

## Remarried But Not Disqualified

Series 1-10

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### **Remarried But Not Disqualified – A Biblical Defense of God’s Call After Divorce**

#### **Introduction: When Churches Shut Doors God Still Opens**

There is perhaps no scar in ministry more weaponized than the word **divorced**.

Not “backslidden.”

Not “lukewarm.”

Not “carnal.”

But *divorced*.

You can be a former drunk, a former addict, a former jailbird, and the church may still open the pulpit to you if you’ve turned your life around. But whisper the D-word—and suddenly the “grace is greater than all our sin” crowd turns into the Pharisees with clipboards and crossed arms.

It is tragic. It is unscriptural. And it must be confronted.

This series is for the **faithful, broken man** who has wept on his face before God—not because he ran away from a marriage, but because one was torn from him. Whether by betrayal, abandonment, or mutual collapse, he has grieved, repented where needed, and moved forward. He’s not a serial polygamist, not a predator, not a spiritual toddler. He’s been through fire and come out not bitter—but *better*.

And now? He finds the doors closed. Not by God—but by committees.

Not by Scripture—but by policy.

Not by the Spirit—but by the traditions of men.

#### **The Modern Pharisee Problem**

We live in an age of form-over-substance religion. Many of the loudest voices calling men “disqualified” are themselves living in disobedience to God’s Word, but their sins are

invisible—hidden behind religious polish and polite conference chatter. They measure men by a checkbox on a form, not by the fire in their soul. They quote 1 Timothy 3 with surgical precision, yet fail to apply the *gospel* of Jesus Christ to the wounded, the forgiven, and the restored.

What is worse, many of them—if judged by the same standards they impose—would themselves be disqualified.

This is not a defense of easy divorce. This is not a platform for compromise. This is a **call to biblical clarity**, grace-filled truth, and Christ-centered discernment. It's time to stop letting the Pharisees carry stones while pretending they have no sin (John 8:7). Jesus never said, "He who is doctrinally elite, let him cast the first disqualification." He said, "Let him that is *without sin...*"

This series will confront the hypocrisy of modern legalists while restoring the dignity of **God-called, blood-washed, Spirit-filled men** who've been shelved by men—but not by God.

### **Why This Series Matters**

The Apostle Paul said it best: "*For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance*" (Romans 11:29). That means if God has called a man—*truly called*—He doesn't change His mind because the man went through personal heartache.

But ask a church hiring committee today and you might hear:

"Well... he *was* called... but then his wife left him. Now he's disqualified."

"We love his preaching, and he's doctrinally solid, but he's been remarried. So... we just can't."

"We believe in grace—just not for the pulpit."

In other words: *God may have called him, but we've overruled God.*

Let that sink in.

This series exists because too many churches have let a misreading of Matthew 19—or a shallow interpretation of "husband of one wife"—create a caste system where divorced and remarried men are treated like spiritual lepers. Meanwhile, the very ones doing the disqualifying often live in pride, pornography, and religious cruelty—but no one checks *their* boxes.

We must ask: **Who really is disqualified?**

The man who has a past?

Or the man who denies God's grace to others?

### **A Word to the Wounded**

If you are a man who has walked through the valley of divorce with a crushed heart and clean hands, this series is for you.

If you have repented of past sin, cried out to God, and sought His will with a renewed heart—this series is for you.

If your desire is to preach the gospel, teach the Word, shepherd the hurting, and glorify Jesus Christ—but you've been told to sit down because of something God has already put under the blood—this series is for you.

You are not alone.

You are not disqualified.

You are not finished.

This isn't permission for rebellion or license for sin. This is **restoration**—God's specialty.

### **What This Series Will Do**

Each essay in this 10-part series (with a bonus appendix) will take aim at the most misused passages, challenge man-made disqualifications, and uplift the truth of **God's calling, God's grace, and God's plan for restoration.**

You will see:

- What *marriage* truly is in the Bible—and what it's not.
- What *divorce and remarriage* actually mean in context.
- How *Jesus' words in Matthew 19* have been twisted by Pharisees.
- Why *Paul's teachings* in 1 Corinthians matter more than committee bylaws.
- How the *devil attacks* the home to cripple the called.
- And most of all—how **God uses broken vessels** to display His glory.

## **Let's Get Real**

Jesus chose a woman with five failed marriages to preach to a city (John 4).

He restored Peter after public denial.

He called Paul—a murderer—to write the epistles.

He forgave David after adultery and murder—and called him a man after His own heart.

He used Jonah after rebellion.

He called John Mark after failure.

So if you're wondering whether God can use you after your heartbreak, your divorce, your remarriage, or your collapse—this series is shouting:

**YES. HE. CAN.**

And if your critics aren't careful, He may use *you* to reach *them*.

## **Final Note: This Isn't Just Theory. It's Testimony.**

This series is being written not from an ivory tower—but from the trenches. From the pulpit of experience. From a place where God's Word has been tested in the furnace of affliction—and found faithful.

Whether you're a pastor, preacher, teacher, deacon, evangelist—or just a believer who's heard “you can't” one too many times...

...you're not disqualified.

You're **called**.

And now?

You're **ready**.

Let's begin.

## **1 of 10: Remarried But Not Disqualified – Called of God, Not of Man**

### **God's Call on a Divorced Man**

**Key Texts:** Romans 11:29; 1 Corinthians 7:17

**Goal:** Show that God's call is on the man, not the marriage, and that a faithful man who's

been divorced is still called and usable. God doesn't revoke His call when a spouse walks away.

## **Introduction: The Call That Religion Tries to Cancel**

There is a calling that originates not from men, but from heaven. It doesn't come from credentials, committees, or public consensus—it comes from the throne of God. And once God calls a man, **no vote can override it, no scandal can revoke it, and no betrayal can cancel it.**

Yet in many religious circles today, the moment a man suffers a divorce—especially one outside of his control—the Church, not God, steps in with a red stamp of "**Disqualified.**" And if he dares to remarry? The whispers grow louder, the doors close tighter, and the platform crumbles beneath him, not because of sin—but because of **legalism.**

But the Bible speaks. And when it speaks, it shatters the false doctrines that religion tries to prop up. Scripture makes it clear: **God's call is not tied to a spouse. It is placed on the man.** And once placed, **it stands.**

### **1. The Irrevocable Nature of God's Calling**

#### **Romans 11:29 KJV**

*"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."*

This foundational truth stands like a mountain in the middle of a foggy swamp of church tradition. When God calls a man—whether to preach, pastor, teach, evangelize, or serve—He does so with **divine foreknowledge.** He knows the path ahead. He sees the heartbreaks, the betrayals, the human weaknesses—and He still calls.

That phrase "without repentance" means **irreversible.** God doesn't change His mind. He doesn't regret choosing you. He doesn't revoke your calling when your wife leaves, or your marriage collapses, or your church board takes a vote.

Religion may revoke it. Men may vote it down. But **heaven still honors it.**

If you're a man called by God, and your marriage fell apart—hear this clearly: **Your call did not fall with it.**

### **2. The Calling Is on the Man—Not the Marriage**

### 1 Corinthians 7:17 KJV

*“But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches.”*

Paul emphasizes that each person is to walk in the **calling given to them by God**, not by others. The calling is **individually distributed**.

God didn't call Abraham and Sarah together—He called **Abraham**.

He didn't call Moses and Zipporah—He called **Moses**.

He didn't call David and Michal—He called **David**.

He didn't call Hosea and Gomer—He called **Hosea**, even though his marriage was a disaster.

God **calls men**, not marriages. A marriage may support the ministry, enhance the calling, or create stability—but it is **not the source** of the call.

When a man is faithful, humble, Spirit-led, and obedient to the Word, **he is qualified to walk in that calling**—regardless of marital status.

### 3. When the Spouse Walks Away, God Doesn't

There's a brutal truth that few talk about: Sometimes, the wife walks away. Sometimes she backslides, abandons, commits adultery, chooses the world, refuses to repent, and **won't be restored**. And when that happens, the man is often treated as **the failure**, even though he remained faithful.

This is the devil's tactic.

- He can't disqualify the man directly, so he attacks the marriage.
- He knows the church will often blame the man **by default**, so he lets the weaker vessel fall—and watches as the stronger one is punished.

But God sees. And God never removes His hand from a man who stays faithful through the fire.

A broken marriage doesn't equal a broken calling.

### 4. Remarriage Doesn't Revoke the Anointing

This is the other religious landmine: remarriage. A man suffers through divorce. He heals. He finds a godly woman. They marry in Christ. They walk in unity. They minister together.

But legalists show up with their favorite club: “Husband of one wife.”

We’ll deal with that phrase in another essay, but for now, know this: **The Bible never says remarriage is sin for the faithful.** In fact, Paul says the opposite:

**1 Corinthians 7:27–28 KJV**

*“Art thou loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife. But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned.”*

Let that verse ring like a hammer on stone: **“Thou hast not sinned.”**

Remarriage is not sin.

Remarriage is not disqualification.

Remarriage is not adultery if the first marriage has ended.

And remarriage does **not cancel the call.**

## **5. The Ministry Belongs to God, Not a Denomination**

Church boards don’t get to cancel the anointing. Application forms don’t get to decide if someone is “usable.” When God calls, He equips. And when He equips, He sends.

And when men create extra-biblical standards—like asking *“How many times have you been married?”* as though that’s a spiritual metric—they are replacing **grace with a bureaucratic pharisaical system.**

God didn’t ask Moses for paperwork.

Jesus didn’t vet Peter’s marriage before handing him the keys.

Paul wasn’t asked how many failed engagements he had in Tarsus.

This system is modern.

It’s man-made.

And it’s antichrist in spirit.

## **6. Hidden Sins vs. Visible Wounds**

Let’s be honest. In too many churches:

- A man with a porn addiction can preach.
- A man with a pride problem can lead worship.
- A man with no prayer life can be an elder.
- A gossip can sit on a board.

But let a man go through a **visible** heartbreak like divorce, and suddenly he's considered unfit—while the secret sins of others are **never touched**.

That's not holiness. That's hypocrisy.

### **Romans 2:1 KJV**

*“Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man... wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.”*

If visible failure disqualifies but hidden rebellion does not, then the church has become more concerned with **optics than obedience**.

## **7. Biblical Examples of Men God Still Used**

Let's revisit some examples for clarity:

- **Moses:** His wife left him at one point (Exodus 4:24–26), yet God still used him mightily.
- **David:** Multiple wives, moral failure—yet still a man after God's own heart.
- **Hosea:** A prophet married to a repeatedly unfaithful woman.
- **The Samaritan Woman:** Five husbands—yet Jesus used her to reach an entire city.
- **Paul:** Possibly widowed or divorced—yet planted churches across the known world.

