



Scriptures and Doctrine :: 1 Thess 4:4 Your wife or your vessel?

1 Thess 4:4 Your wife or your vessel? - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2010/8/16 20:59

Hello!

I hope that everyone is doing well here. I thought I would put this here to see if anyone had any thoughts. I had originally posted it in another forum.

I had something that caught my attention a few moments ago that I was curious about. Depending on how you interpret this word, it really seems to change what this verse is saying.

I was reading in my Spanish bible (Reina Valera 1960) and read the following in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4:

Quote:

-----2 Porque ya sabéis qu  instrucciones os dimos por el Se or Jes s;
 3 pues la voluntad de Dios es vuestra santificaci n; que os apart is de fornicaci n;
 4 que cada uno de vosotros sepa tener su propia esposa en santidad y honor;
 5 no en pasi n de concupiscencia, como los gentiles, que no conocen a Dios;

This would translate into English basically like the KJV or most versions have it, with the exception of verse 4. Here is my translation of verse 4 from Spanish:

Quote:

-----that every one of you know how to have his own *wife* in holiness (sanctification) and honor

The key word that is different is that in Spanish it says wife, not vessel.

This really seems to make a difference in what this verse is saying. If it means vessel, it seems to be saying that we should learn how to handle our body correctly and not like the gentiles that don't know God. If it should be interpreted wife, then that is something altogether different. We shouldn't handle our wife in the lust of concupiscence, but in holiness and honor.

I did a little looking around and there are several versions that in the footnote indicate that it could be interpreted wife (NLT, NIV, ESV) and the RSV goes ahead and translate it as wife.

I looked up the Greek word and it seems to plainly mean vessel, at least literally. But BlueLetter Bible says that it's an metaphor that can mean body. This comes across plain enough into English. Some commentaries seem to think it's talking about a wife, others just your own body.

Is this verse referring to how you deal with your spouse in the marriage bed or how you deal with your own body? Is the direction of this statement toward our significant other or ourselves?

Re: 1 Thess 4:4 Your wife or your vessel? - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/8/16 21:18

It is an interesting translation isn't it? I guess abstaining from fornication does imply faithfulness to your wife if you are a married man. I think it is probably not quite true to the Greek. What meanings does esposa have in Spanish other than wife?

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2010/8/16 22:29

It can only mean wife as far as I know. The word kind of looks like spouse (esposa).

They are translating it similar to the RSV for some reason:

that each one of you know how to take a wife for himself in holiness and honor,

I think the literal translation from Greek should be vessel, but I'm curious to if this phrase 'his vessel' would have brought to mind a spouse in the mind of the original readers. Some commentators seem to think so.

I don't know if this verse can be thrown in the mix or not..

1Pe 3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

If your interested in reading a commentary to see why some might think it should be interpreted to mean wife, you can read a little bit about it out of Vicent's NT Word Studies. Here is a link.

<http://www.godrules.net/library/vincent/vincent1the4.htm>

or John Gill

<http://www.studylight.org/com/geb/view.cgi?book=1th&chapter=004&verse=004>

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2010/8/16 22:44

Even if the interpretation or translation of this verse is wrong, I think it's worth examining if those with spouses treat them in this area any different than what the rest of the world does.

1Cr 7:2 Nevertheless, fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

1Cr 7:3 Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.

1Cr 7:4 The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.

1Cr 7:5 Defraud ye not one the other, except with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

It's interesting that he basically says the body belongs to the other spouse. I wonder how many people view this area of life anywhere close to that. The typical mindset of the world is all about selfishness and trying to get all the prosperity and pleasure they can. It's all about you, get as much as you can and however you can and it doesn't matter who it hurts or affects. Few seem to have any concern about self sacrifice and laying their life down for someone else. You can apply this to nearly any type of relationship that God has put in your life.

Jhn 15:13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Acts 20:35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2010/8/16 22:46

We have this entry from K&D:

One drinks water to quench his thirst; here drinking is a figure of the satisfaction of conjugal love, of which Paul says, 1 Cor. 7:9, and this comes into view here, in conformity with the prevailing character of the O.T., only as a created inborn natural impulse, without reference to the poisoning of it by sin, which also within the sphere of married life makes government, moderation, and restraint a duty. Warning against this degeneracy of the natural impulse to the (passionate desire) authorized within divinely prescribed limits, the apostle calls the wife of any one (HIS VESSEL cf. 1 Pet. 3:7). So here the wife, who is his by covenant (Prov. 2:17), is called "cistern" and "fountain" of the husband to whom she is married. The figure corresponds to the sexual nature of the wife, the expression for which is (but Isa. 51:1 holds to the natural side of the figure, for according to it the wife is a pit, and the children are brought out of it into the light of day.

