Richard Baxter (1615-1691) was arguably the greatest English Puritan of the seventeenth century. He is well known for his ministerial manual "The Reformed Pastor", in which he expressed the unusual conviction that parish ministers were better off unmarried. And yet, Baxter seemed to contradict himself by marrying one of his parishioners, Margaret Charlton. Though Baxter claimed to be happily married, he continued to champion celibacy for the rest of his life. This book explores Baxter's argument for clerical celibacy by placing it in the context of his life and the turbulent events of seventeenth-century England. His viewpoint was shaped by several factors, including the Puritan literature he read, the context of his parish ministry, his burdensome model of soul care, and the formative life experiences shaping his theology and perspective. These factors not only explain why Baxter became the only Puritan to champion clerical celibacy but also why he continued to do so even after marrying.