These men were **not perfect**, but they were **called**—and that's what mattered.

## **8. When God Still Walks With the Wounded**

### **Psalms 34:18 KJV**

*“The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.”*

Too often, the Church is the only army that shoots its wounded.

But God is different. He's close to the brokenhearted. He walks with the abandoned. He lifts the man who stayed pure when the marriage didn't. He gives **new beginnings** to men who thought ministry was over.

Not because they're entitled.

But because they're still called.

## 9. Stop Sitting Down When God Said Stand

There are countless men today who used to preach, teach, or lead—but after a divorce, they sat down in shame. Not because God told them to—but because the **church did**.

If that's you—listen carefully:

If your wife walked away, and you stayed faithful to the Word,  
If you remarried in the Lord and walk uprightly today,  
If you've been burning with a calling you haven't used in years...

**You're not disqualified.**

The call of God is still on your life.

He never revoked it.

He never changed His mind.

**You did.**

Get up again.

Dust off your sword.

And get back into the battle.

**Conclusion: The Call Stands.**

Let this ring in your soul like a trumpet blast:

**“For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”** – Romans 11:29

When God calls a man, **He doesn't tie that call to a woman's decisions**, a church's approval, or a denominational checkbox.

He calls the man.

And that call **still stands**, even if the marriage didn't.

## **2 of 10: Remarried But Not Disqualified – After That She Is Defiled**

### **The Finality of Divorce and the Sin of Returning**

**Key Texts:** Deuteronomy 24:1–4

**Goal:** Show that once divorce and remarriage occur, the original covenant is over. Returning is an abomination, proving you're not still married in God's eyes after divorce.

### **Introduction: When the Church Clings to What God Already Closed**

In a religious culture that obsesses over outward appearances and clings to man-made definitions of purity, there is a deep, aching need to return to **what the Bible actually says** about divorce and remarriage. Too many saints walk in **shame and silence**, not because God disqualified them, but because **man refuses to let them move forward**.

One of the most **ignored, misunderstood, and misused passages** in Scripture is **Deuteronomy 24:1–4**—and yet within it lies one of the clearest proof texts that can silence the confusion, condemn the legalism, and affirm those who have walked through the heartbreak of divorce and the complexity of remarriage.

This essay will walk through this passage and show without apology:

- ✓ **Divorce ends the covenant**
- ✓ **Remarriage is permitted under the Law**
- ✓ **Returning to a former spouse after remarriage is not restoration—it is abomination**
- ✓ **You are not still married “in God's eyes” once a divorce and remarriage has occurred**

### **1. The Legal Sequence in Deuteronomy 24:1–4**

#### **Deuteronomy 24:1–4 KJV**

*[1] When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.*

*[2] And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.*

*[3] And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife;*

*[4] Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after*

*that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the Lord: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.*

This is not poetry. It's not metaphor. This is **case law**—God giving His people a binding legal framework with **divine commentary**.

Let's walk through the structure:

1. A man marries a woman.
2. He finds some “uncleanness” and divorces her.
3. She lawfully marries another man.
4. That second marriage ends (death or divorce).
5. The first husband **cannot** remarry her.
6. Why? Because she is now **defiled**.
7. And returning to her is an **abomination** before the Lord.

This is the **clearest legal proof** in the Old Testament that once divorce and remarriage occur, **the original bond is over—and may not be restored**.

## **2. The Defilement: When and How It Happens**

Let's focus in on that critical phrase in verse 4:

*“after that she is defiled.”*

What does that mean? When did it happen?

Contrary to modern assumptions, the woman is **not defiled by returning to the first husband**—she is **already defiled** before the return is even attempted. The text uses **past tense**:

*“...may not take her again to be his wife, **after that she is defiled.**”*

So when was she defiled?

### **Verse 2:**

*“She may go and be another man's wife.”*

There it is.

The **act of remarriage** after divorce—though legally permitted—is the moment that **permanently closes the door** to the original covenant. The marriage to the second man **defiles** the first union—again, not in a sinful sense toward God’s law, but in the sense that the first marriage is now **spiritually and legally invalidated**.

That’s what defilement means here: **the first union has been polluted beyond restoration**. It cannot be repaired, reclaimed, or resurrected.

### 3. The Abomination: What God Forbids Man to Restore

*“...for that is abomination before the Lord...”*

Let this statement ring with all the weight it deserves.

God doesn’t say that returning to the first marriage is “unwise,” or “a bad idea,” or “less than ideal.” He says it is an **abomination**.

In Hebrew, the word *toebah* means something that is **detestable, disgusting, and morally revolting** to a holy God.

What is being condemned here is not the divorce.

Not the remarriage.

But the attempt to go back and act like the past never happened.

Trying to “rebind” a former marriage after one or both parties have been joined to another is **not restoration—it’s rebellion** against God’s revealed order.

### 4. You Are Not Still Married in God’s Eyes

Many legalists say, “You may be divorced legally, but in God’s eyes you’re still married.”

But that’s **not what this passage teaches**.

Let’s ask the text some questions.

**? If the first couple were still married in God’s eyes, would the second marriage be considered adultery?**

No. Verse 2 explicitly permits the woman to “be another man’s wife.” The remarriage is lawful.

**? If she’s still married to the first man, wouldn’t going back to him be fixing the mistake?**

No. Verse 4 says it's an **abomination** to go back. If they were still married in God's eyes, the reunion would be restoration. But it's not.

### ? So what does this mean?

It means the **first marriage is completely ended** in God's eyes. Not just in human legal terms. Not just in culture. In **God's eyes**, the divorce and remarriage have closed that covenant permanently.

Therefore, when someone tells a remarried believer, "You're still married to your first spouse," they are contradicting Scripture and laying a burden God Himself has not authorized.

## 5. What This Means for Grace and the Gospel

Some mistakenly think that because Deuteronomy 24:4 calls something an abomination, the remarried person is forever defiled in God's sight. But that's not what the passage says.

The **second marriage is not condemned**. What is condemned is the idea of **reuniting** with the original spouse **after remarriage** has occurred.

So the proper response to a broken and remarried person is not:

- "You're living in adultery."
- "You need to separate from your current spouse."
- "You should have stayed single forever."

No.

The correct, biblical response is:

"Don't go back. That door is closed.

But now that you are remarried, walk forward in righteousness, in holiness, and in grace."

## 6. Jesus Affirmed the Law, Not the Legalists

Now let's deal with the objection from Matthew 19, where Jesus says:

### Matthew 19:9 KJV

*"And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery..."*

At first glance, this seems to contradict Deuteronomy 24.

But here's the key: **Jesus was correcting the abuse of Deuteronomy 24, not erasing it.**

The Pharisees had twisted the Law to allow **no-fault divorce**. Men were "putting away" their wives without legal divorce (without a bill), and then remarrying. That **was** adultery, because the first marriage had not been legally dissolved.

Jesus was bringing them back to the **original intent** of marriage: that it was meant to be a lifelong covenant—not a casual agreement.

But notice: even Jesus gives the **exception clause**—"except it be for fornication."

Meaning: **In cases of sexual sin**, divorce and remarriage are permissible—just as Deuteronomy 24 implies.

There is **no contradiction**. Jesus was reinforcing the standard of the Law—not undermining it.

## **7. Modern Application: Stop Trying to Reopen What God Closed**

Here's where it gets practical:

Too many churches today hold divorced and remarried people hostage to their past.

- They tell them to leave their second spouse.
- They tell them to "go back to the first one."
- They say, "God sees you as still married."

But Deuteronomy 24 shuts the door on that nonsense.

"After that she is defiled... it is abomination."

If you're remarried, the first marriage is over. You **cannot** go back. It's not God's will. It's not righteous. It's sin.

God's command is: **Walk forward.**

Stop digging up what God buried.

Stop repenting for what He no longer remembers.

Stop calling restoration what He calls rebellion.

## 8. What About Ministry? Am I Still Qualified?

This passage doesn't directly address ministry qualifications, but the implications are profound.

If a man is:

- Biblically divorced (not the one who committed adultery),
- Remarried lawfully,
- Walking uprightly in the Spirit,
- Faithful to his new wife...

Then he is not disqualified.

Deuteronomy 24 proves that **he is not still married to his first wife** in God's eyes. The remarriage is **final, valid, and honorable**.

So when ministry applications ask, "*How many times have you been married?*" or worse, "Are you disqualified due to divorce?"—remember: that's man's standard, not God's.

The better question is:

"Are you faithful to your wife today, walking in the Spirit, and preaching the Word?"

If yes, then keep preaching.

You're not disqualified—**you're clean**.

## 9. You Are Not Defiled—The Past Is

Let's be clear: the defilement described in Deuteronomy 24:4 is **about the former union**, not your spiritual state.

It's the **original marriage** that is now defiled—not **you**.

In fact, if you're remarried today, walking in truth, and raising your family in righteousness—**you're more than restored—you're refined**.

The scar of divorce is real.

The pain of betrayal or abandonment is deep.

But the blood of Christ cleanses **all sin**—even the kind caused by others.

## 10. Final Word: Let the Door Stay Shut

### Deuteronomy 24:4

*“Her former husband... may not take her again... after that she is defiled.”*

This verse is not cruel—it is **freeing**.

It says:

- You don't owe your former spouse reconciliation.
- You don't have to live under condemnation.
- You don't have to tear apart your current marriage to satisfy religious critics.
- You are not “still married in God's eyes.”
- You are not “living in adultery.”
- You are not second-class.

The marriage ended.

The covenant is broken.

The door is shut.

And trying to reopen it would be **sin**, not righteousness.

So walk forward.

Love your current spouse.

Teach your children grace.

Serve your church.

Preach the truth.

And let anyone who says otherwise be silenced by the Word of God.

### **Conclusion: A Closed Covenant Is Still Covered by Grace**

You are not defined by your divorce.

You are not disqualified by your remarriage.

You are not bound to the past when the cross of Christ calls you forward.

Deuteronomy 24:1–4 is your proof text:

**Once the covenant is broken and defiled, it may not be revived.**

Let that silence the Pharisee.  
Let that release your conscience.  
Let that strengthen your walk.

Because **you're not defiled. The old covenant is.**  
And God has already **moved you on in grace.**

### **3 of 10: Remarried But Not Disqualified – Thou Hast Not Sinned**

#### **Paul's Teaching on Remarriage**

**Key Texts:** 1 Corinthians 7:27–28

**Goal:** Refute the false idea that remarriage after divorce is always sin. Paul says you have not sinned—and that trumps man's opinion.

