



**COMMUNITY CHURCH**

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Mountain View Community Church Membership Meeting

Sunday, June 26, 2011

Mountain View Community Church membership meeting was held on Sunday, June 26, 2011, at 11:45 AM in the auditorium at Eastern View High School. Forty members were in attendance. The agenda item was a proposed change to the bylaws regarding elder qualifications and the term "husband of one wife". Discussion took place and a vote was taken to strike the line in our existing bylaws that reads, "In light of this, we feel it is wise to choose Elders who have continued in their first marriage" (Article 2, Section 3, #4). Vote was 29 – yes, 5 – no, 6 – abstain. The vote passed.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 PM.

Nancy Mattison

6/27/11

Nancy Mattison, Church Secretary/Clerk

Mark Jenkins

6/27/2011

Mark Jenkins, Lead Pastor

40 attended  
29- yes  
5- no  
6- abstain

Husband of One Wife...  
What Does This Really Mean?

**1 Timothy 3:2 (New International Version)**

*Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,...*

The phrase "husband of one wife" and its related phrase "the wife of one man" occur four times in the New Testament. The phrase "husband of one wife" is made up of three words in the Greek: *mias* meaning "one", *gynaikos* meaning "wife or woman", and *andra* meaning "husband or man." Thus, it can be translated "one-wife husband", "one-woman man", or "husband of one wife." The challenge has been in the board interpretation of this little phrase.

Over the years, this phrase has been used to try to dictate that an elder must be married, cannot be divorced, or cannot be an elder even if their spouse dies. Some have said that Paul's intent for this phrase was to prohibit polygamy. But it is unlikely that any of these issues were Paul's intent. We are convinced that this phrase does not disqualify a qualified widower from serving as an elder. A remarried widower could still be called the "husband of one wife."

It is our opinion that by itself the phrase the "husband of one wife" doesn't indicate whether Paul meant one wife in an entire lifetime or one wife at a time. We believe this phrase must be interpreted within the larger context of Paul's overall teaching on marriage. We also believe that our interpretations must never be allowed to contradict God's clear, general, teaching on marriage.

Historically, we know that among Jews, Romans, and Greeks, it was easy to divorce and remarry. In the case of remarriage following a divorce, two or three living women could have been married to the same man. Some have even termed this successive polygamy. Many theologians believe Paul prohibits a remarried, divorced man from the office of elder because of the potentially embarrassing situations his ex-wife (or ex-wives) create for the elder and the congregation.

Up to this point, Mountain View leadership has interpreted this phrase to mean that men who have remarried following a divorce could not be appointed as elders. After much study and prayer, we feel that the correctness of the interpretation of this particular phrase seems impossible to prove one way or the other. In fact, the problem with most of the interpretations related to this phrase is that they all create more problems than they solve. One author wrote, "*The interpretation "married only once in a lifetime" particularly raises a hornet's nest or mind-puzzling theological and marital questions.*"