involvement of God in our lives. Job, love, relationships are all important as long as they are put in the right place where God's kingdom is the most important and highest priority. That comes at the cost of self sacrifice, of obedience, and of removing bad habits from our lives. But it's worth it. Every aspect of our lives are transformed when we prioritize God's will.

I think everyone has a similar experience growing up. As we mature we go through different mentalities when it comes to our parents. We start out thinking our parents know everything. Then we realize that they are humans and don't know everything. Then we think we know everything. Then, hopefully, we realize we don't know everything. Hopefully we eventually realize our parents do know a lot and we go back to asking them for advice.

Without realizing it we do this with God. We begin fully trusting Him. We fully rely on Him for everything. Then we start to grow and our desire for independence pushes us to follow our own path. We make compromises, we twist scripture to justify our own desires and we delve further into our own understanding. Our own opinions start to get stronger and stronger until we are stuck in one mindset. Hopefully we get to see our mistake but Satan tempts us to double down and keeps us blind to our own errors. If we follow our own judgement and our own hearts we will be perpetually lost. To obey God and depend on Him takes sacrificing our egos and surrendering our will to Him which is easier said than done. Being crucified with Christ is the key to a transformed Christian life. To see real impact requires our surrender and obedience. So instead of asking God to bless my relationship with my girlfriend, I ask whether it's God's will. Instead of asking God to help me get this job, I ask Him to close the wrong doors and bring me to the right one. It's asking Him what I should do with my time, money, and energies instead of telling Him what to do with His time, money, and energy. We know that Christianity is founded on love. But the greatest expression of our love for God is our obedience. Like Jesus said in John 14:15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

The big decision of our life is not where we go to school or where we work or who we marry. The most impactful decision is whether we will follow God's will or not. To allow God to lead us means a life free from worry, where we prioritize the kingdom of Heaven, where we obey God. Depending on Him for choices, wisdom, our needs. I can't think of any decision that makes a greater difference in your life because every other decision will be impacted as well.

God guides each of us differently. What God provides for one person would be poisonous to another person. Some are allowed to be single for a season, others for a few seasons. Some need time to heal, to grow, to change their minds, and learn. When we surrender to God, He is able to heal us, cultivate us, change our minds, and teach us all things.

My call to you all this Sabbath comes from Psalm 34:8 which says "8 O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him." The most important decision we can make is to be crucified in Christ and live for Him. Then wherever God guides you, there you will receive the greatest blessing God has to offer.