#### **Introduction: Let Paul Speak**

The topic of remarriage after divorce has become one of the most **abused** and **legalistically misrepresented** issues in the modern church. Religious institutions often place divorced and remarried believers under constant scrutiny. Their salvation is questioned. Their service is rejected. Their leadership potential is erased.

But the Apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, speaks plainly. And when he does, it silences every critic, every Pharisee, and every guilt-shamer.

In just five words, Paul ends the debate:

**“Thou hast not sinned.”** (1 Corinthians 7:28)

This essay will make one thing absolutely clear:

**Remarriage after divorce is not inherently sinful.**

**Paul affirms it. God honors it. And the church needs to stop condemning it.**

Let's walk verse-by-verse, word-by-word, and destroy the lie that has kept too many believers bound to a past that Christ already forgave.

#### **1. The Corinthian Context – What Was Really Going On?**

The first thing we must understand is the **context** of Paul's letter.

The Corinthian church was:

- Spiritually gifted, but morally confused
- Surrounded by pagan culture
- Riddled with questions about sex, marriage, celibacy, and relationships

In 1 Corinthians 7, Paul is responding to **a list of questions** the church sent him. He is not giving sweeping universal mandates. He is answering **very specific pastoral concerns** from believers who wanted to do right in the middle of marital chaos.

This chapter is not about perfect marriages. It's about **how to serve God when relationships are broken, strained, or irreparably changed.**

## 2. The Key Passage: 1 Corinthians 7:27–28

### 1 Corinthians 7:27–28 KJV

*“Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.*

*But and if thou marry, **thou hast not sinned**; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned...”*

Paul uses two phrases here:

- **“Bound to a wife”** – meaning presently married
- **“Loosed from a wife”** – meaning **divorced** or released from the covenant

This is not talking about widows. He covers them later in verse 39. This is addressing men who are divorced.

And what does he say?

*“Art thou loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife. **But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned.**”*

That last phrase is the **death blow** to the false doctrine that **all remarriage is adultery.**

Let it be shouted from every pulpit:

**Thou. Hast. Not. Sinned.**

## 3. The Legalist's Twist – What They Try to Do With This Verse

Despite how plain the verse is, legalists try to twist it.

### Some claim:

*“Paul’s only talking about virgins or never-married people.”*

But verse 28 covers **two different categories**:

- First: *“If **thou** marry, thou hast not sinned”* – referring to the **loosed** person in verse 27
- Second: *“If a virgin marry, she hath not sinned”*

Clearly, two types of people. Paul says **both** are allowed to marry—**without sin**.

### Others say:

*“Loosed just means separated, not divorced.”*

But the Greek word for "loosed" here is **λύω (luō)**—which means to **release, dissolve, or untie**. It’s the same word used to describe **breaking legal bonds** or **untying a ship from its dock**.

Paul is talking about people **freed from a previous marriage**.

In fact, he uses the opposite word—**“bound” (δέδουσαι)**—to refer to those still married.

So Paul contrasts:

- Bound = still married
- Loosed = divorced

No ambiguity. Just **truth that legalism can’t handle**.

## 4. Why Paul Says “Seek Not a Wife” But Still Allows Marriage

Some people wonder: *If remarriage isn’t sin, why does Paul say, “Seek not a wife”?*

Here’s why:

Paul believed that **in times of persecution**, singleness might be more practical for ministry. Earlier in chapter 7, he says:

### 1 Corinthians 7:26 KJV

*“I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress...”*

What distress? Likely growing persecution against the Church. Paul knew that **marriage brings extra care and burdens**—not because it’s wrong, but because it divides your focus.

But what does he also say?

*“If thou marry, thou hast not sinned.”*

In other words:

- If you can serve God single, great.
- If you desire marriage, **you’re still clean.**

This is **not law**. It’s **pastoral counsel**.

And Paul makes sure no one turns it into doctrine by adding that beautiful, liberating phrase:

*“Thou hast not sinned.”*

## **5. Romans 7 and the One-Flesh Argument**

Some try to argue from Romans 7:2–3 that remarriage after divorce is always sin unless the first spouse is dead.

### **Romans 7:2–3 KJV**

*“...if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress...”*

Here’s the problem: **Romans 7 is not a teaching on divorce**—it’s an analogy for the Law. Paul is using the binding power of marriage to explain how the Law binds us **until death**, but grace makes us **free**.

He’s not laying down a marriage doctrine—he’s laying out the **gospel of grace**.

That’s why in 1 Corinthians 7, he gives actual **pastoral instruction about marriage and remarriage**, and says:

**“Thou hast not sinned.”**

When Paul wants to teach marriage doctrine, **he says so directly**.

Romans 7 is about sin and grace—not divorce law.

## 6. You Can't "Sin" into a Covenant

Let's use some logic.

If remarriage after divorce is always adultery...

- Then every remarried person is **living in perpetual sin**.
- Then every time they sleep with their new spouse, they're compounding adultery.
- Then the only way to "repent" is to **divorce again**—breaking a new covenant to try and restore an old one.
- But **Deuteronomy 24:4** forbids returning to a former spouse after remarriage. God calls it an **abomination**.

So now you're in a bind:

- Stay in your new marriage = adultery?
- Leave your new spouse = destroy a covenant?
- Go back to your first = abomination?

This is the tangled web legalism always weaves.

But Paul ends the confusion:

*"Thou hast not sinned."*

God **sanctifies** the new marriage—not shames it.

## 7. What About "Living in Adultery"?

Some cite **Matthew 5:32** and say:

*"Whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."*

That was Jesus speaking to Jews who were **putting away their wives without cause**. They were refusing to give a bill of divorcement (Deut. 24), meaning the woman was still legally married—but left alone and vulnerable.

Jesus was rebuking unjust divorce, not righteous remarriage.

If **all remarriage** is adultery, then:

- Jesus contradicts Moses (He didn't).

- Paul contradicts Jesus (He didn't).
- Grace contradicts the Law (It doesn't).

The real issue Jesus was addressing was this: **Men treating women as disposable.**

But when divorce is final, and remarriage occurs lawfully, Paul—under the same Spirit as Christ—says:

**“Thou hast not sinned.”**

## **8. God Is Not the Author of Confusion**

### **1 Corinthians 14:33 KJV**

*“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace...”*

Legalism brings chaos.

One group says remarriage is sin.

Another says it's okay if your spouse cheated.

Another says you must remain celibate forever.

Another says go back to your first spouse—even if they've remarried.

God doesn't speak through contradictory voices.

He speaks through His Word.

And His Word says clearly:

*“If thou marry... thou hast not sinned.”*

That's peace.

That's order.

That's Scripture.

## **9. Pastors, Evangelists, and Teachers: You Are Not Disqualified**

Many men called by God walk in silence because of one thing: **divorce**. Some were abandoned. Some were cheated on. Some were thrown out for preaching truth. Others walked through failure, repentance, and restoration.

And now they're remarried, fruitful, blessed—and disqualified?

Not by God.

## **Romans 11:29 KJV**

*“For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”*

If you’ve been loosed, and you’ve remarried in the Lord, and you are walking uprightly:

- ✓ You are not in sin
- ✓ You are not unclean
- ✓ You are not disqualified
- ✓ **You are not done**

Let this echo through every chamber of your heart:

**“Thou hast not sinned.”**

### **10. You Don’t Have to Justify What God Has Already Cleared**

You don’t need to apologize for being remarried.

You don’t need to give a five-minute disclaimer before your testimony.

You don’t need to check a box on a church form that says “How many times have you been married?”

You need only one answer:

“I’m walking in grace—and I have not sinned.”

Let man rage.

Let religion fume.

Let church boards disqualify.

Let denominations vote you out.

**Heaven has already voted you in.**

### **Conclusion: Grace Is Greater Than Opinion**

There will always be Pharisees.

They’ll ignore context.

They’ll twist Scripture.

They’ll shame what God has already sanctified.

They’ll shout about their version of holiness while hiding behind pride, lust, or power.

But when Paul—the apostle to the Church—speaks on the matter of remarriage, he says something **no modern Pharisee can erase**:

\*“But and if thou marry, *\*thou hast not sinned.*” – 1 Corinthians 7:28

If Paul said it, that’s the final word.

Not your church handbook.

Not your former pastor.

Not your accusers.

Not even your own inner guilt.

The Bible says you're free.

You’ve been loosed.

You’ve remarried.

**And you have not sinned.**

#### **4 of 10: Remarried But Not Disqualified – Flesh of Flesh**

##### **What the Bible Says Marriage Really Is**

**Key Texts:** Genesis 2:24; 1 Corinthians 6:16

**Goal:** Teach that marriage in the Bible is flesh joining flesh, not a ceremony. A man who joins to a woman in physical union becomes one flesh—that’s the biblical definition, not the Roman ritual.

##### **Introduction: More Than Rings and Vows**

Ask the average Christian what marriage is, and you’ll likely hear something about walking down an aisle, saying vows, exchanging rings, signing paperwork, and maybe throwing rice outside a chapel. But **none of those elements are ever commanded, required, or even described in Scripture** as the essence of marriage.

Where did this modern idea come from? Much of it—wedding rings, ceremonies, and institutional involvement—comes from **Roman tradition** and **Catholic influence**, not biblical revelation. Over time, the **ritual replaced the reality**.

This essay will walk through Scripture and prove:

- ✓ Marriage in the Bible is the joining of flesh—not officiated liturgy.
- ✓ One-flesh union, not man-made ceremony, is what God calls marriage.
- ✓ The Church needs to return to **biblical definitions**, not cultural or denominational ones.
- ✓ This truth is especially relevant for believers who've been remarried, wrongly condemned for "illegitimate" unions.

If we're going to talk about remarriage rightly, we have to define marriage biblically. And Scripture starts—not in a church—but in a **garden**.

## 1. The First Marriage: Flesh of My Flesh

### Genesis 2:23–24 KJV

*“And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.*

*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”*

There was no priest.

No vows.

No ceremony.

No license.

No flowers, photographers, groomsmen, or guest list.

Just **God, a man, a woman**, and the **declaration of one flesh**.

Adam's words weren't just poetic—they were **covenantal**. He acknowledged Eve as his **counterpart in body**. God, as the Witness, honored that. And the union was sealed not in public ritual but in **private intimacy**.

This is **God's prototype** for marriage:

- Not religious formality
- Not civil paperwork
- But the **cleaving of flesh to flesh**, under divine recognition

And that pattern continues.