C. F. Keil and Delitzsch F., Commentary on the Old Testament (Accordance electronic ed. 10 vols.; Peabody: Hendricks on Publishers, 1996), n.p. PROVERBS 5:15-17

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2010/8/16 23:03

Quote:

-----The typical mindset of the world is all about selfishness and trying to get all the prosperity and pleasure they can.

James describes unnatural lust as a fire:

Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. (James 4:3)

James is almost a 'book of proverbs' for the New Covenant. The picture here is one throwing things onto a fire that just burns and burns seemingly hotter and higher.

God gave the natural desire for procreation and pleasure. When men and women seek to find their fulfillment in that natural desire they have passed beyond God's intention. This happens when natural desires are fed until they become unnatural lusts. I think this is the danger. Epithumia (lust) can be good or bad. The word just means desire or strong desire. James warns us not to feed the fire (as it were). Paris Reidhead deals with this in "Tragedy of Third Generation Religion" . <http://media.sermonindex.net/0/SID0114.mp3>

God's love is a Fire of a different sort. As you mention it is a love of selfless sacrifice. As Ron Bailey would say- it does not demand it's rights. One can find fulfillment in knowing that it is more blessed to give than to receive. That is to say, when we put others needs above our needs and desires then it is 'more blessed' or of a greater happiness. Lust can never be satisfied.

Re: 1 Thess 4:4 Your wife or your vessel? - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2010/8/17 0:26

Hi Preach...

This same passage in the Reina-Valera Antigua (1569) reads "Que cada uno de vosotros sepa tener su vaso en santificaci3n y honor."

Spanish: Vaso = vessel

Greek: skeuos = vessel

Interestingly, the Greek word has never been translated as "wife" except in the newer Spanish versions (like the Reina Valera 1960/1995 and 1999's Traducci3n en Lenguaje Actual) and as footnotes as a possible variant in a few others.

According to the Blue Letter Bible, "'Vessel' was a common Greek metaphor for 'body' since Greeks thought of souls living temporarily in bodies." Matthew Henry wrote, "The body is here called the vessel of the soul, which dwells therein (so 1 Sa. 21:5), and it must be kept pure from defiling lusts."

This use is seen later in I Peter 3:7 when Peter instructed husbands to give honor to their wives as they were considered the "weaker vessel." This is echoed in II Corinthians 4:6-7 too.

From this, I believe that the passage is referring to a person's own "vessel" -- your own body.

I hope that this helps.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2010/8/17 9:56

Hi there,

there is no doubt that the word is 'vessel' so it really comes down to interpretation. Although we might prefer a word-for-word translation ultimately a translator has to communicate with his readers and it seems that some have decided that there is no question but that Paul is referring here to 'a wife'.

So where does that leave us?

the NET Bible, which can be very helpful with its note says...

1Thessalonians 4:4

5 tn Grk "to gain his own vessel." "Vessel" is most likely used figuratively for "body" (cf. 2 Cor 4:7). Some take it to mean "wife" (thus, "to take a wife for himself" or "to live with his wife"), but this is less likely. See J. Smith, "1 Thess 4:4— Breaking the Impasse," BBR 10 (Fall 2000), who argues that "vessel" in this context is very likely a euphemism for the sexual organs.

The ESV notes say

*Or how to take a wife for himself; Greek how to possess his own vessel

So there is no way of producing a definitive answer. My own instinct is that the verb for 'possessing' which is Strong's G2932 - ktaomai is not a verb I would have expected Paul to use with regard to a man's relationship to his wife.

It is interesting that both Wesley and Clarke opt for the 'wife' view but Robertsons Word Pictures has...

4. That each one of you know how (eidenai hekaston humo^oen). Further epexegetic infinitive (second perfect active), learn how and so know how (learn the habit of purity). To possess himself of his own vessel (to heautou skeuos ktasthai). Present middle infinitive of ktaomai, to acquire, not kek^oesthai, to possess. But what does Paul mean by "his own vessel"? It can only mean his own body or his own wife. Objections are raised against either view, but perhaps he means that the man shall acquire his own wife "in sanctification and honour," words that elevate the wife and make it plain that Paul demands sexual purity on the part of men (married as well as unmarried). There is no double standard here. When the husband comes to the marriage bed, he should come as a chaste man to a chaste wife.

