

The Husband of One Wife

A detail explanation of 1 Timothy 3:2

Introduction

We will *not* be discussing each of the qualifications of the elders. Rather we are looking in detail at some of the questions implied by several of those qualifications. This distinction must be kept in mind as you proceed.

The qualifications for elders from both Timothy and Titus are itemized below for comparison. The qualifications from Titus are listed out of sequence from the text for easy comparison with the matching qualification from the Timothy text. Please read down the list from both sources. Look at each qualification. Are there any unknown words? Are there any uncommon words? If you read any of these words in any other context would you have any difficulty understanding the meaning? Probably not. Why in this context is it common to say or imply that a particular item is “difficult” to understand. The words mean what they say. None of these words has a special, ancient or esoteric meaning in these passages.

1 Timothy, chapter 3

Now the overseer must be:

*above reproach,
the husband of but one wife,
Temperate,
Self-controlled,
Respectable,
Hospitable,
able to teach,
not given to drunkenness,
not violent but gentle,
not quarrelsome,
not a lover of money.
He must manage his own family well and
see that his children obey him with proper
respect.
If anyone does not know
how to manage his own family [Gk. household]
how can he take care of God's church.*

*He must not be a recent convert.
He must also have a good
reputation with outsiders,*

Titus, chapter 1:5-9

An elder must be:

*blameless, [used twice, v. 5 and v.6]
the husband of but one wife,
not quick-tempered,
who is self-controlled,
upright, holy and disciplined
he must be: hospitable,

not given to drunkenness
not violent,
not overbearing,
not pursuing dishonest gain.
man whose children believe, and
are not open to the charge of
being wild and disobedient,

one who loves what is good,
He must hold firmly to the trustworthy
message as it has been taught, so that
he can encourage others by sound
doctrine and refute those who oppose it.*

As we begin this study I ask for your patience. Because elders are usually, and should be, the most respected and loved members of the congregation there is, and should be, a hesitancy in saying anything that is critical. Please consider that I am not talking about any elder in particular. I am just trying to understand what the Bible says about this particular question regarding the qualifications of all elders in general. As you read this it will be most natural for you to apply these comments to the elder(s) you know and love and therefore you could possibly take offense to some comment or choice of words. I only ask that you please remember that I am trying to discuss a very emotional subject with as much objectivity as possible. Your understanding is greatly appreciated.

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From the previous list of qualifications for elders we see that only two of them are physically measurably, i.e. he must be married and have obedient Christian children.

When an elder's wife dies it is undoubtedly the most stressful time in his life. The elder and his wife are a team like any Christian couple, but the position of elder requires much more support, cooperation, encouragement from his wife than is generally the case. When his wife dies it is, practically speaking, impossible for the elder not to spend some time "adjusting." During this time the thoughts expressed in this paper are probably not given much time or consideration. If this subject is discussed beforehand and all the elders are in agreement and a procedure is in place *before* it is needed, then the widower can step out of office with grace, receiving the love and well deserved appreciation from the congregation for a job well-done. This will allow a very difficult situation to be handled with brotherly love, respect, kindness and much less pain for the elder **and** the congregation. This is another reason for giving these matters serious attention now.

Detail Analysis

When an elder's wife dies, should he resign?

The first of the two measurable qualifications is that an elder must be the husband of but one wife. This is measurable. This fact is easily established. But in recent years this translation "the husband of one wife" has been challenged. Some have said the literal and actual translation should be "a one woman man."

A) How should $\mu\alpha\iota\sigma$ (one) $\gamma\upsilon\nu\alpha\iota\kappa\omicron\varsigma$ (woman/wife) $\alpha\nu\delta\rho\alpha$ (man/husband) be translated?

Let us look at the various versions to see how consistent they are. The following translations use the word *husband* and/or *wife* in translating this Greek phrase: $\mu\alpha\iota\sigma$ $\gamma\upsilon\nu\alpha\iota\kappa\omicron\varsigma$ $\alpha\nu\delta\rho\alpha$.

John Wycliffe bible of 1382, John Purvey bible of 1395, William Tyndale bibles of 1526 and 1534, The Geneva Bible of 1599, **King James Bible of 1769, KJV (1873), NKJV, ASV, NASB, NIV, RSV, ESV,** Phillips, NEB, Hugo McCord, Weymouth, Diaglott, New world Translation, Young's Literal Translation, The Amplified Bible, the Living New Testament (paraphrased), The Living Oracles (by Campbell, MacKnight and Doddridge). These **23** translations give the requirement that the elder/overseer *must be* married.

Wuest's New Testament, an expanded Translation gives "a one-wife kind of a man [that is, married only once]," but in his Word Studies in the Greek New Testament, v. II, Pastoral Letters, p. 54 he translates 1 Timothy 3:2 as "a one-wife sort of a husband." Again implying the man must be married.

Duay Confraternity ("must be ... married but once"), Moffatt ("must be only married once"). These **two** translations require marriage, specifying only once is allowed.

The Jerusalem Bible (... "not have been married more than once."). This is the only version I could find whose translation did not require marriage, nor forbid it. But if marriage occurred then it can only have happened once, implying that even this translation recognizes the marriage implication of these words.

Please notice several implications from the above list. *First*, if someone takes a stand that "the husband of one wife" from all these translations since 1382 through the current NIV (over 618 years) is *incorrect* then certainly there must be a great deal of evidence available to support this new translation of "a one woman man." Yet, all

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the *normal, regular, respected* translations (**King James Bible of 1769, KJV (1873), NKJV, ASV, NASB, NIV, RSV, ESV**) have "The elder must be ... the husband of one wife..." Who is the person or persons who can now say that all these Greek scholars for over 600 years made the same mistake, on this same phrase, but now this new translation is correct? Would anyone suggest that all these Greek scholars did not know that **γυναικος** means either woman or wife and that **ανδρα** means either man or husband?? When the whole purpose of any new translation is to provide different words for a better or more clear understanding of the Greek and yet not one of these translations chose to use "one woman man" as an *acceptable* translation. How can any Christian who loves the truth (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12) now think this new idea is a "legitimate rendering" without any evidence to overturn the consistent translation of "a husband of one wife"?

What is the evidence offered to support this new idea? Where are the translators, the Greek scholars, the lexicons who/which agree with this non-marital expression (one woman man)? Where are the established facts and clear logic from which this conclusion is deduced? So far those who suggest this new translation have not provided any evidence that it is anything other than a rather unusual interpretation, once again without substantial evidence.

Second implication from the above list of translations is: if "the husband of one wife" is an *incorrect* translation then God has allowed error to prevail for all these years with no way for Christians to obtain the truth on this subject. Would God do that? Was God unable or unwilling to make the "truth" available to all who sought it? Did 2 Corinthians 1:13,

13 For we do not write to you anything you cannot read or understand,

not apply to these passages in 1 Timothy and Titus for the English speaking world? How can God's Word thoroughly equip (NIV), completely furnish (ASV), us unto every good work if we don't have access to a valid translation for over 600 years, 2 Timothy 3:16-17? Of course there is no problem with God's character or ability if "one woman man" is just another recent innovation in an effort to force a translation to condone a particular practice.