## 2. Cleaving = Covenant

The word “**cleave**” in Hebrew is *dabaq*, meaning to **adhere, cling, or be joined fast together**. It’s the same word used in:

### Ruth 1:14 KJV

*“But Ruth clave unto her...”*

It implies **emotional loyalty, relational exclusivity**, and most importantly, **physical union**.

When Genesis 2:24 says a man shall “cleave unto his wife,” it’s not talking about merely committing emotionally or standing at an altar—it’s the **intimate act** of joining.

**One man. One woman. One flesh.**

That’s the covenant. That’s the marriage.

## 3. 1 Corinthians 6:16 – The One-Flesh Reality

Paul, centuries later, confirms the same truth:

### 1 Corinthians 6:16 KJV

*“What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.”*

This is staggering.

Paul says that even **joining with a prostitute** results in **becoming one flesh**—because that’s how physical intimacy works in God’s eyes.

Notice:

- There’s no ceremony.
- No covenantal vows.
- No legal paperwork.
- But the **act alone** creates a one-flesh bond.

This shows that **God recognizes the physical act as binding**—whether in righteousness or in sin.

So if becoming “one flesh” with a harlot is acknowledged as real by God—**how much more legitimate is a one-flesh union in the context of love, commitment, and fidelity?**

#### 4. Marriage Is Not Man's Ceremony, But God's Design

Nowhere in Scripture is a marriage described as needing:

- A government license
- An official ceremony
- A wedding ring
- A religious rite

These things may be **practical, traditional, or helpful**—but they are not **foundational**.

The biblical foundation of marriage is this:

#### **Leaving, Cleaving, and Becoming One Flesh**

(Genesis 2:24)

And Paul repeats that same structure in the New Testament:

#### **Ephesians 5:31 KJV**

*“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.”*

Same structure. Same message.

**No ritual. Just reality.**

#### 5. Rings, Rituals, and Rome – Where Did the Ceremonies Come From?

The modern wedding ceremony—with white gowns, ring exchanges, processions, and altars—originated largely from **Roman Catholic influence**, which fused **pagan tradition with Christian language**.

- **Wedding rings** were pagan fertility symbols.
- **White dresses** were symbols of Roman purity and wealth.
- **Standing before a priest** came from Roman legal systems and Church authority, not Scripture.

None of these are sinful in and of themselves. But problems arise when these **traditions are elevated above truth**.

Too many churches treat a legally licensed ceremony as **the only real marriage**, and treat one-flesh unions—especially remarriages after divorce—as **illegitimate**, even when they meet all biblical criteria.

This is not holiness. This is **traditionalism masking as doctrine**.

## 6. So What Makes a Marriage Legitimate?

Let's break it down simply:

### ✔ Biblical Marriage Is:

- A man and woman leaving former ties
- Cleaving to one another in emotional and physical union
- A one-flesh relationship under the eye of God
- Faithful, exclusive, enduring

### ✘ Biblical Marriage Is Not:

- Dependent on civil paperwork
- Dependent on a denominational endorsement
- Defined by a wedding ceremony
- Invalid without rings, candles, or formal witnesses

God **blessed Isaac and Rebekah's marriage** without a public ceremony (Genesis 24:67). They entered the tent. They consummated the union. **That was the marriage.**

If God honors a covenant of flesh and faithfulness, who are we to demand a certificate and a stage show?

## 7. The Double Standard of the Legalists

Here's the tragic irony.

A man and woman who stood at a church altar, signed a license, exchanged rings—but never consummated the relationship—would be declared “married” by most churches.

But a godly, faithful couple who were joined in one flesh without a ceremony—especially after a divorce—would be declared “living in sin.”

That's not biblical. That's **backward**.

God doesn't measure marriage by **outward ritual**. He measures it by **inward reality**.

#### **Hebrews 13:4 KJV**

*"Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."*

This verse ties the legitimacy of marriage to the **purity of the physical union**, not to religious formality.

### **8. Remarried? You're Still One Flesh**

Let's apply this truth to those who have been remarried after divorce.

Many are told:

- "Your second marriage isn't valid."
- "You're living in adultery."
- "God never sanctioned this union."

But if a man and woman have been:

- Joined together physically
- Faithful to one another
- Living in covenantal commitment

Then **they are one flesh**. And that **is marriage** by every biblical standard.

God doesn't recognize **fake weddings and empty rituals**.

He recognizes **flesh joined in fidelity and grace**.

### **9. Divorce Ends the First Flesh Union**

Some argue, *"But the first marriage was one flesh. You can't break that."*

Yet the Bible shows that divorce **can dissolve** a one-flesh union.

#### **Deuteronomy 24:1-4**

A man divorces his wife. She marries another. She is **defiled**—meaning the **first covenant is now legally broken and cannot be restored**.

Jesus also refers to the Mosaic allowance for divorce “because of the hardness of your hearts.” (Matthew 19:8)

That doesn’t mean divorce is ideal—but it is **real**, and it **ends** the first union.

Once that happens, and a new union is formed, **God does not call it adultery**—He calls it **one flesh**.

## **10. The Gospel in Marriage – Christ and the Church**

Marriage is a picture of Christ and His bride.

### **Ephesians 5:32 KJV**

*“This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.”*

And what is the Church?

- Called by grace
- United to Christ
- One with Him in spirit
- Without any official ceremony the world could see
- Not based on earthly contracts, but **divine union**

Marriage in the gospel is not about legalism. It’s about **love, covenant, and intimacy**—just like the one-flesh union between man and woman.

And just like God doesn't un-save someone because they mess up, He doesn't declare someone "not married" because they didn't have a formal ritual.

## **11. Practical Application: Stop Invalidating What God Has Blessed**

To those in second marriages—especially after unwanted divorce—you need to hear this:

- You are not in sin.
- Your union is not illegitimate.
- You are one flesh.
- You are married in God’s eyes—even if no church bulletin says so.

Stop letting religious systems define what **God already affirmed**.

And to the pastors, elders, and institutions that elevate **form over substance**, consider Jesus' words:

**Matthew 15:9 KJV**

*“But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”*

## **12. A Word to the Wounded and the Shamed**

If you were once made to feel like your remarriage wasn't real...

If someone said your union was invalid...

If the ceremony didn't “count”...

If you were told you were still married to someone who left you long ago...

Then let God's Word silence their voices.

You are one flesh.

You are not defiled.

You are not in sin.

You are not second-class.

You are not married to the past.

## **Conclusion: Flesh of Flesh – And That's Enough**

Adam never gave Eve a ring.

Isaac never booked a venue.

Paul never performed a wedding.

And yet God calls those unions real.

Because marriage isn't a ritual.

It's not a rulebook.

It's **one flesh** under God.

Let the Pharisees howl.

Let the church forms pile up.

Let the critics write their theology books.

But let the Scriptures stand:

**“They shall be one flesh.”**

— Genesis 2:24

That's marriage.  
That's covenant.  
That's all you need.

## **5 of 10: Remarried But Not Disqualified – Grace in the Pulpit – Can a Divorced Man Preach?**

### **Introduction: Who Deserves a Pulpit?**

The question of whether a divorced and remarried man can preach has become one of the most hotly debated and shamefully weaponized issues in the church today. Churches that claim to preach grace suddenly enforce Pharisaical judgment when a brother—called of God, filled with the Spirit, proven in life and doctrine—is found to have a divorce in his past. In many places, it doesn't matter if the divorce was scriptural, undesired, or long in the past. It doesn't matter if his present marriage is healthy, godly, and full of fruit. They hold up one phrase from 1 Timothy 3:2—"the husband of one wife"—and slam the door of the pulpit in his face.

But is that what Scripture really teaches? Is the phrase "husband of one wife" a moral weapon to disqualify anyone with a difficult past, or a mirror reflecting current character? Is God's grace powerful enough to forgive fornication, addiction, idolatry—but not divorce?

This essay answers those questions directly. It will show, from Scripture, that:

- The qualification "husband of one wife" refers to present faithfulness, not a marital past.
- God does not revoke His gifts or calling when tragedy or abandonment strikes.
- Grace empowers the forgiven, not sidelines them.
- The real threat to the pulpit isn't the remarried—it's the self-righteous.

Let's tear down this legalistic wall and let grace speak.

### **1. The Misuse of "Husband of One Wife"**

**Key Text: 1 Timothy 3:2**

“A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife...”

This is the cornerstone phrase used to disqualify remarried men from pastoral ministry. But what does it mean?

**The phrase is a present-tense moral qualification.** It does not say “has only ever had one wife.” It says he must **be** the husband of **one** wife—presently faithful, not a polygamist, not a womanizer, not given to marital chaos. The Greek phrase *mias gunaikos andra* literally means “a one-woman man.” It is a character requirement, not a historical résumé.

If we applied the same logic legalistically to the rest of the verse, we'd also have to disqualify any man who had ever **once** lost control of his temper, or lacked hospitality, or struggled with finances.

But Paul wasn't writing to make a law. He was writing to Timothy about the visible fruit of **current** Christian maturity.

If God disqualified every man who had failed in the past, then the pulpit would be empty.

## 2. What About Divorce and Remarriage?

Many argue that remarriage is adultery, citing verses like Luke 16:18. But context matters.

Jesus was speaking to Pharisees who were **divorcing for trivial reasons**, leaving their wives vulnerable while remaining religiously arrogant. Jesus was exposing **hard hearts**, not condemning every remarriage.

Paul, by contrast, says something far more freeing:

“But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned.” – 1 Corinthians 7:28

That's a clean slate. If you're divorced and free to marry, **you have not sinned**. Case closed. If God doesn't call it sin, then neither should man.

## 3. Can a Murderer Preach, but Not a Divorcé?

Consider this: Paul was a murderer of Christians. Peter denied Christ three times. David committed adultery and murder. Yet God used every one of them. Why? Because of **grace**.

But in today's churches, a man who has been **abandoned** by a wife, or divorced against his will, or forgiven and remarried in Christ, is treated worse than a murderer. He's disqualified, excluded, and told he cannot lead.

That's not grace. That's hypocrisy.

If grace can cleanse a murderer, then surely it can cleanse a broken marriage.

#### 4. The “One Wife” Argument Backfires

Here's something few want to admit: The phrase “husband of one wife” has **zero** to do with whether a man is divorced. If taken literally, it would disqualify:

- **Single men** (not married = 0 wives)
- **Widowers** who remarry (2 wives total)
- **Men with deceased wives** (because technically, they had more than one)

But Paul himself was **single**. Was he disqualified? Of course not.

The Bible is not interested in tallying past marriages. It's looking for **present** spiritual maturity and moral integrity.

#### 5. The True Qualification: Blameless, Not Sinless

Let's go back to the beginning of the list:

“A bishop then must be **blameless**...”

