

---

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

---

1. In what ways might one be guilty of keeping the letter of the law while violating the spirit of the law regarding the *husband of one wife* qualification?
  
2. Why is faithfulness in marriage such an important aspect of Christian leadership?
  
3. Is this qualification too restrictive for our culture? Explain your answer.

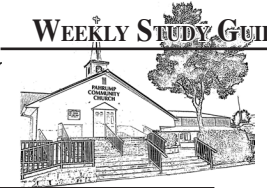
---

# PERSONAL APPLICATION

---

- What practical steps can you outline for yourself which will aid you in more faithfully fulfilling your marital vows to *love, comfort, honor and keep your spouse in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, keep yourself only unto her/him, as long as you both shall live*?

If you have never been *born again*, contact Pastor Keith or a trusted Christian friend this week to find out how.



---

# God Expects Marital Faithfulness

Introduction: 1 Timothy 3:1–13; Titus 1:5–9

I. God requires leaders to \_\_\_\_\_ His \_\_\_\_\_  
for \_\_\_\_\_ . 1 TIMOTHY 3:2,12; TITUS 1:6

A. \_\_\_\_\_:

1. “Husband of one wife.”

2. A \_\_\_\_\_ – \_\_\_\_\_ . (See *Commentary Supplement*.)

3. The type of man who would

\_\_\_\_\_ .

B. \_\_\_\_\_:

1. God \_\_\_\_\_ all \_\_\_\_\_  
of \_\_\_\_\_ . HEBREWS 13:4

2. God \_\_\_\_\_  
to \_\_\_\_\_ .

II. God is the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ .

A. The marriage relationship is the \_\_\_\_\_  
relationship of the \_\_\_\_\_ . MARK 10:6–9

B. The marriage relationship is the \_\_\_\_\_  
of \_\_\_\_\_. GENESIS 1:28

C. The marriage relationship is a \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ's  
relationship with \_\_\_\_\_. EPHESIANS 5:21-32

III. God expects your \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
His love and \_\_\_\_\_.

A. God wants you to \_\_\_\_\_. 2 CORINTHIANS 6:14

B. God \_\_\_\_\_. MATTHEW 19:7-9; MALACHI 2:16

C. God wants you to be committed to His \_\_\_\_\_  
for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

[See EXODUS 20:14; MATTHEW 5:27-30] MATTHEW 15:19; ROMANS 1:26-27;

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-10; EPHESIANS 5:21-32

[See also GENESIS 2:18-24; SONG OF SOLOMON; MARK 10:6-9]

D. God wants you to be an \_\_\_\_\_  
of His \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

1 TIMOTHY 4:12

---

## FELLOWSHIP GROUP QUESTION

---

- Obeying God's Word is always beneficial. What are some practical benefits to living according to the principle of faithfulness in marriage?

---

## STUDY QUESTIONS

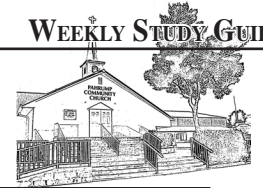
---

1. Explain the use of the concept of *adultery* in the context of JAMES 4:4.

2. Using EPHESIANS 5:21-32, give at least three ways that the marriage relationship is a picture of Christ and His church.

3. What encouragement does 1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11 offer for the Christian?

4. How does 1 CORINTHIANS 6:15-20 help explain the *husband of one wife* qualification?



---

# *Husband of one wife*

## Commentary Supplement

1 Timothy 3:2, 10; Titus 1:6–7

Paul's instructions to Timothy and Titus concerning the selection of elders and deacons include the qualification that each are to be *the husband of one wife*. The Greek text reads *mias gunaikos andra* which, taken in its most literal sense, translates: *a one woman man*. Although this literal translation appears to be more vague than the typical English translation, it is more accurate. The obscurity is primarily due to the verbatim translation and not to Paul's intent.

By *a one woman man* Paul means the type of man who would have only one woman as opposed to two or more—that is, a monogamous type of man, one not involved in polygamy. This one statement would serve to cover the whole scope of sexual immorality. A man who is of the type of character as to be *a one woman man* would never be guilty of *fooling around*, of extra-marital affairs, or of any type of disloyalty to his wife—all of which fit under the category of *adultery*. In the case of an unmarried man such character would manifest itself in a chaste lifestyle devoid of any hint of sexual immorality.

To understand these passages to teach that a man must have been married only one time is to read into the text what is not there. A parallel statement in 1 TIMOTHY strongly indicates that such an interpretation would be in error.

In 1 TIMOTHY 5:9 (and context) Paul gives the qualifications for a widow who is to be added to the list of widows receiving aid from the church. In addition to her having to be sixty years old or older, Paul says she is to have *been the wife of one husband*, or, as in the Greek, *a one man woman*. When these qualifications are met (along with those in v.10) then she is considered a true widow (5:5). Yet in 5:14 Paul urges the younger widows (all those under 60?) to remarry. If a young woman who has lost her husband remarries in accord with Paul's instructions, does she lose her eligibility for being a true widow at any point in the future? Such an understanding would certainly miss Paul's point. His teaching is that she is to have been completely loyal, faithful and supportive to the man to whom she was married. So it must be in the case of an elder or deacon. Granted, the case of a widow concerns remarriage in the event of death and does not deal with divorce. So where does divorce fit into the picture?

The Bible clearly teaches that divorce is contrary to God's design (MATTHEW 19:8; MALACHI 2:16), therefore divorce (except for the cause of marital unfaithfulness) is sin (MATTHEW 5:31-32). Jesus also taught that remarriage from divorce is adultery (again, except for the cause of marital unfaithfulness). A Christian under these circumstances would not be blameless with respect to the *one woman man* qualification, for he would be a *two-woman man*, having two living spouses. Essentially, he would be guilty of polygamy, not in the eyes of civil law but in the sight of God who designed marriage to be a life-long commitment (see MATTHEW 19:4-6).

The Christian community must be careful, however, to recognize that according to New Testament teaching, we are *not under law but under grace* (ROMANS 6:14). This does not change the truths mentioned above, but it does take into account two different contexts: pre-salvation and post-salvation. The Bible is clear concerning our life in Christ: it is a *new life* (ROMANS 6:4, 7:6) into which we are *born again* (JOHN 3:5). It contrasts with our old life just as light does with darkness (1 PETER 2:9). The qualifications given in 1 TIMOTHY and TITUS are purely *Christian* character traits, the majority of which are not even attainable apart from the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. How, then, can one assume that these qualifications apply to the pre-Christian as well as post-Christian experience? If that were so, Paul would be reducing the number of eligible church leaders to *zero*. Nor can it be said that God forgives all of one's sins when he becomes a Christian except remarriage after divorce. A person's past non-Christian life is eradicated as far as personal blame is concerned. God forgives the murderer; God forgives the drug-addict; God forgives the adulterer. So, for the person who has divorced and remarried in his pre-Christian life, he is no more disqualified for the position of elder or deacon (or true widow) than is the person who was covetous or inhospitable in his pre-Christian life (see 1 TIMOTHY 3:2-3). Paul's instructions are for the redeemed!

What does Paul mean, then, to be the *husband of one wife*? He means that a Christian man, if married, must be a *one woman man* totally faithful and loyal in mind and body, completely dedicated to his wife's physical, spiritual and mental well-being, committed to the scriptural teaching of a godly Christian marriage, united with his wife in growth, purpose and service to Almighty God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