But maybe the objector says that "the husband of one wife" is not wrong. It is just that *one woman man* is also correct. That's impossible! One translation requires an elder to be married, the other does not require this marriage. They both can not be correct! Either God requires an elder to be married or he doesn't. We must decide which is true. We **MUST** make our decision based on what the scriptures say. That is why we are putting so much emphasis on the translation.

Third thing to notice about the translations is: The Chinese Union Version says "one woman husband," Today's Chinese Version says "he ...wife," Recovery Chinese Bible says "one wife husband." How are the millions of Christians in China going to understand the truth if they, too, have no *accurate* (?) translation saying "one woman man?" We must also consider other languages.

The Latin Vugate, a 4th century translation from the Greek into the Latin, say "unius uxoris virum." The Latin dictionary gives "uxor -oris f. [a wife]; 'uxorem ducere', [to marry a wife]." Therefore "unius uxoris virum" can only be translated literally as **a one wife man**, or **a one wife husband**. John Wycliffe translated it, *the husband of one wife*, when he made his English translation directly from the Latin Vugate. It would be very interesting to see how this Greek expression was translated into other languages!

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Fourth, another source for the meanings of Greek words is the Interlinear where the Greek is given on one printed line and the English, word for word, translation is given on the next line. I looked at four interlinears: Berry's Interlinear (1897), "of one wife husband;" Marshall's Interlinear (1958), "of one wife husband;" Comfort and Brown Interlinear (1990), "of one wife a husband;" Mounce and Mounce Interlinear (2008), "of one woman man."

Three of the four gives the same as all the translations listed above. Although I could find no translation that gives us "one woman man" there is one interlinear which says that, i.e. Mounce & Mounce (2008). Because of the date of this interlinear we must at least consider the possibility that this is just a recent innovation with no new evidence to support it. I send an email to Bill Mounce on April 9, 2012 and on May 22, 2012 requesting the evidence which allowed this new translation, to date he has provided no information supporting his new *one woman man* translation. Please see the **Appendix D** for a complete copy of our email exchanges and a detailed refutation of Mounce's position on translating this phrase. His position is stated in his commentary on the Pastoral Epistles.

Fifth, the next source for Greek definitions we will check is the Lexicons:

Thayer's, " $\alpha\upsilon\eta\rho$, 1. b. as a husband: ...1 Timothy 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6."

BDAG, " $\alpha\upsilon\eta\rho$, an adult human male, man, husband - a. in contrast to woman *man* ... Especially husband ... 1 Timothy 3:2, 12; 5:9; Titus 1:6."

TDNT, v. 1, p. 362 $\alpha\upsilon\eta\rho$ in the NT. "Examples of 4. [from the previous page, where the meaning of the word is husband] are found in ...; in the passages dealing with office-bearers ... (1 Timothy 3:2,12; 5:9; Titus 1:6.)"

Vine, v. 3, p. 34 $\alpha\upsilon\eta\rho$ "...; as a husband ...Titus 1:6

In every case the authority says that $\alpha\upsilon\eta\rho$ should be translated as *husband* not *man* in 1 Timothy 3:2,12; 5:9; Titus 1:6!! Are they all *incorrect*? If yes, there must be a huge amount of evidence to overturn the collective evidence listed above. To my knowledge this evidence has yet to be introduced.

Sixth, Dictionary of New Testament Theology: V.1, p.496; V. 2, p.563, 580 all three articles give 1 Tim 3:2 and/or Titus 1:6 as scriptures referring to the married relationship

Seventh, If we follow good principles of translation we can translate these three Greek words, $\mu\alpha\iota\varsigma$ $\gamma\upsilon\upsilon\alpha\iota\kappa\omicron\varsigma$ $\alpha\upsilon\delta\rho\alpha$, ourselves. The last two of these three Greek words each have two actual and literal meanings. All lexicons give both "woman" or "wife" as meanings for the second word and "man" or "husband" as meanings for the third word. Therefore there are **four** possible "literal and actual" meanings for this phrase:

- 1) of one wife husband
- 2) of one wife man
- 3) of one woman husband
- 4) of one woman man

Of these four choices, the correct one can only be determined by the context. This is the most basic rule used in all translating activities. Almost every word in any language has more than one meaning. Any particular meaning of any given word can only be determined by the context in which it is found. The context (1 Tim. 3:1-13) is clearly discussing a marital relationship because of the children and/or household mentioned in verses 4,5 and 12,

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wives mentioned in verse 11, and the parallel passage in Titus 1:6. Therefore, "of one wife husband" is the most likely choice of the above four possibilities. That is probably why we have total unanimity in the previous list of translations as *husband of one wife*.

However, any of the first three options would be acceptable since a *of one wife man* is a man with one wife, i.e. married; and a *of one woman husband* is a husband of one woman, i.e. married. In order for a person to choose option 4, i.e. *one woman man*, he must have **some** support from the context. What word or group of words from the context require, support or even allow a non-marital (one woman man) translation for $\mu\alpha\iota\sigma\ \gamma\upsilon\nu\alpha\iota\kappa\omicron\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\delta\rho\alpha$? So far, this is the unanswerable question.

Eighth, An elder who has lost his wife is a widower. A widower does not have a wife, else he could not remarry without having two wives. The word wife describes a relationship which can only be maintained by a live person. Consider Romans 7:1-3:

1 ¶ Do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to men who know the law—that the law has authority over a man only as long as he lives? 2 For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. 3 So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man.

and 1 Corinthians 7:39:

39 ¶ A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.

Once dead their position of wife (or husband) is vacated, allowing for a possible scriptural remarriage. This has nothing to do with the love and respect one has for the departed spouse. Love, admiration, devotion and respect will remain (maybe forever) but the relationship of spouse no longer exists once death occurs, else the living spouse could not ever remarry. Therefore, an elder whose wife has passed on, no longer has a wife and is therefore, no longer a husband. Both the law of man (Income taxes, Parental responsibility, Property ownership) and the law of God (Romans 7:2-3, 1 Corinthians 7:39) recognize that death breaks the bond of marriage and frees the survivor to marry another. Although after a long happy marriage a man may still "feel" married after the wife dies, he is not.

However, if we can **retain** a person as an elder who is not a husband because his wife just died, why can't we allow a man to **become** an elder whose wife just died "recently." We must accept the words of the Holy Spirit as they are written, else face His condemnation because we ignored them, Galatians 1:8-9, James 3:1, 1 Corinthians 4:6.

Ninth, what does "one woman man" really mean? If Paul is here allowing a *one woman man* to be considered for the eldership, then he is allowing all men who are known to be a *one woman man* to be considered.