Blameless does not mean sinless. It means **above reproach**, not living in unrepentant sin, not actively violating God's standards.

Can a remarried man be blameless? Absolutely—if he is walking in truth, loving his wife, raising his family, teaching sound doctrine, and living in holiness.

The Bible doesn't say “never divorced.” It says “blameless.”

#### 6. 1 Corinthians 6:11 – Washed, Sanctified, Justified

Let this verse thunder:

“And such were some of you: but ye are **washed**, but ye are **sanctified**, but ye are **justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” – 1 Corinthians 6:11

Whatever was in your past—sexual sin, broken marriages, drunkenness, rebellion—it is **washed** in the blood. It is **gone**. And if God doesn't remember it, then man has no business holding it over your head.

If you're justified by Christ, you're **qualified by grace**.

## 7. The Hypocrisy of the “Never-Divorced” Pharisee

Let's be honest. Some of the worst preachers morally are the ones who've never been divorced.

They:

- Abuse their wives behind closed doors
- Watch porn
- Cheat on taxes
- Bully their congregations

But because they've never **officially** divorced, they're seen as “qualified.” Meanwhile, a humble, godly, remarried brother is disqualified on a technicality.

This is modern-day Pharisaism. Jesus had harsh words for such hypocrisy:

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites!** for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.” – Matthew 23:25

God looks on the **heart**, not the résumé.

## 8. The Devil's Tactic: Take Out the Wife

Here's a reality most overlook. When the devil wants to silence a called man, he often goes after his home. If he can fracture the marriage, he can cast doubt on the man's ministry.

And tragically, many churches **side with the enemy**, disqualifying the wounded instead of restoring them.

But God is not like man. He doesn't revoke His calling because a spouse walks away. Romans 11:29 says:

“For the gifts and calling of God are **without repentance.**”

The call to preach is not **given** by a wife, nor can it be **revoked** by her departure. If God called you, **He still does**.

## 9. Grace on the Throne, Not Legalism

The pulpit is not a trophy stand for the perfect. It is a battlefield post for the broken—those restored by grace, seasoned by suffering, and empowered by the Spirit.

Legalists say, “You were divorced. Sit down.”

Grace says, “You were washed. Stand up.”

Legalists count scars. Grace counts victories.

The entire New Testament is a declaration of **redemption**, not restriction. And if we silence every man with a divorce in his past, we’ll also have to silence half the heroes of faith—because many of them were broken, fallen, and flawed.

Yet they led revivals.

## 10. What Makes a Man Qualified?

- **Is it his marital record?** No.
- **Is it the number of rings he’s worn?** No.
- **Is it the scars he bears from betrayal or heartbreak?** No.

What qualifies a man is this:

- **Faithfulness** to his current wife.
- **Blamelessness** in his life and doctrine.
- **Sound teaching** rooted in Scripture.
- **Love** for the flock.
- **Anointing** by the Spirit.
- **A clear call** from God.

If he has these, **he is qualified**—regardless of his past.

## **Conclusion: Grace in the Pulpit, Power in the Man**

It's time for the church to grow up.

God is not looking for trophy husbands with clean marriage files. He's looking for **faithful men**—even if they've been through hell and back.

The pulpit belongs to those who've been **broken and restored**, not those who've merely avoided scandal.

If you are a man called of God, and you've been divorced and remarried—walk in grace. If your heart is pure, your doctrine sound, and your life consistent, then you are **not disqualified**.

You are living proof that **grace reigns**—even in the pulpit.

Let the Pharisees rage. Let grace preach.

## **6 of 10: Remarried But Not Disqualified – Pharisees in the Hiring Committee**

**Essay Title: Legalism in Ministry Applications**

**Key Texts: Luke 11:46; Matthew 23:4**

### **Introduction: The Form that Speaks Louder than Fruit**

In many modern churches, the hiring process for pastors and ministry leaders begins not with prayer, nor with a discernment of spiritual fruit, but with a form. Tucked between boxes asking about education and doctrinal alignment is a loaded question: “Have you ever been divorced?” If the answer is yes, another question follows—“Have you been remarried?” With a pen stroke, a man's spiritual walk, calling, and years of faithful service can be erased by a checkbox.

This practice doesn't stem from the Bible. It stems from modern-day Phariseeism—the kind Jesus rebuked with sharp words. “Woe unto you also, ye lawyers!” He declared in Luke 11:46, “for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.” These words, though ancient, ring prophetically today in hiring committees and denominational policies.

What does God really say about divorced and remarried believers serving in ministry? What happens when man's added rules override grace? And how do we respond when legalists claim to defend holiness but reject the very people God has restored?

This essay will expose the modern "hiring Pharisees," demonstrate the unbiblical nature of their gatekeeping, and call the Church back to a grace-based, Spirit-led understanding of qualification for ministry.

## **I. The Silent Disqualification: When the Form Replaces the Fruit**

Many church hiring processes begin with a resume and end with a checklist. These checklists don't measure a man's doctrinal depth, prayer life, or spiritual fruit—they often measure his marital history. While no one would dare write "grace alone" on a theology exam and then disqualify Paul for being single or Peter for being impulsive, divorced men are often immediately dismissed regardless of context.

Imagine the Apostle Peter applying to be your church's pastor. "Were you ever rebuked by Jesus?" Yes. "Did you ever deny Christ?" Yes. "Have you ever been divorced?" Unknown, but the Bible gives more detail about his mother-in-law than his wife—awkward.

Would Paul get the job? He admits to imprisoning and consenting to the death of Christians, but never married. "Not our type," they might say.

What, then, is the true standard?

## **II. Jesus' Rebuke: You Bind Heavy Burdens**

Jesus reserved some of His strongest rebukes not for prostitutes or tax collectors, but for legalistic religious leaders. In Matthew 23:4, He said, "For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers."

That's what's happening when a committee disqualifies a man over a checkbox. They lay a burden on his back—a burden the Lord never commanded.

Paul's list of qualifications in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 are not meant to be Pharisaic filters. They're pastoral ideals that help identify *faithful men*, not perfect men. "Husband of one wife" means "a one-woman man," not "a man who's never had a failed marriage." It refers to *present* faithfulness, not *past* circumstances.

### III. Grace That Changes the Past

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 6:11, “And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified.” Who were they? Fornicators. Adulterers. Idolaters. But in Christ, that past identity was wiped clean.

Yet in many ministries today, “forgiven” is not enough. “Restored” is not enough. Grace may be good enough for heaven, but not for the hiring committee.

How ironic.

If God casts your sin into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19), why are church leaders still fishing for it?

### IV. The Hypocrisy of Hidden Sins

Let’s be brutally honest: there are men in pulpits today whose private sins—pornography, pride, abuse, arrogance—are hidden behind closed doors. They haven’t been disqualified not because they are holy, but because they haven’t been exposed.

Meanwhile, a man who wept through his divorce, raised his children faithfully, and was later remarried in grace is rejected publicly. Why? Because *his sin is visible*, and their sin is not.

That’s not holiness. That’s hypocrisy.

Jesus said in John 7:24, “Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.” A man’s walk, character, and restoration should matter more than his checkbox.

### V. Misusing “The Husband of One Wife”

Much of the disqualification logic comes from a legalistic misinterpretation of 1 Timothy 3:2—“the husband of one wife.”

Let’s ask: Was Paul saying no divorced man could ever pastor? No. In fact, Paul himself was likely *not married* at the time he wrote that! Was he disqualified? Hardly.

The phrase literally translates to “a one-woman man.” It refers to moral fidelity and present faithfulness. A widower remarried? Still a one-woman man. A man who was abandoned or divorced by an unfaithful spouse but is now remarried and living faithfully? Still a one-woman man.

The idea that this verse forbids anyone with a broken past from leading is not Scripture—it's spin.

## **VI. Application Questions that Cross the Line**

Some application forms ask, “How many times have you been married?” Others demand explanations about previous spouses, children from past marriages, and even dates of divorce or remarriage.

Let's pause here. Does a born-again man really owe the details of a 20-year-old failed marriage to a deacon board?

If a man has been walking with God, loving his wife, raising godly children, and bearing spiritual fruit for years—what business is it of yours what happened decades ago?

What ever happened to “*old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new*” (2 Corinthians 5:17)?

We wouldn't ask a man how many years he struggled with porn. We wouldn't ask a woman how many men she slept with before salvation. Why, then, are we holding the past marriages of forgiven believers against them?

## **VII. The Power of Restoration**

God is a restorer. He doesn't just forgive—He *rebuilds*. In Joel 2:25, He promises, “I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten.”

So if God restores a man's life, family, and ministry—who are we to say, “Not good enough”?

If David, who committed adultery and murder, could write Psalms and lead Israel...

If Peter, who denied Christ three times, could lead the early church...

If Paul, who persecuted Christians, could become the apostle to the Gentiles...

Then a faithful, remarried man can preach.

## **VIII. A Warning to the Pharisees**

Jesus told the Pharisees in Matthew 21:31, “Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.”

Let that sink in.

When a man weeps over his past, clings to grace, and rises to serve—Jesus smiles.

When a religious board sits in judgment, puffs its chest, and plays gatekeeper—Jesus weeps.

God will use the broken. He always has. But the proud? He resists them (James 4:6).

## **IX. Fruit Over Forms**

Jesus taught that you know a tree *by its fruit*, not by its paperwork.

When you see a man loving his wife as Christ loved the church, preaching the Word in truth, raising up disciples, and walking humbly with God—that's fruit.

No checkbox can disqualify that.

Yet the modern Church has replaced fruit with forms, Spirit with systems, grace with grids. And we wonder why revival tarries.

We need men—not perfect men, but forgiven men—who've wrestled with God in dark nights, who've walked through divorce with tears and emerged clinging to Christ. That's not weakness. That's *power*.

## **X. A Call to the Church: Restore, Don't Reject**

Galatians 6:1 says, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one..."

Restore. Not reject.

Every committee member who reads a resume should read it with tears, not a red pen.

Every pastor who's been through divorce should know he's not a second-class Christian.

And every church that preaches *grace* should *practice it*.

## **Conclusion: Let God Be the Judge**

In the end, we must return to the voice of God over the voice of man.

Romans 11:29 declares, “For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” That means if God calls a man, *He doesn't take it back*—even if man tries to.

Hiring committees may be silent judges, but the real Judge sits in heaven. And He sees the heart.

Let us not be modern Pharisees with clipboards and checklists. Let us be ministers of reconciliation, not rejection. Because when the Church becomes more obsessed with marital status than spiritual fruit, we've traded the Gospel for a club membership.

The Kingdom needs men who have tasted grace, not those who merely preach it.

