
6 Views of the “One Woman Man” Qualification

Beginning Questions:

Does this refer to marriage?

If so, is it **who** one can marry, **how many** one can marry, **when** one can marry? Each seems to require standing alone (you cannot combine views – e.g. has to be married and also not divorced, as the text does not allow for that complexity).

Why does it not use the terms for marriage or divorce if it is dealing with either situation?

What does the surrounding list indicate about this requirement?

These are terms that meet the “must be [present tense]” which seems to indicate the obtaining of a condition or state or status which was at one time not present (possibly). Marital status by itself is not a mark of spirituality.

Is this a standard for everyone (as it appears the rest of the list is), or is it a higher standard just for pastors?

1. You Are Married to the Church (The Church Is Your Wife)

The view that a bishop is married to the Church and must remain celibate otherwise. This is the reason why priests do not marry.

There is no real support for this view other than Catholic tradition.

2. You Must be Married (You Must Have a Wife)

The term for marriage is not used.

Paul (the author and an apostle) was not married and even encouraged singleness at times.

The Greek phrase can be translated “one woman man,” which may not refer to marriage at all.

Is the pastor then required to also have more than 1 child?

3. You Can Only Have One Wife (At a Time)

This view assumes that this is translated “husband of one wife” and refers specifically to marriage when the term is not used.

Polygamy was not recorded to be a large problem in that society in the first place.

This cannot, then, expressly prohibit divorce or remarriage.

4. You Cannot Be Divorced (Your Marriage Is Intact)

The term divorce is not used.

Does divorce itself constitute an assumption of bad behavior? Is it possible to be divorced and be walking with God?

The focus of the qualifications is on what is true about one’s behavior and conduct in the present. If applied to the past, who then would qualify under every item on the list?

5. You Cannot Remarry At All (One Woman Ever)

Can refer to remarriage after the death of a wife, or remarriage after a divorce (variations of this view).

Romans 7:1-3 indicates that death breaks the marriage bond, so remarriage after death would not be a biblical violation.

Neither the term divorce or marriage is specifically used.

The Bible gives scenarios in which one is allowed to remarry:

- If one divorces an unfaithful spouse (Matt 19:9; Matt 5:32)
- If one’s spouse dies (Rom 7:2-3)
- If an unbelieving spouse divorces them (1 Cor 7:12-15)

6. You Are Morally Pure (You Conduct Yourself in a Pure Way)

This is the only view that considers that someone can be a multi-women man even inside of marriage. Just being married itself does not guarantee spiritual maturity or moral purity that qualifies one for leadership.

This view requires moral conduct toward all women before marriage as well as during marriage. It would encompass every relationship and every habit, not just one’s marital status.

This seems to be the most fitting application, as it addresses a person’s conduct, not one’s marital status (which is no direct indication of one’s spiritual maturity). It is ATTITUDE & ACTION:

- a. Commitment to covenant marriage for LIFE. (Mal 2:14)
- b. Pure conduct w/ all women: any age at any time (1 Tim 5:2)
- c. Proper view of marriage as designed by God (Gen 2:21-25)
- d. Personal purity
 - i. Before marriage, saving yourself for your future mate
 - ii. During marriage (“do not commit adultery”)
 - iii. Includes purity of mind and habit as well as relationships
 - iv. Examples: 1 Cor 6:18; Eph 5:3; Col 3:5; 1 Thes 4:3-7