Would Paul really be including in this phrase a man who was raised only by his mother and therefore had a great deal of respect, honor and love for her? This man who had no interest in women his own age but cared for and spent all his spare time with his mother. This man is definitely a one woman man. Is this man included in Paul's description of a "one woman man" in Timothy 3:2 or Titus 1:6? Would anything in the context allow for the

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inclusion of this man in Paul's description? Of course not! No one would think that! Maybe because of the context which implies the elder must have children, which implies that he had to be married?

How about the couple who live together in an unmarried state? Maybe both with children from previous marriages. They have been together for years and are very happy. He adores her, honors her, respects her and all his friends recognize him as a "one woman man." Does Paul include this man in his description in 1 Timothy 3:2 or Titus 1:6? Would anything in the context allow for the inclusion of this man in Paul's description? Of course not! No one would think that! Maybe because of the context which says the elder must be above reproach, implying that if he lives with a woman he must be married to her. But what if this woman died? He, even then would still be a "one woman man." He and all his children are Christians. Would he now be included in Paul's description of a "one woman man" and be ineligible for consideration of the eldership? Or would the context imply that he must be married before he can be included in Paul's description?

It seems even if all the evidence to the contrary is ignored and we use *one woman man* as the translation, the contextual implication and common sense still limits this phrase to a married man! An elder whose wife has died is not married.

Tenth reason for rejecting this new idea is we would be setting a terrible precedent if we allow "a one woman man" to receive our endorsement or acceptance just because someone says it is "a valid alternative translation" of the Greek. To be consistent we would have to allow the following reasoning: a) Every translations for over 600 years translate the Greek word *Psallo* as "sing." Some now want to say "yes, but another legitimate translation is 'sing with the option to play'" and thereby justify instrumental music in the worship service. Please notice the parallels: The consistency of translations for over 600. The claim that this new understanding is a valid translation. The complete absence of linguistic, historical and scholarly testimony to support this new "rendering." Should we accept this new claim only because good and sincere men make it? This is the type of thinking which gave birth to denominationalism.

Summary of translation evidence.

In view of the overwhelming evidence listed above, we must consider it proven beyond a reasonable doubt that the expression "one woman man" is neither required nor allowed as a translation of the Greek words *μᾶισ γυναικος ανδρα* found in the two passages we are discussing, 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6. A wise man once said "Experience suggests, however, that an old tradition must not be too quickly rejected; our ancestors were not all fools." (Will Durant, *The story of Civilization*, v. iii, p. 556)

If someone chooses to believe, teach and publish that *μᾶισ γυναικος ανδρα* should be, or even **can** be, translated as *one woman man* in our context without an abundance of evidence to support this new idea he will face Christ at judgment with the possibility of violating Galatians 1:8-9:

8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! 9 As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!

Unless this understanding (one woman man) can be found somewhere in a translation from the first few centuries, we run the risk of a very serious offense to God by teaching something that was not part of the Gospel

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"preached" by Paul and "accepted" by the first Christians from Galatia. Please seriously consider the following logic:

If we agree that God's word teaches that "an elder must be ... the husband of one wife,"
Then no man can be an elder during the time he is not the husband of one wife.

As Christians, we cannot accept speculation as fact, theory as evidence nor assumption as truth. We must do the work and find the preponderance of evidence to substantiate our beliefs, else we can be perverting the Gospel of Christ.

B) Since the translation is: *of one wife husband or husband of one wife*, we now ask if "one woman man" is an allowable interpretation of $\mu\alpha\iota\sigma \gamma\upsilon\nu\alpha\iota\kappa\omicron\varsigma \alpha\upsilon\delta\rho\alpha$,

If the evidence and laws of translation do **not** allow for "one woman man" as a translation, can it then be considered as a valid interpretation? The intent of a passage never negates the meaning of the words translated! The translation of the Greek is, literally: "*the elder must be ... of one wife husband.*" We only know the intent of a passage if the scriptures tell us. What contextual evidence do we have to assure us of the intent of this phrase? We can speculate, theorize, and discuss any possibilities as interesting research, but to teach, preach and publish a conclusion as to the meaning of a phrase based on a speculation as to the intent of the phrase is untenable, at best, and dangerous at worse, James 3:1, Galatians 1:6-9.

Some say *the intent* of the our phrase is to say that a husband must love, honor and be faithful to his wife, so we should therefore put all the emphasis on the intent (one woman man) and ignore the meaning of the actual words which say the elder must be married. Should the intent, even if we know it, negate the meaning of the words? This speculated intent (to be faithful to his wife) is true of all Christian marriages. ***So by using the actual translation the desired intent is maintained.*** The actual translation in no wise hinders, negates nor even tarnishes this claimed intention of the passage, i.e. He (the man) must honor and be faithful to his wife. Yes, we know that the Pharisees obeyed the letter of the law while ignoring the spirit of the law, and were condemned for it. But please remember that following the spirit of the law does not negate following the letter of the law. We don't choose which to follow, we must follow both the letter of the law and the spirit of the law.

We must be careful when we stress the intent of any passage. If the intent is not specified, we can never be sure what it is. A wise man once said: "***The biggest difference between God and us is: He never thinks He is us!!***"

The Bible was written by the Holy Spirit for all people for all time, not just the actual persons who received it. If we should decide on the intent of this passage, and then teach this intent, which has a direct impact on the practices of every local church and find out on judgment day that *our* chosen intent was not what God intended, we will be judged more strictly (NIV), receive the heavier judgment, (ASV), James 3:1.

After all is said and done, maybe the only intent of this phrase is to ensure that the elder must be "the husband of one wife," i.e. married according to Christian guidelines. What evidence is available to prove otherwise?

The second reason we can not use the claimed intention to deduce the meaning of a passage is: the faulty precedent it would set. For example: For two thousand years Greek scholars have known and printed that baptism means immersion. But some now say "Yes, but the intention was just to symbolize cleansing. We can do

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that with any amount of water. No need to immerse when we can accomplish the intention by any application of water." Can we allow the *claimed* intention to override the clear meaning of the words? This process is exactly the same as those who claim the intention of 1 Timothy 3:2 is just to ensure dedication to the wife, and this assurance is maintained even after the death of an elder's wife, therefore we can ignore the actual meaning of the Greek words because we are maintaining the *claimed* intention.

If we validate, acknowledge or give any credence to this faulty process we are opening the door to all matter of fallacious conclusions and thereby negating God's Holy Word!!

Summary of interpretation evidence.

We have demonstrated that the intent of a passage cannot contradict or nullify the actual meaning of the words. It has also been demonstrated that the intent can only be known if the text specifies what the intent really is. To simply state the intent and then act on it alone, disregarding the meaning of the words is pure speculation and unacceptable for all who love the truth. If this "reasoning" is deemed acceptable then to be consistent we must accept sprinkling for baptism and many more equally *un*scriptural practices.