Let us welcome them—not because they checked all the boxes, but because Jesus already checked theirs with His blood.

## **7 of 10: Remarried But Not Disqualified – When the Devil Targets the Marriage: Strategic Warfare Against the Called**

### **Introduction: The Forgotten Battlefield**

In the battle for souls, pulpits are platforms of power—and Satan knows it. If he cannot silence the preacher's voice through scandal or sin, he will go after the next most vulnerable target: his marriage. It's a strategy as old as Eden. Attack the woman, divide the union, and disqualify the man—not by Scripture, but by the scorn of Pharisees. Yet ironically, churches often help the enemy finish the job. Instead of restoring the wounded, they bury the survivors under guilt, shame, and policy.

This essay will confront the brutal reality of spiritual warfare in Christian marriages, especially among those called to preach, and expose how the devil manipulates not just the home—but also the hiring committee. Using Scripture as our lens, we'll examine why marriage is often the battlefield where ministry callings are targeted, and how the legalistic church often aids the devil's assault by wrongly disqualifying men that God still calls.

### **1. The Devil's Strategy: Strike the Help Meet**

From the beginning, Satan didn't approach Adam directly. He went to Eve. Genesis 3 reveals the first tactic of hell: divide the union by undermining the woman.

“And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die...” (Genesis 3:4)

It wasn't that Adam wasn't present—he was. But Satan knew how to sow doubt, division, and distortion by targeting the helper. That same method is still in use today. Peter warns:

“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge... that your prayers be not hindered.” (1 Peter 3:7)

When Satan wants to silence a man of God, he can do it by disrupting his home. If he can create bitterness, distance, or chaos in the marriage, the man's spiritual effectiveness suffers. The prayer life gets hindered. The ministry gets strained. The pulpit becomes a prison instead of a platform. And Satan doesn't need the wife to commit adultery—he just needs her to break her covenant in heart, spirit, or behavior.

## **2. Job's Wife: A Case Study in Hellish Pressure**

In Job 2, we see a telling moment:

“Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.” (Job 2:9)

Job was being tested by God—but it was Satan doing the destroying. Notice how the wife becomes a mouthpiece for despair. She doesn't speak hope. She speaks hell's will: curse God. Give up. Die.

This is not to bash wives but to recognize a reality: sometimes the godliest men are yoked to women who break under pressure or fall into bitterness. And what does Satan do? He uses the breakdown to destroy the man's ministry.

Job didn't sin—but imagine if he had left her? Or if she had left him? Modern church committees would've barred him from preaching again. Not because he sinned—but because he was sinned against.

## **3. 1 Timothy 5:14–15 – When the Adversary Finds an Advantage**

Paul wrote:

“...for some are already turned aside after Satan.” (1 Timothy 5:15)

This warning, given in the context of household order, shows how domestic neglect, spiritual immaturity, or bitterness can cause women to fall into the enemy's grasp. And when that happens, guess who's left wounded in the fallout? The husband. Often, the man who walks in faith is the one the church disciplines—because we still haven't learned to separate biblical disqualification from emotional overreaction.

#### **4. The Hiring Committee's Blind Spot**

Too many churches have reduced the complexity of a man's life to a checkbox on a form:

- Divorced
- Remarried

If either box is checked, the application ends up in the trash. No context. No explanation. No Matthew 19. No 1 Corinthians 7. No Romans 11:29 (“For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”)

They've reduced ministry qualification to marital status instead of biblical fruit.

Can the man teach sound doctrine?

Is he faithful to his current wife?

Is he temperate, self-controlled, and filled with the Spirit?

None of those matter when legalism governs policy. But they matter deeply to God.

#### **5. Luke 11:46 – The Burden of Legalism**

Jesus said:

“Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.” (Luke 11:46)

When a church disqualifies a man for being divorced—when that divorce wasn't even his fault—they become like the lawyers in Jesus' rebuke. They add burdens not found in Scripture. They create manmade traditions in the name of “upholding standards” while dismissing the standard-bearer God has appointed.

This is how Satan wins: not by getting the man to fall, but by getting others to shame him even when he stood.

#### **6. Matthew 23:4 – The Hypocrisy of Ministry Standards**

“For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders...” (Matthew 23:4)

Here's the modern hypocrisy: A man with a porn addiction can be “restored,” but a man who was abandoned by his wife must be “retired.” A man who commits adultery gets six

months of counseling. But a faithful man who gets served divorce papers he didn't ask for is seen as permanently disqualified.

This isn't biblical holiness. It's legalism dressed in clerical robes.

### **7. 1 Corinthians 6:11 – But Ye Are Washed**

Paul reminded the Corinthians of their past sins:

“...but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus...” (1 Corinthians 6:11)

And yet, some churches act like there are permanent stains that even God can't wash. They believe the cross cleanses every sin—except divorce.

What a lie.

### **8. David, Peter, and Paul – God Uses the Broken**

If disqualification were God's model, David would've never written a Psalm after Bathsheba. Peter would've been benched after denying Christ. Paul—who presided over murders—would've never planted a church.

The Bible is not a museum of the perfect. It's a hospital for the redeemed.

To say a man is unfit because his wife left him is to deny the very grace that makes any of us fit.

### **9. What If Satan Attacked the Marriage to Stop the Ministry?**

This is the question no one wants to ask.

What if Satan's entire goal in destroying the marriage was to silence the voice God called?

Wouldn't it then be spiritual malpractice to disqualify that man for surviving the war?

Wouldn't it be the height of demonic strategy for the Church to partner with hell in silencing the wounded?

### **10. Restoring the Broken: A Better Way**

Galatians 6:1 says:

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one... considering thyself...”

But in the case of divorce—especially one not caused by the man—churches rarely seek to restore. Instead, they issue theological death sentences to faithful men.

We must repent of this.

### **Conclusion: When Churches Aid the Enemy**

The enemy’s playbook is not complicated: silence the preacher, distort the Word, and kill the testimony. If he can’t disqualify the man through sin, he’ll do it through suffering. He’ll whisper to the church that a failed marriage—no matter the circumstances—equals a failed calling.

But the Bible never says that.

The Bible says:

“For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” (Romans 11:29)

The Bible says:

“Thou hast not sinned.” (1 Corinthians 7:28)

The Bible says:

“If he desire the office... let these first be proved.” (1 Timothy 3)

Let us stop making the pulpit a place for the unbroken and start making it a platform for the redeemed. For those who’ve walked through fire, held their faith, and still said, “Here am I, Lord, send me.”

Even if the marriage fell apart, the call didn’t.

Even if the wife turned back, the man didn’t.

Even if the church closed the door, God didn’t.

Let the Pharisees grumble. Let the hypocrites point fingers. But let the faithful preach—scars and all. Because the devil may target the marriage, but he cannot touch the call of God.

## **8 of 10: Remarried But Not Disqualified – The Silent Shame – The Hidden Sins of the Legalists**

**Key Texts: Romans 2:1–3; Matthew 23:27–28**

**Goal: Unmask the hidden hypocrisy of those who judge divorced believers but hide their own pornography, emotional abuse, and pride. Divorce is visible—their sin is not.**

### **The Silent Shame – The Hidden Sins of the Legalists**

#### **Introduction: When Shame Wears a Robe and Collar**

There is a certain kind of shame that's easy to see—like a scarlet letter pinned to someone's chest. Divorce. Remarriage. A public falling out. When these events occur, churches often know. Whispers start. Pews empty. Eyes roll. Opportunities disappear.

But there is another kind of shame that's far more sinister because it's far more silent. It hides behind robes of piety and religious performance. It teaches Sunday school. It leads worship. It sits on pulpit committees and boards. It shakes hands and smiles at the door while harboring bitterness, pornography, pride, secret affairs, or emotional abuse.

This essay will draw back the curtain on the hypocrisy of legalistic judgment—especially toward divorced and remarried believers—by unmasking the silent sins of the self-righteous. God has always hated hypocrisy more than He hated visible failure, because one repents and the other hides.

As Jesus said in **Matthew 23:27–28**:

*“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres...within full of dead men's bones.”*

#### **Part 1: The Visible vs. the Invisible – Why the Legalists Focus on Divorce**

##### **Romans 2:1–3: A Mirror for the Self-Righteous**

Paul opens Romans 2 with a rebuke aimed directly at the religious moralist:

*“Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself.”*

Why? Because the legalist commits the same or worse sins—just behind closed doors. But here's the key: **divorce is visible**. It's a documented, traceable event. It's on record. It's in the church gossip circuit.

That makes it a convenient target for the legalist who wants to appear clean. Like the Pharisees of Jesus' day, legalists specialize in "righteous branding" through **comparison**.

- "At least I never got divorced."
- "God can't use someone who's remarried."
- "That's not the testimony we want in the pulpit."

It's not about holiness—it's about hierarchy. They feel righteous because others look worse. Like the Pharisee who stood and prayed "I thank thee I am not like this publican" (Luke 18:11), the modern legalist builds a false holiness on visible disqualifiers.

Divorce becomes a public sin they can use to **deflect from their private sins**.

## **Part 2: The Whited Sepulchre Syndrome**

Jesus' harshest words were not for the harlot, the tax collector, or even the Roman soldiers. They were for the religious elite who hid rot beneath robes.

*"Ye are like unto whited sepulchres...beautiful outward...but within full of dead men's bones."* (Matt. 23:27)

The whited sepulchre is a **grave with a paint job**—outwardly polished, inwardly putrid.

Today's sepulchres:

- Look clean on church websites.
- Quote Scripture fluently.
- Wear tailored suits and serve on committees.

But inside?

- They scream at their wives and children in private.
- They click through porn when the house is dark.
- They judge the hurting while addicted to approval.
- They belittle, manipulate, and emotionally crush others, while being praised for their "discernment."

And then they dare to tell a man whose wife left him—who rebuilt a godly home—that he's **"disqualified"** from ministry.

What hypocrisy. What abomination. What cowardice dressed up as conviction.

### **Part 3: The Unseen Ledger – What God Really Sees**

Man looks on the outward appearance. But God? **He sees everything.**

He sees:

- The man who never divorced, but repeatedly cheated emotionally and verbally assaulted his wife.
- The elder who brags about one marriage but secretly harbors hatred toward his brother (1 John 3:15).
- The pastor who condemns remarriage but indulges in lust daily, thinking no one knows.

God's ledger is not limited to paperwork and public knowledge. His scales are just. He weighs the **heart**, not the form.

Jesus redefined adultery when He said:

*“Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.”* (Matt. 5:28)

So who's really disqualified?

Is it the man who was abandoned, then later remarried in the Lord with a godly woman and now shepherds a flock faithfully?

Or is it the man who stayed married but has been unfaithful in his **thoughts, emotions, and attitudes** while judging others mercilessly?

### **Part 4: Legalism's Real Goal – Control, Not Holiness**

Legalism isn't about holiness. It's about **control**.

It builds boxes, draws lines, and posts checklists—then guards them with swords. You can serve... **if** you meet their man-made criteria. You can lead... **if** you've never had public failure. You can preach... **if** you haven't remarried.

But God's call is not based on human résumé. It's based on **grace, brokenness, and redemption**.

Consider David—adulterer, murderer, failed father. And yet God called him “a man after mine own heart” (Acts 13:22). Why? **Because David repented.**

The legalist cannot stand that.

- He cannot stomach grace.
- He cannot control repentance.
- He cannot rewrite God’s call.

So instead, he rewrites **the qualifications**—not with Scripture, but with **church policy manuals, denominational bylaws, and opinion-based vetting forms.**

### **Part 5: Divorce Isn’t the Unpardonable Sin**

Let it be shouted from the rooftops: **Divorce is not the unpardonable sin.**

It is tragic, yes. Painful, yes. Sometimes sinful, yes. But it is **not the end** of God’s ability to use a man. The idea that remarriage puts a permanent stain on a man’s ministry is nowhere taught in Scripture.

1 Corinthians 6:11 says:

*“And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified...”*

The blood of Christ cleanses from **all sin**. Even the public ones. Even the documented ones. Even the ones that the legalists remember, but God has already **forgotten**.

The church needs to stop acting like God is still mad at what the cross already covered.

### **Part 6: What Disqualifies a Man?**

1 Timothy 3 lays out the **present qualifications** for a bishop (pastor/elder). It does **not** give a list of sins that, once committed, forever mark a man as unusable.

The phrase “husband of one wife” has been twisted into a club. But in Greek, it literally means **“a one-woman man.”** A man devoted to his current wife. Faithful. Pure. Upright.

It doesn’t say:

- “Never divorced.”
- “Only married once.”

- “Perfect past.”

It says **faithful now**.

Why do we let past tragedy erase present character?

The fruit of the Spirit is the **present test** (Gal. 5:22–23). Is he loving? Joyful? Peaceful? Longsuffering? Gentle? Good? Faithful?

If yes, then what exactly is the basis of disqualification?

### **Part 7: The Hypocrisy of “Qualifications”**

The same men who preach disqualification for remarriage are often:

- Emotionally abusive to their families.
- Secretly addicted to pornography or control.
- Devoted to the ministry but neglectful of their wives.
- Rigid in doctrine but cruel in spirit.

They wouldn't pass Jesus' test for ministry. They're the modern-day scribes—knowledgeable, powerful, feared—but far from the Spirit of Christ.

They use **visible sins** to distract from their **invisible bondage**.

They protect their image while wounding the already-wounded.

They will quote Scripture, but not **live it**.

They will talk about grace, but not **extend it**.

They will say they love Jesus, but **stone the woman He forgave**.

### **Part 8: Jesus' Ministry to the Broken**

Jesus loved the publicly shamed.

- He ate with sinners.
- He welcomed the divorced Samaritan woman.
- He forgave the adulterous woman.
- He praised the weeping prostitute who washed His feet.

But He rebuked the legalists.

Not once did He say, “Sorry, you’ve been disqualified.” But over and over, He said, “Go, and sin no more.”

That’s the heart of Jesus.

And if a man, after brokenness and healing, says, “Here am I, Lord, send me”—**who are we to say no?**

### **Conclusion: The New Testament Standard – Grace, Not Guilt**

The silent shame of the legalists will be shouted from the rooftops one day (Luke 12:3). But for now, let us shout the truth:

- God still calls broken men.
- Divorce is not disqualification.
- Legalists hide what grace can heal.
- Jesus uses the humbled, not the flawless.

To every believer who’s been written off because of a divorce or remarriage, hear this:

**You are not second-class. You are not rejected. You are not defiled. You are not finished.**

If your heart is clean before God, your marriage is holy, your walk is faithful, and your desire is to serve—**then serve.**

And let the silent shame fall on those who shut the door to others while keeping their own sin behind it.

### **9 of 10: Remarried But Not Disqualified – Under the Blood**

**Essay Title: God’s View of the Past**

**Key Texts:** Psalm 103:12; Isaiah 43:25; Hebrews 10:17

**Goal:** Proclaim the freedom of forgiveness. Divorce, adultery, sin—it’s all under the blood. If God doesn’t remember it, why should the church?

## Introduction: Buried or Beaten Over the Head?

There's a strange phenomenon in many churches today. They preach forgiveness, shout about grace, sing songs about the blood of Jesus—and then quietly excommunicate you for something that happened ten years ago. Especially if it involves divorce.

The cross is held high on Easter Sunday, but for the divorced believer, especially those in ministry, there's a secret clause: *Forgiveness is real... unless you were married and now you're not.* Suddenly, God's mercy has limits, and the blood has a shelf life.

But does God's Word say that? Is there a divine expiration date on grace? Has the blood of Jesus lost its power when it comes to certain sins? This essay makes one thing clear:

**If God no longer remembers it, the church has no right to rehearse it.**

### 1. God's Promise: Sins Removed, Remembered No More

Psalms 103:12 is a divine declaration of spiritual amnesia:

"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

Notice, it doesn't say God shelved our sins, or archived them for later review. He *removed* them—indefinitely. East from west is not a measurable distance; it's a statement of **perpetual separation**. The moment a sinner repents and receives Christ, every sin—past, present, future—is washed clean.

Isaiah 43:25 says it more directly:

"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

That's not poetic language. That's theological fact. God does not forget like a man forgets. He chooses, as Sovereign Judge, to *never bring it up again*. If the blood of bulls and goats provided a temporary covering in the Old Covenant, how much more does the blood of Christ provide **permanent cleansing** in the New?

### 2. Hebrews 10:17 – The Final Nail in the Coffin

When legalists attempt to resurrect your past, remind them of Hebrews 10:17:

"And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

That's God talking—not Paul, not Peter, not your pastor, not the Pharisees on the hiring committee.

Now here's the irony: Many of those who claim you're disqualified for ministry due to past divorce will quote from Hebrews to defend eternal security, the New Covenant, and the finished work of Christ. Yet, somehow, when it comes to *your* past, they make an exception.

They say, "Yes, you're forgiven, but you still can't pastor. You're clean, but not usable. You're saved, but sit down and shut up."

That's not grace. That's prison with a Bible verse on the wall.

### **3. The Sin of Digging Up What God Buried**

Romans 2:1–3 puts the hammer on the head of hypocrisy:

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself..."

Translation: If you point a finger at a divorced man of God, you'd better make sure your closet is sinless.

Let's get painfully honest here: divorce is public. But what about the secret sins of the church board? The pornography addiction? The emotional abuse in "still-married" homes? The financial manipulation? The spiritual bullying? Are those less disqualifying because they're not on paper?

Jesus called out this exact problem in Matthew 23:27:

"...ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones..."

Today, we have men who stayed married for optics, yet live in cemeteries of bitterness, lust, and deceit—judging those whose sins have been *repented of and covered by the blood*.

### **4. What About Divorce? What About Adultery?**

Let's not sugarcoat this: divorce is always a tragedy. Adultery is always sin. But the **cross is always bigger**.

The woman caught in adultery in John 8 was *not* disqualified from grace. Jesus didn't excuse the sin—but He also didn't allow the mob to destroy her. His words still ring: “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.”

So why is the divorced man treated like a leper, especially if he's a preacher?

Often, the answer is fear. Churches want “clean optics.” They fear the opinion of man more than the calling of God. But God doesn't operate in optics—He operates in **omnipotent mercy**.

David committed adultery and murder—yet he wrote Psalms under inspiration.

Peter denied Christ—yet he led the early church.

Paul persecuted Christians—yet became the apostle of grace.

Their sins were not minimized—but neither were they held hostage by them. And yet many churches will treat a divorced and remarried man as though he bears an unpardonable stain. According to who—Jesus or the bylaws?

## 5. The Blood Doesn't Come with Footnotes

Some argue, “Yes, you're forgiven, but God still expects consequences.”

That's partially true—sin often has earthly consequences. But **ministry disqualification is not one of them**, unless the sin persists. Grace doesn't erase accountability, but it does erase condemnation.

The blood of Christ doesn't come with footnotes:

- *Cleanses from all sin...except the one your ex-wife filed paperwork for.*
- *Justifies the ungodly...unless they got remarried and serve in the ministry.*
- *Makes you whiter than snow...except when viewed through a church constitution.*

No. The blood speaks a better word.

## 6. Paul's Own Example: “But Such Were Some of You”

1 Corinthians 6:11 is the anthem of every redeemed soul:

“And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified...”

Paul didn't say "*such were some of you, and therefore you're benched for life.*" He said you *were*, but now you *are* washed. That's past tense vs. present calling.

The church is filled with men who were *former* whoremongers, addicts, liars, and fools. The difference between them and the divorced preacher? One's sin was filed with the county clerk.

But God doesn't use courthouse records as His reference sheet.

## 7. Jesus, the Great Re-Qualifier

When Jesus chose His disciples, He didn't look for squeaky-clean resumes. He picked:

- A tax collector (hated).
- A zealot (violent).
- Fishermen (uneducated).
- And a traitor (Judas).

None of them were polished. All of them had pasts. And every one of them would've failed today's church hiring process.

But Jesus doesn't recruit the qualified. He **qualifies the called**.

If you've been divorced, remarried, forgiven, and are walking in present obedience—you are not disqualified. You are *evidence of God's grace*.

## 8. The Stain That Becomes a Sermon

One of the devil's tricks is to take your deepest scar and turn it into a muzzle.

But God does the opposite. He takes the stain and turns it into a **sermon**.

When a man who has failed preaches grace, it hits different.

When a man who's been broken teaches restoration, it lands deeper.

When a man who's been divorced yet stands faithful behind the pulpit, he puts flesh on the message that *Jesus saves*.

If every divorced man sat down, we'd lose a host of voices that know firsthand what it means to be restored.

## 9. Restoration Is the New Testament Model

Galatians 6:1 says:

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one...”

Restoration is not a *favor*—it’s a *command*.

But sadly, churches today often practice exile instead of restoration. They parade grace for new converts but chain believers to old failures.

Here’s the question: **What’s more dangerous—past failure or present hypocrisy?**

Jesus told the story of a man forgiven a massive debt, who then choked someone else for a few bucks. That’s the modern church in many cases—released from Hell, but holding a clipboard and checking someone else’s past.