This procedure is untenable in any area of investigation but, additionally, is eternally dangerous when done while dealing with God's word. I repeat the following logic for emphasis:

If we agree that God's word teaches that "an elder must be ... the husband of one wife,"
Then no man can be an elder during the time he is not the husband of one wife.

ANSWERING SOME OBJECTIONS TO THE ABOVE CONCLUSIONS

A) If an elder's wife dies how can we ask him to resign, after all, "he is still the same man"!

It has been asserted by some that an elder does not have to resign after the death of his wife because he is still the same man as before her death. After having been married for 55 years to a wonderful Christian wife, I find this statement to be stunning and totally unbelievable or else a very sad commentary on the married life of the elder in question.

When two Christians marry they become one in flesh, but that is not the only way in which they merge. Because of their mutual love, honor and respect they influence each other in every area of life! This mutual edification, encouragement and influence is a constant force in their changing lives. I think I can safely say that no man after being married for many years to a Christian wife will ever be "the same man" after that wife dies. The constant presence of a Christian wife is also a constant encouragement, balance, influence and sometimes "muffler." She dulls the pain from insult and embarrassment experienced by her husband as he lives the life of a church leader. She is uplifting during times of depression caused by the many present day troubles of most churches. She provides a different perspective when weighing the options of many decisions required of an elder. She is the source of laughter in times of gloom. She contributes hope when it seems to be lacking. She offers inspiration when the passion seems to be gone. She adds to his spiritual knowledge in daily Bible studies and discussions. She assists in growing closer to God during regular mutual prayers. *Her regular private prayers for him are the source of his strength as a blessing from God.*

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When that constant influence is removed the man is never "the same" as he was with that influence. Maybe that is why an elder is required to be married, i.e. the constant and direct effect of a wife is beneficial and needed and necessary. Would any elder say that the influence of his wife was negligible or will not be missed? Would any man, after a long happy marriage to a Christian woman say after her death that her future contribution to the man's attitudes, efforts, initiatives and decisions would have been minimal or not needed nor missed? Would any Christian man say he will make the same decisions, act with the same way, show the same love, give the same consideration to all questions as he did before his wife died? Anyone who can answer "yes" to any of these questions has missed out on the greatest blessings of married life and is making a very critical statement about his departed wife and/or their marriage.

Does the teaching of Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 apply to marriage?

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work:
If one falls down, his friend can help him up.
But pity the man who falls and has no-one to help him up!
Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.
But how can one keep warm alone?
Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Even if all human nature and all scriptural teaching about the caring and loving nature of a Christian marriage are ignored and someone can be found that answers all, or any, of the above questions in the affirmative, ... the Bible still says that the elder "**must be**" a husband (present tense verb, implying the state of marriage must be current), regardless of all the human instincts which some may think run contrary to this plain statement..

B) 1 Timothy 5:9 gives us another view of how to translate 1 Timothy 3:2?

NIV- 5:9 No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband...

ASV- 5:9 Let none be enrolled as a widow under three-score years old, [having been] the wife of one man, ...

The Greek translated (NIV) "**has been faithful to her husband**" or (ASV) "*having been the wife of one man*" is ενος ανδρος γυνη, literally "of one husband wife."

Please note that the verb associated with "faithful to her husband (NIV)" or "the wife of one man (ASV)" telling us when the condition must be true is absent in the Greek of 1 Timothy 5:9, but inserted as "has been" by the NIV or "having been" by the ASV. The verb is specified in 1 Timothy 3:2 where it is present tense, i.e. **must be**. In Greek the verb 'to be' is often not present, it is to be understood from the context. Since the verb is missing here in 5:9, we must decide if Paul is saying to be enrolled as a widow she: **a) must be** (present tense), **b) must become** (future tense), or **c) must have been** (past tense) "a one husband wife (literally)" or "the wife of one man (ASV)"? Since she is now a widow we cannot pick option **a)** which would imply that she must not be put on the list of widows until she has a husband, therefore not being a widow any more. The verb cannot be in the future tense, option **b)**, because she needs the assistance now and that assistance cannot depend on a future condition being met, especially the condition of remarriage (*becoming* the wife of one husband) which would mean she would not then qualify for assistance as a *widow*. The present tense and future tense would also imply

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no one would ever be enrolled on the list, since they can't be enrolled until they become a wife again, thereby negating their qualification as a widow!

Therefore our choice of tense must be option c) past tense (Aorist), the same as the tense for "raised children," "showed hospitality," and "washed feet" in the next verse. If the tense is Aorist the translation of 1 Timothy 5:9 would literally be: "*No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been [of one husband wife (literally) or] the wife of one husband ...*" in exactly the same sense as an elder must be (present tense) the husband of one wife as stated in 1 Timothy 3:2.

C) It has been said "a man must be married to become an elder, but doesn't need to remain married in order to remain an elder."

What evidence is offered to substantiate this claim? What scriptural fact is presented from which this conclusion can be logically deduced? What scriptural example of another similar situation is presented? What verse or group of verses teach this qualification is short-term or only momentary? On the contrary, this qualification is implemented with the present tense verb, *must be*, which implies a current *and* future condition.

The verb *must be* is present tense, meaning that anytime anyone reads this verse the statement must be true. Yes, there is an exception to that general rule. 1 Corinthians 14:1 says "...eagerly desire spiritual gifts." This is a present tense verb. Does this imply that we today should desire spiritual gifts? No, because there are many verses that explain that spiritual gifts were temporary, e.g. 1 Corinthians 13:8-13. Only the Bible can specify that a command is temporary. There are many scriptures and much logic that specify that spiritual gifts are no longer available. Where are the scriptures or logic that teach, imply or even hint that any of the qualifications of the elders are temporary?

Anyone who reads the command "*must be ... the husband*" and concludes that after a wife dies the widower is still qualified to be an elder is probably too greatly influenced by his love, sympathy and respect for the elder in question thinking that if he resigned it would be an additional stress, pain and loss that he should not have to endure. But if this plain teaching from Paul was taught regularly and each elder knew it and a plan was in place to implement the resignation of any widower, the process could go smoothly and with less stress on the widower and on the congregation.

Reviewing 1 Timothy 3:1-2:

Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. 2 Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, ...

If the Holy Spirit had wanted to convey the idea that the marriage was required but only for the candidate, He could have maintained the subject from the first sentence, i.e. *anyone* (who desires to be an elder). He did not. He changed the subject to *the overseer*. Why? No word is in the Bible by accident. Each word (in the Greek) was chosen by the Holy Spirit. If He had wanted to convey the idea that this qualification only applied to the candidate for the office he would have maintained the subject from the first sentence, leaving out the underlined section in the previous scriptural quotation and said something like:

Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task ...and ... must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, ... etc.

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This wording would imply that the qualification applies to the candidate, not necessarily to the elder once he is installed. There may be several other words or groups of words to convey the message that the qualification is only temporary. None of these other choices of words were used. The Holy Spirit changed the subject from *anyone* to *the overseer* and used the present tense verb and specified that "an elder must be ... the husband..." i.e. the *elder/overseer* must be, not the *candidate* must be. How then can we refuse to accept what the Holy Spirit says and change His wording in a human effort to *improve* His message by saying or implying that this qualification is only temporary?

If **C**) is true, does this same logic apply to our corporate worship, i.e. must we sing? If we stop singing (I don't mean between songs, but deciding not to sing at all in our worship service) is our worship still acceptable to God? For example, in our congregation we always sang at every worship service. If we decided to no longer sing in our corporate worship. Is this worship still acceptable because we at one time did sing, or must it be continued at every service because our command to sing is a present tense, Ephesians 5:19? Every command to Christians, i.e. **to grow** in the grace and knowledge, 2 Peter 3:18; **Honor** your father and mother, Ephesians 6:2; Husband **love** your wives, Ephesians 5:28 are in the present tense. Could we say we are following any of these commands if we only did them for a while then stopped? 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 both say an elder "must be" married. How can we then say that if he is no longer married, he still meets this qualification?

What example is there where a command is given in the present tense but is no longer effective after a certain time limit or a special event, without contextual evidence to specifically justify its temporary nature? (See the example of 1 Corinthians 14:1-3, above)

What example from world affairs can be cited to validate the assumption made in **C**)? Is this true in the military? Would any business accept a president according to certain qualifications and then say it is all right to remain as president after losing one of the qualifications? Could any professional sportsman continue after it is proved he did not have some specific qualification?

If this conclusion **C**) is valid, can an elder remain in office if his wife leaves him, through no fault of his own, or after an elder gets a scriptural divorce? The elder is no longer married but was during many years of service as an elder. Can he remain in office? Please don't dismiss this question as if it could not happen. It can happen. I have seen it happen!

What if an elder has only one child, and that child very sadly and unfortunately dies while in High School? He had a believing child to become an elder, can he remain an elder with no believing children, in reality no children at all? **C**) would imply "Yes, he can."

Be careful how you answer the last two questions. If **C**) is correct you could have a man with no wife and no children serving as an elder, possibly for many years. If a congregation and eldership do this they will have a difficult time facing Christ on judgment day to give an account of everything done while in the body, 2 Corinthians 5:10.

Please forgive a few rhetorical questions. If **C**) is correct why would an elder have to maintain any of the qualifications? If he were "apt to teach" when accepted as an elder, must he retain that characteristic after becoming an elder? If he had a good reputation from outsiders when accepted as an elder must he retain that reputation after becoming an elder? If his children at home were Christians and obeyed him when he was accepted as an elder must his children retain that relationship to him if he is to remain an elder?

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In answer to these questions it has been said "yes, if he loses any of the other qualifications the elder must resign, because in losing the others qualifications sin is involved, therefore the elder must resign even if the elder repents of the sin. But since losing one's wife is not a sin he should not be forced to resign. This position is wrong for three reasons: 1) Several other qualifications can be lost without sin, 2) If the position was true, it implies that all Christian men unqualified for the eldership would be living in sin until they qualified, and 3) Some Scriptural and/or Logical evidence must be offered to prove: a) Loss of a qualification due to sin implies leaving the office of elder and b) Loss of a qualification due to non-sin implies no resignation is necessary.

1) Several other qualifications can be lost without sin, for example: a) To lose the qualification of being "apt to teach" is not a sin. The aptitude could have been lost through bad health or loss of desire, neither method of losing this eldership qualification is sin. b) If an elder's child, after he becomes an elder, refuses to be obedient, it is not a sin for the elder. c) If an elder loses his "good reputation" from outsiders it is not necessarily a sin, it might be because his political party is looked down on by all his acquaintances due to changing political circumstances after he was installed as an elder. d) If an elder has a non-Christian child who reaches the age of accountability, yet refuses to obey the Gospel, it is not a sin for the elder. But after a certain *reasonable* length of time the elder must resign. These four examples of an elder losing one or more qualifications, yet not due to sin, would all require an elder to resign. Therefore the fact that losing a wife is not a sin has nothing to do with whether the elder should resign. The point is losing the qualification, not how it is lost.

2) The objector in saying that losing certain qualification(s) for the eldership is due to sin, therefore, for this reason, the elder should resign. For example, if an elder lives so that he is no longer *above reproach*, it must be due to sin. Not necessarily! He may take an unpopular stance on a Biblical question, and maybe even be correct, but loses his reputation with the majority of the congregation due to his very unpopular position. Other qualifications such as being *temperate*, self-controlled, respectable, etc. might all be lost because of personality differences, political views or any number of reasons that are not sinful. The whole point of having qualifications is to select men for the job who are accepted as examples to follow by the congregation and respected as shepherds so as to be led by them. The Holy Spirit listed the correct qualifications to accomplish His purpose. The Holy Spirit is saying men like this can be leaders and elders, those men who don't have these characteristics should not be elders. There is no reason given for having or not having these qualities, it simply says only men who have them can be elders. No mention of circumstantial evidences that may imply an exception to His rules. Since no exceptions to His rules are stated, we can not conger up any. If for an elder to lose his standing of being *above reproach* is necessarily due to sin, or is sinful in and of itself, then all of us who are not *above reproach* are leaving in sin! The same can be said of all the other subjective qualifications. This necessarily implies that any who are not qualified to be elders are living in sin until they meet the qualifications of elders. Surely not even a casual Bible student would accept these necessary implications, Therefore C) must be false.

3) Some Scriptural and/or Logical evidence must be offered to prove: a) Loss of a qualification due to sin implies leaving the office of elder and b) Loss of a qualification due to non-sin implies no resignation is necessary. To merely say this is no evidence that it is true. Where is the scripture or logic which can be used to prove these two necessary implications from C)? We cannot fall victim to the world's practice of accepting hypothesis as evidence, theory as fact, nor accusations as truth. Without this evidence we must reject C) as false.

It has also been said that since there are no instructions on how to initiate the resignation of an elder then we cannot do it when the wife dies. We have no instructions on how or when to install an elder either. Yet, we use the purpose for, and qualification of, elders to imply the importance and the necessity of having them and then

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use prayer and wisdom to establish a procedure that works and is acceptable to the congregation. Why shouldn't we do the same thing for a resignation procedure? We also have no scriptural procedure for removing an elder who becomes a drinker, begins swearing, is found guilty of any crime and sent to jail, or a thousand other sins that all would agree would require removing him from the office of the eldership. Therefore if we can't ask an elder to resign when his wife passes on because we have no scriptural procedure to do so, then we cannot ask him to resign for any reason. Surely no one would agree with this necessary implication from this argument, therefore it cannot be used to justify C).