## 10. When Churches Keep Records Better Than God

Psalms 130:3 asks a haunting question:

“If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?”

Answer: *None of us.*

So why do churches keep marks that God erased?

Why do bylaws, interviews, and forms include lines like:

“Have you ever been divorced?”

“Have you ever been remarried?”

“Please explain the circumstances of your past marriage.”

But no box says:

“Have you repented of all sin?”

“Are you walking blamelessly now?”

“Is there present fruit in your life?”

That tells you something. The system is flawed.

## Conclusion: Let the Blood Speak

In heaven’s courtroom, there is only one witness that matters—the blood of Jesus.

Hebrews 12:24 says:

“...to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

Abel’s blood cried out for vengeance. Christ’s blood cries out for *mercy*.

And if God’s mercy is strong enough to redeem a murderer, a thief, a harlot, and a denier—then surely it is strong enough for a divorced and remarried man walking in holiness.

Let the church hear what heaven is saying:

**You are forgiven. You are not disqualified. You are under the blood.**

## **10 of 10: Remarried But Not Disqualified – Restored and Ready: God’s Use of Broken Vessels**

**Key Texts: Joel 2:25; 2 Timothy 2:21; John 4:18–29**

**Word Count: ~3,800 Words**

### **Introduction: When God Rebuilds What Others Abandon**

There’s a beautiful paradox in the way God works: the things people throw away, He restores. The vessels man labels "unfit," He cleans, fills, and uses. The testimonies we would bury under shame, God resurrects to preach the Gospel. This essay is not just about remarriage—it’s about redemption. It’s about being called *after* the breaking. It’s about coming back from the ashes—not as a cautionary tale, but as a living sermon.

The Church today often loves the story of the prodigal—but doesn’t want him in the pulpit. It preaches grace for the sinner, but adds fine print for the saint who’s been divorced. It says “whosoever will” for salvation, but “only the spotless” for service.

But God doesn’t work that way.

He doesn't write people off after a chapter of failure. He doesn’t view brokenness as the end—He sees it as preparation.

### **1. The God Who Restores the Years**

**Joel 2:25 – "And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten..."**

This promise from Joel isn't poetic fluff—it's a prophetic declaration. God doesn't just forgive. He restores. He doesn't just clean you up. He rebuilds what was lost.

This applies to the years spent in abusive marriages, painful divorces, courtrooms, counseling offices, or lonely nights where calling and confidence felt crushed.

If God can restore Israel from a locust invasion, He can restore a man from a marriage collapse. If He can restore a nation from exile, He can restore a woman from shame.

Divorce may have eaten your joy. Guilt may have gnawed at your usefulness. But God restores not only your soul—but the *years*.

He makes the broken whole—and then He uses them.

## **2. The Vessel Is Not the Issue—The Usefulness Is**

**2 Timothy 2:21 – "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour..."**

This verse doesn't say, "If a man is never broken." It doesn't say, "If a man has never failed."

It says *if a man purges himself*.

The standard isn't perfection. It's repentance and sanctification. The measure isn't "Have you been through a divorce?" but "Are you purged, prepared, and fit for the Master's use?"

Let's be clear: a vessel is not disqualified because it was cracked—it's disqualified if it refuses to be cleaned.

Some ministers never divorced—but are filled with pride, manipulation, and spiritual abuse. Others were broken by betrayal, cleansed by grace, and now filled with the Spirit.

Which one is truly "fit for the Master's use"?

The real test isn't past pain. It's present purity.

## **3. Jesus and the Woman with Five Husbands**

**John 4:18–29 – "For thou hast had five husbands..."**

Enter the Samaritan woman. Jesus meets her at Jacob's well—not by accident, but by divine appointment.

Let's take stock of this woman's résumé:

- Five failed marriages.
- Living with a man she isn't married to.
- Rejected by society—she comes to the well at noon to avoid gossip.
- Ethnically marginalized.
- Spiritually confused.

And yet—**Jesus uses her as the first evangelist to Samaria.**

He doesn't rebuke her with the Law. He doesn't call her "defiled" or "used up." He doesn't say, "Go back to your first husband and then maybe I'll speak to you."

He gives her **living water**.

He reveals to *her*—before His disciples—that He is the Messiah.

He uses her as a mouthpiece. A missionary. A forerunner.

Five husbands. One calling. Total redemption.

#### **4. The Bible's Pattern: Broken but Called**

Let's walk through Scripture for a moment. God has a pattern:

- **Moses:** Murderer. Fugitive. Later the lawgiver and deliverer.
- **David:** Adulterer. Compromised father. Yet "a man after God's own heart."
- **Peter:** Denied Jesus three times. Restored and became the leader at Pentecost.
- **Paul:** Persecutor of the church. Later its greatest apostle.

None of them were perfect. All of them were broken. Yet *all of them were used*.

Their failures didn't cancel their futures. They were stepping stones, not stop signs.

If God disqualified people based on failure, the Bible would be a pamphlet.

#### **5. A Word to the Disqualified**

Many believers walk around with invisible labels stamped on their chests:

- "Divorced."

- "Disqualified."
- "Damaged Goods."

These labels weren't placed by God. They were placed by people with clipboards, checklists, and cold hearts.

But let's be clear: if your failure is **under the blood**, it is not **on your record**.

You are not "used goods." You are a *redeemed vessel*.

You are not a "risk." You are a *testimony*.

You are not "disqualified." You are *called*.

The cross of Christ doesn't just forgive sinners—it *qualifies saints*.

## 6. Satan's Strategy: Condemn the Called

Why is there so much hostility toward divorced ministers?

Because the enemy knows that if he can't stop a man from being called—he'll try to *discredit* him.

And often, the most efficient way to do that... is through **religious people**.

Satan doesn't need to whisper in your ear when church boards, pulpit committees, or seminary professors will do it for him:

- "Well, we just feel the 'appearance' of divorce could damage our testimony."
- "You know the Bible says husband of *one* wife..."
- "We appreciate your application, but we're looking for someone with an *unblemished* record."

But when God called Moses, He knew about the murder.

When God called David, He knew about the affair.

When God called you—He knew about the divorce.

And He didn't revoke it.

The gifts and calling of God are *without repentance* (Romans 11:29).

## 7. Grace in the Pulpit Is the Gospel

## **1 Corinthians 6:11 – “And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified...”**

How can the Church preach grace to the world and deny it to the pulpit?

How can we declare forgiveness from the platform, and yet demand perfection from the man standing on it?

The irony is heartbreaking:

- A man with five felonies and tattoos from prison can be welcomed as a powerful testimony...
- ...but a man who went through a bitter divorce while serving faithfully? “Sorry. You’re disqualified.”

Grace isn’t selective. It’s not a license to sin—but it *is* a covering for those who repent.

Grace in the pulpit is not a liability. It is the *proof* that the Gospel still works.

## **8. The Power of a Story That’s Been Through Fire**

There’s something compelling about a minister who’s been through the fire and come out the other side.

- He preaches with compassion—because he knows pain.
- He counsels with grace—because he’s been broken.
- He leads with humility—because he knows what it’s like to be led by mercy.

The man who has never suffered may be polished—but the man who has suffered and been restored carries *power*.

God doesn’t need you to be perfect.

He needs you to be purified.

And sometimes that purification comes through fire.

## **9. What About “Husband of One Wife”?**

Let’s handle this objection, because it’s the most common weapon used to beat down remarried men.

## **1 Timothy 3:2 – “A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife...”**

This doesn't mean "never divorced." It means "faithful to one woman"—a one-woman man. It refers to *present character*, not *past tragedy*.

Paul wasn't saying, "Only men who have never suffered marital loss can lead."

He was saying, "The man leading must be faithful now."

This verse was written in a culture of polygamy and sexual chaos—not sanitized Sunday school. Paul was laying out a *standard of present integrity*, not a rejection of men with past wounds.

## **10. Conclusion: Your Story Is Not Over**

You are not the label others gave you. You are not the worst chapter in your story. You are not the scars on your past.

You are *called*.

You are *clean*.

You are *restored*.

You are *ready*.

Let this series ring with the truth: **Remarried does not mean disqualified.**

And more than that—it means *refined*. It means *prepared*. It means *graced for a unique calling* that only a man who has walked through fire can fulfill.

Like the Samaritan woman, God can take your broken story—and make it the loudest sermon in town.

### **Final Word:**

If God has restored you—*walk in it boldly*.

If others reject you—*God accepts you still*.

If your past screams "Disqualified"—*let the blood speak louder*.

Because broken vessels aren't cast away in God's kingdom.

They're lifted, filled, and *poured out with power*.

## **Conclusion: *When Grace Writes the Last Chapter***

In a world that demands perfection yet secretly profits off our brokenness, Jesus does something radically different—He meets us at the well, not with stones in His hand, but with living water.

This series has walked through the battlefield of broken covenants, the haunting chambers of regret, the prison cells of shame, and the courtroom of religious judgment. And in each of those dark corners, we found Jesus—not as an accuser, but as a redeemer.

We saw how marriage was always meant to picture something eternal. Yet, we also saw how sin, hard hearts, betrayal, abuse, and failure ripped that picture apart—and how the same God who painted it also wept over it.

We learned:

- That the **law was given by Moses**, but **grace and truth came by Jesus Christ** (John 1:17).
- That God doesn't discard His wounded soldiers—He restores them, repurposes them, and *uses them because of their wounds*, not despite them.
- That judgment without mercy is not the gospel—it's Pharisaism dressed in holy robes.
- That to love again is not always rebellion—it can be redemption.
- That the woman at the well became a well for others—because Jesus didn't count her past against her future.

This series does not pretend there are no consequences to broken vows, nor does it excuse sin. It simply does what Jesus did—it **extends truth with tears, correction with compassion**, and **doctrine with dignity**.

To the one reading this who feels disqualified by divorce: **God is not done with you.**

To the one who has remarried and wonders if they're forever tainted: **Grace doesn't make you second class. It makes you *His*.**

To the one judging others from a place of ignorance or zeal: **Study Jesus, not just the Law.**

To the church leader scared to preach this for fear of backlash: **Preach truth seasoned with grace, and let the Pharisees walk away one by one.**

This series was never about excusing failure. It was about exalting a Savior who **redeems failures into testimonies, transforms brokenness into ministry, and writes new chapters with ink made of mercy.**

We have now traced the arc from creation to corruption, covenant to collapse, and finally—**to redemption.** The narrative is not over when the vows are broken.


Because in Christ, the last chapter is always titled:

**“Restored and Ready.”**

And that’s not just a doctrine.

That’s a testimony.

That’s grace.

 *Go. Be used of God. Not someday. Today.*