Finally, how would the logic of C) be applied to the widow being served in 1 Timothy 5:9. Could we say that a woman needs to be a widow to be added to the list, but does not need to remain a widow to remain on the list? The answer is so obvious someone might say "Of course she must remain a widow, the list is for widows! If she remarries she is no longer a widow and must be removed from the list of widows!!" If this logic is valid for the widow why not for the elder? To be put on the list of elders a man must be married, if his wife dies he is no longer married and must be removed from the list. Compare the following two commentaries on the indicated scriptures:

Timothy 5:9

Of course she must remain a widow,
the list is for widows!
If she remarries she is no longer a widow
and must be removed from the list.

Timothy 3:2

Of course the elder must remain married,
the list is for married men!
If his wife dies he is no longer married
and must be removed from the list.

Can any sincere Bible student accept the statements about one scripture while rejecting the statements about the other? If so, our reasons must be very convincing else we will have a difficult time when we face Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due to him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

D) The qualification to be married is like the requirement to have children, when the children leave home it is the same as when an elder's wife dies, i.e. no need to resign.

Some have said that the qualification to be married is "like the requirement to have children," it is temporary, i.e. when the children leave the home an elder is still qualified to be an elder. The conclusion is when an elder's wife dies he is still qualified to be an elder, because it is the same as when his children leave home. In other words losing his wife is the same as losing his children, i.e. neither event disqualifies the elder. This conclusion is false for three reasons: 1) It is logically arbitrary, 2) It ignores the differences between the two qualifications, and 3) It is unscriptural.

Before we discuss the reasons for the above conclusion being false we want to restate the importance of the question. This is a doctrinal question: The qualifications of elders. This decision will probably effect every congregation of the Lord's people. The elders, by definition, are older. Therefore it is only a matter of time until this question will be faced in almost every congregation. Having scripturally qualified elders is most important, as exemplified by the very qualifications themselves. If we implement these qualifications in a way unspecified by the Holy Spirit when He wrote them, we are in very grave danger of receiving severe judgment, Galatians 1:6-10, Revelation 22:18-19, 2 Corinthians 5:10.

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1) The conclusion that the qualification of an elder being the husband of one wife can be handled with the same supposed exception as the qualification requiring children is strictly arbitrary, therefore unjustified logically. Why couldn't I say, with the same authority:

- a) The "husband of one wife" is the same as the need to be hospitable, i.e. if the elder loses that qualification he must resign. Or,
- b) The "husband of one wife" is the same as the need to be "apt to teach," i.e. if an elder loses this ability he must resign. Or,
- c) The "husband of one wife" is the same as the need to be "above reproach," i.e. if an elder loses that quality he must resign. Or,

Why can't this specific qualification (the husband of one wife) be compared to any of the other qualifications and say when an elder's wife dies it is the same as losing the "tied to" qualification and would necessitate resignation? Why isn't this procedure as logical as saying we must handle "the husband of one wife" as we do the requirement to have children?

Absent any scriptures to the contrary, **wouldn't it be most reasonable to handle all qualifications the same**, i.e. if any of the qualifications are lost the elder must resign?

2) We cannot ignore the many differences between these two qualifications (husband of one wife and the requirement of children) even though they are sometimes illogically tied together.

We are not told why an elder must be married. Maybe the Holy Spirit expected that any mature Christian would know why. But, contrariwise, we are told why he must have children, 1 Timothy 3:5 NIV.

5 (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?)

This fact has many implications. We all know that children provide many blessings, challenges, joys, heartaches, pleasures, and training opportunities; for the children **and** the parents.

We will only mention here the benefits to the potential elder. Raising children is great training for the potential elder, preparing him to also train the congregation in spiritual growth as he trained his children in emotional and spiritual growth. Any father knows how much he, himself, grows as he raises his children. As his children mature his "oversight" diminishes as planned by his own desire, human physical nature and God's command.

All of us want our children to "grow up," and become mature and accept more and more responsibilities for their own actions and decisions. And as such they need less and less "oversight" from their father. Of course this fatherly influence continues throughout life, but we all agree this influence diminishes as the children grow older and leave home. This change is planned, desired and natural. At some point along this growth process the father is considered by the congregation to have managed his family well and therefore meets this one qualification to become an elder. At this point the children have fulfilled the purpose specified in 1 Timothy 3:4-5. (Please don't misunderstand, this is not the only purpose for children. It is just the only one we need to discuss here.)

Not only is this growth planned, desired and natural it is COMMANDED by God:

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Genesis 2:24 *For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.*

Matthew 19:5 *and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'?*

Mark 10:7 *'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,*

Ephesians 5:31 *"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."*

I quote all these passages here to emphasize the commandment to *leave* father and mother and be united with his wife. The separation of the children from the controlling influence of their father is commanded by God. Is it possible that the importance of this message contributed to the fact that the Holy Spirit wrote it four times.

Please also note the words of Paul in:

1 Corinthians 11:3 *Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.*

This passage teaches many lessons but the one point to mention here is the father is not noted, implying adult persons are no longer under the guidance of their physical father. Additional support can be gained from:

Ephesians 4:14 *that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; but speaking truth in love, we may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ;*

This passage is definitely talking about spiritual children and spiritual growth, but it has such clear spiritual meaning because the physical parallel is so well know and accepted.

So much emphasis has been put on this point in order to prove children leaving the home is natural, planned, desirable and command by God, in contrast to the fact that the elder's wife dying while he is in office is NOT planned, NOT natural, NOT desirable and especially NOT commanded by God!

How then can anyone say we must react to the death of the elder's wife in the same way as we react to his children leaving home as they mature?? The purpose for an elder being married is never fulfilled, it is always *being* fulfilled. The need for the wife's presence beside her husband is never fulfilled by another nor diminished by time, if anything it is enhanced by time.

When two Christians marry they become one flesh, but that is not the only way in which they merge. Because of their mutual love, honor and respect they influence each other in every area of life! This mutual edification, encouragement and influence is a constant force in their changing lives. I think I can safely say that no man after being married for many years to a Christian wife will ever be "the same man" after that wife dies. The constant presence of a Christian wife is also a constant encouragement, balance, influence and sometimes "muffler." She dulls the pain from insult and embarrassment experienced by her husband as he lives the life of a church leader. She is uplifting during times of depression caused by the many present day troubles of most churches. She provides a different perspective when weighing the options of many decisions required of an elder. She is the source of laughter in times of gloom. She contributes hope when it seems to be lacking. She offers inspiration when the passion seems to be gone. She adds to his spiritual knowledge in daily Bible studies and discussions.

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She assists in growing closer to God during regular mutual prayers. *Her regular private prayers for him are the source of his strength as a blessing from God.*

Assuming we should allow an elder to remain in office when his wife dies because we allow it when his children leave home is unreasonable, illogical and scripturally unauthorized.

3) Assuming we should allow an elder to remain in office when his wife dies because we allow it when his children leave home is unscriptural! It is unscriptural because there is NO scripture that commands it, teaches it, implies it nor even hints at it. Please brethren let us not practice something with no Biblical support.

Surely no more evidence is needed to prove **D)** is erroneous and contrary to Scriptures, logic and common sense.

Please believe me when I say I sincerely do not want to teach anything that is not in harmony with The Word. Would you please help me by pointing out any pertinent scripture not included in this discussion, any scripture that I misused or any faulty logic. You may contact me at c2baird@charter.net or 615-261-9324

Appendix D, A REFUTATION

1 Timothy 3:2 - "one woman man," from a Commentary by William Mounce.

My first email to Bill Mounce regarding his translation of 1 Timothy 3:2, found in his Greek and English Interlinear, is as follows: On Monday, April 9, 2012 at 6:14 AM, Cliff Baird wrote:

Dear Bill:

I attend a small congregation in middle TN. We are having a discussion about 1 Timothy 3:2. Your interlinear translation of $\mu\alpha\iota\varsigma$ $\gamma\upsilon\upsilon\upsilon\alpha\iota\kappa\omicron\varsigma$ $\alpha\upsilon\delta\rho\alpha$ gives "a man of one woman." You can really help me if you could share the evidence which prompted that decision. Please help me in this. Thanks for your time.Cliff

Bill's response: > Bill Mounce wrote:

>> It would be best if you could get a copy of my commentary. The discussion has a lot of facets to it. (I am on vacation, sorry). >> Bill

My follow up email was: On Tuesday, May 22, 2012 at 2:57 PM, Cliff Baird wrote:

> Bill,

> Sorry to bother you again, I really need your help and I don't know where else to turn. I know you must have this information written down somewhere. If you could just point me in the right direction so I could find it I would really appreciate it. You suggested your commentary, but when I accessed it online the explanation of 1 Tim. 3:2 was on an unavailable page. Your explanation of Titus 1:6 was only a statement with all the evidence supporting it on the missing page for 1 Tim. 3:6. Is buying your commentary the only solution?Cliff

His response: > Bill Mounce wrote: I am sorry but I don't have any way of getting that information to you without breaking copyright with Nelson.

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After the above email exchange I traveled to a Christian University library and looked up his commentary. The information on the translation of this phrase is on pages, 170-173 of his commentary on 1 Timothy.

After a short introduction to this phrase, *μιας γυναικος ανδρα*, he continues:

*"The eleven characteristics in vv 2b-3 are grammatically dependent upon δια, 'it is necessary,' of v 2. The first is that an overseer must be *μιας γυναικος ανδρα*, the "husband of one wife" or "a 'one-woman' man."*

After giving these two possible translations Bill Mounce goes on to say, in preparation for his interpretation which follows, that

"Paul could have said clearly (1) "must be married," (2) "not polygamous," (3) "faithful to his wife," or (4) not married/divorced."

Mr. Mounce says nothing more about the translation of the phrase. I found this astounding. He had said this phrase was one of the most difficult phrases in the Pastoral Epistles. And yet spends almost no time on how to correctly translate it. Stating the two valid choices, *husband of one wife* or *one-woman man* and observing that 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6 "suggests that marital faithfulness is a serious problem" he then chooses the non-marital translation of *one woman man* and proceeded with the interpretation.

Mr. Mounce chose to "correct" the translations in: Berry's Interlinear (1897), "of one wife husband;" Marshall's Interlinear (1958), "of one wife husband;" Comfort and Brown Interlinear (1990), "of one wife a husband;" without any comments as to why. He also did not mention the consistent translations **King James Bible of 1769, KJV (1873), NKJV, ASV, NASB, NIV, RSV** (plus 20 other translations listed on page 2), all of which translate this phrase using either *husband* or *wife*, implying this phrase meant a marital relationship. By choosing *one woman man* as the correct translation our author implied that everyone in the past was mistaken but this correct translation is now available, without any supporting evidence. This is phenomenal! Then he proceeds to the interpretation.

Yes, it is possible that all these Greek Scholars made the same mistake on this phrase, but to reach this conclusion would require a tremendous amount of evidence. Where is the list of Greek Scholars that outweigh those from history? Where is the evidence from Greek grammar which proves, or even suggests, that all the Greek scholars for over 600 years made the same mistake on the same phrase? Where are the scriptural facts from which we can logically conclude this horrendous error is now corrected? And finally, how do we explain God's ambivalence or indifference to this great transfer of *misinformation* for over 600 years, providing no way for the average man to know the truth about this phrase! One possible answer to all these questions might be to doubt the accuracy of this new translation.

Our author's attempt to justify his choice of translation is based on his interpretation, instead of the normal process of basing his interpretation on his translation. At the bottom of page 170 of his commentary he says "(1) The interpretation that the phrase means that an overseer must be married should be rejected This sees *ανηρ* and *γυνη* as "husband" and "wife," not "man" and "woman."" At this point our author seems to have completely dissolved the line between translation and interpretation. With this elimination he can now proceed to discuss any interpretation as if it were a translation, to the great detriment of Biblical truth.

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Because reasoning is required to evaluate the context as you translate any passage, does not necessitate that all translation is therefore interpretation. To eliminate the line between translation and interpretation is hardly the solution to the problem of how much reasoning can be used in the translation before it becomes an interpretation. The only solution seems to be having honest men who love the truth do the translation, 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 (with special attention given to verse 11). As we pray and ask for God's discipline to give us humility, with reliance on God's guidance in answer to our sincere and fervent prayer for wisdom we will grow in our efforts to understand even the difficult writings of Paul mentioned by Peter in 2 Peter 3:15-16.

Our author then gives five reasons for using "woman" and "man" instead of "husband" and "wife." They are: "(a) the emphasis of the phrase is on the word *μια*, "one," and not on the marital state; (b) Paul and Timothy would not be eligible to be overseers; (c) it runs counter to Paul's teaching that being single is a better state for church workers (if they have the gift; 1 Cor 7:17, 25-38); (d) this line of reasoning, to be consistent, would have to argue that the overseer is required to have more than one child since *τεκνα*, "children" (v 4) is plural; and (e) most adult men were married so it would have been a moot point."

Looking at these five reasons for using the non-marital translation it seems that all of them are rather normal or even obvious. Which of the five reasons took special insight, unique education, recent manuscript discoveries or additional perseverance to identify? Is our author saying, by implication, that all other Greek scholars for over 600 years overlooked, or ignored these factors? Or maybe previous scholarship chose to translate using *husband* and *wife*, based on the context rather than on these seemingly irrelevant observations. We will now investigate each of these five reasons separately to see if they should, or even can, be used as a deciding factor in this very important translation, or whether they are, indeed, irrelevant.

(a, first reason for one woman man) The emphasis of the phrase is on the word *μια*, "one," and not on the marital state. *First*, assuming his assessment of emphasis to be true, does that imply the marital state is to have no consideration? Does the placement of *μια* forward in a three word phrase have sufficient importance to base the whole translation of the phrase on the position of *μια*? If not, what other evidence is available to support the very heavy burden of a non-marital translation? Shouldn't the context have something to do with the translation of any word or phrase? The context talks about the actual home or an implication of a home in the following expressions: 1) *given to hospitality*; although not required, hospitality is more normal for a couple of a household, 2) *one that rules well his own house*, 3) *having children in subjection*, 4) *rule his own house*, and from Titus 1:6 ff., 5) *having children that believe*, (6) *(having children) not accused of riot or unruly*, (7) *given to hospitality*. All these phrases say or imply a marital state for the elder. All of this evidence is ignored because of the accusation of the author "the emphasis is on the 'one,' not on the marital state." The author's seems to imply that if the emphasis is on the "one" all that follows has no significance in a correct translation and this conclusion is reached based only on assumed, or at least missing, evidence. This type of procedure is tentative at best and probably very dangerous spiritually, James 3:1. If any of the missing evidence should ever appear supporting the emphasis being on the "one" and not on the marital status we will examine it at that time.

Second, the stated emphasis should be challenged. The context would imply otherwise. Considering both passages, 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, there are 7 phrases, listed in the previous paragraph, that say or imply a married state. In addition to these seven descriptions by the Holy Spirit there is also a very interesting sentence, i.e. verse 11. It is translated by our author as "*wives likewise must be dignified not slanders, clear-minded, faithful in all things.*" This verse is immediately after the first qualifications of deacons and is immediately followed by more qualifications of the deacons. This context makes it very likely that our author has correctly translated *γυναικας* as "wives" in this verse, implying the type of wife required of a deacon. Once again

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implying a marital status for the deacons, supporting the conclusion that the elders must also be married. All this strengthens our commitment to "the husband of one wife" as the correct translation for *μίας γυναικος ανδρα* in both 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6.

(b, second reason for one woman man) "Paul and Timothy would not be eligible to be overseers." This comment is only relevant if we first assume the Holy Spirit would only write such elder qualifications as would *include* Paul and Timothy! Such an assumption is obviously of human origin and is completely without scriptural or logical support. If "husband of one wife" is invalid because it would eliminate Paul as an elder, then "one woman man" is no better, because Paul was certainly not a "one woman man" either! "Oh, but he could be" some might say. Likewise Paul could get married and have believing children, thereby becoming qualified to be an elder. Although it is a true statement that Paul and Timothy would not qualify as elders, it is totally irrelevant to our question of how to translate *μίας γυναικος ανδρα*.

(c, third reason for one woman man) "it runs counter to Paul's teaching that being single is a better state for church workers (if they have the gift; 1 Cor 7:17, 25-38);" This comment is only relevant if it is true; ... it is not. The phrase "runs counter" seems to imply a contradiction, which it is not. 1 Corinthians 7 is talking about Christians, not elders. 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 only apply to elders, therefore no contradiction or "running counter." The characteristics required of the elder are simply additional to those for "regular" Christians.

The phrase "church workers" is nowhere found, or even hinted at, in the 1 Corinthians passage, which makes **(c)** even more irrelevant. Any possible idea from this one qualification that might seem to "run(s) counter" to 1 Corinthians 7 is nullified by scriptures that encourage marriage, 1 Corinthians 7:2 and others, mentioned by our author on page 172 of his commentary. Besides other scriptures that encourage *remarriage*, 1 Timothy 5:14, 1 Corinthians 7:8-9, and Romans 7:1-3. All of which nullifies his own argument on page 171.

(d, fourth reason for one woman man) "this line of reasoning, to be consistent, would have to argue that the overseer is required to have more than one child since *τεκνα*, 'children' (v 4) is plural;" This statement is so unusual that it engenders several comments:

1) For this statement to be relevant it must be true; ... it is not. It has been proven beyond a reasonable doubt (see cliffbaird.wordpress.com, The eldership, section **II A**) that *τεκνα* does not require an elder to have more than one child. The correct translation of 1 Timothy 3:2 has no influence on the interpretation of "children" in verse 4. On the other hand, the existence of children (one **or** more) in verse 4 has a significant influence on the translation of *μίας γυναικος ανδρα* in verse 2, i.e. an elder should be married and the translation should so indicate. **2)** For **(d)** to be true, the implication from it must also be true. The implication is "And since we know that *τεκνα* does not mean an elder must have more than one child, the elder cannot be required to be married." This implication is false because the consequence "marriage not required for elder" has no connection with and does not necessarily follow from the antecedent "*τεκνα* does not mean plural."

Therefore **(d)** is irrelevant because both the statement and its implication are false.

(e, fifth reason for one woman man) "most adult men were married so it would have been a moot point." This statement is irrelevant for two reasons: 1) it starts with an unprovable premise and 2) draws a conclusion which is false.

The Husband of One Wife

A detail explanation of 1 Timothy 3:2

1) "Moot" means, in this context, "not worthy of discussion because it has been resolved or no longer needs to be resolved," Webster's New World Dictionary. That most adult men were married is just another accusation which cannot be proven. The New Testament was written for all people for all time. To make this statement as it applies to every congregation of God's people throughout time and space is phenomenal. Although it may be true for some congregations, maybe even most, it certainly is not true of every congregation. However the qualifications for elders must apply to every congregation! 2) Even if the assertion about most being married were true in a given congregation it would certainly not be a moot point in *any* congregation. That's like saying that Starbucks requiring all new employees to be coffee drinkers is a moot point because most adults drink coffee. Or because most Christians tell the truth would it be a moot point for Jesus to say that his followers must not lie? Or because most Biblical commentaries are written by Christians does that make it a moot point for Zondervan to require all Bible commentators to be Christians. Or because most people who apply for an American passports are American citizens, is it a moot point for our government to require only citizens to apply?

To state a regulation to ensure an outcome under certain situations may, indeed, be a moot point, but requiring elders to be married in every congregation is most certainly not one of them. Statement (*e*) is untrue in stating most adult (without defining *adult*) men were married in every congregation and it is also untrue in asserting the marriage requirement to be a moot point, therefore (*e*) is irrelevant.

Summary

We have proven beyond a reasonable doubt that all five reasons given for rejecting the marriage requirement for elders are illogical and/or false and so are irrelevant. Therefore there is no valid reason to dismiss the traditional view that all Christians who desire to be an elder must be married. To overturn 600 years of consistency by Greek scholars on any given passage requires, and rightly so, a great deal of new or reevaluated evidence. So far, on this subject, we have had neither. Will Durant is once again proven right when he said "Experience suggests, however, that an old tradition must not be too quickly rejected; our ancestors were not all fools," History of Civilization, V. III, p. 556.

Since the New Testament was written for all people for all time, our phrase *μιας γυναικος ανδρα* is meant to be useful for all people for all time. Is there a possibility that the Holy Spirit, knew the future and wanted to teach that elders:

" must be married, not polygamous, faithful to his wife, ?

What if, in His infinite wisdom, He could teach all these things with one short three word phrase? If this was possible would He choose *μιας γυναικος ανδρα* to teach all these ideas?

The evidence implies that He not only could, He did!