It is the same verb that is used in

In your patience possess ye your souls. Luke 21:19 KJV

..which is why I still favour the view that Paul is talking about the man and his own body here.

Re: 1 Thess 4:4 Your wife or your vessel?, on: 2010/8/17 10:47

Greetings all,

The discussion so far seems to be emphasising the separateness of a man and a woman despite their marital union; whereas doesn't scripture usually assume his being one flesh with his wife, unless otherwise stated?

Ephesians 5:28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 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.

There seems to be an element of obtaining, or gaining, (as in 'marry a wife', according to Strong's), in the word translated 'possess'. This is not incompatible with the verse preceding Eph 5:28, above, namely: That he might PRESENT IT TO HIMSELF a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Leviticus 18: The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it thy father's nakedness.

10 The nakedness of thy son's daughter, or of thy daughter's daughter, their nakedness thou shalt not uncover: for their s thine own nakedness.

1 Thessalonians 4:3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: 4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; 5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: 6 That no go beyond and defraud his brother in matter: because that the Lord the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. 7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

Berry's Interlinear has 'the' where the KJV has ". It would make sense if verse 6 was talking about the same 'matter' as v 4, 5, and 7. Can it be defined?

Re: 1 Thess 4:4 Your wife or your vessel?, on: 2010/8/17 14:59

A vessel is a container.

In this sense, regarding bodily considerations, it would be everything that contains what you are.

This would include wife if married, as the two shall become one flesh.

This would include those born from you as they are of your very flesh, containing (of) your nature.

For him who has eyes to see
and ears to hear:

this includes those 'borne' of you, who take hold with your soul-purposes of: prayers, thoughts, words and/or actions...
IF you have been priveledged a position of authority onto them, and/or they walk in compliance in this.

Agapeo,
g

edited: clarity

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2010/8/17 17:23

If we put this verse back into its original content we get.

"For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;" 1 Th 4:3-5 NKJV

the whole context of this is the wider issue of personal purity. To the people at Corinth Paul had to remind them that their bodies were not their own to use as they willed...

"Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body." 1 Cor 6:13 NKJV

To the Romans he admonished...

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Rom 12:1-2 NKJV

Bringing the body under Christ's control is a recurring theme of the epistles. To the Corinthians Paul had reminded them that this included their marital relationships.

"The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does." 1 Cor 7:4 NKJV

but while these are key spiritual concepts which reach even into the marital bed, I am convinced that Paul is not referring to marriage alone in 1Thess 4:4 but to every aspect of sexuality.

Re: , on: 2010/8/17 18:13

Your vessel as in "you", whether married or not is the beginning, and not the conclusion of the matter. IF one chooses to believe that this verse is only talking about marriage, that is what it will mean to them.

i am not of the mind to think that this passage regards only marital fidelity and sexuality. All scripture is profitable to all people.

Purity and sanctification step quite a bit further than running from sexual immorality. On guard, and always fleeing this opens the doorway to greater purity and sanctification in the other areas of life.

In context with the whole of scripture, if we are thinking in terms of fleeing pornia (fornication) alone, Jesus stated that even this is relative outside the congress of husband and wife:

~of purity

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. Mt. 5.27-30

~of sanctifications

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For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

Mk. 10.7-12

Even considering only the case of sexual immorality, be it regarding purity and/or sanctification, situations outside man and wife, as well as the marriage bed are relative.

Whether sexual or something else, lust is always lust, and born out of covetousness.

It is idolatry.

Sexual moors and proclivities are one of the clearer indications regarding the stage of reprobation(=idol worship) that has a grasp on an individual (or people group), evaluating Paul's writing about this in Romans 1.

There is a much greater principle afoot than just sanctification and purity in "possession of your vessel", as possession of your vessel --(by whatever terms considered)-- in living life involves denying yourself in Jesus Christ, whether married or not, in bed or out of it, irregardless of the intimacy of relationship.

Love, Hope, and Faith,
gregg

...I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.
Acts 20:31-32

edited: because it was needed (spelling err, incomplete thought, etc)

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2010/8/17 19:12

=====
Philologos wrote:

but while these are key spiritual concepts which reach even into the marital bed, I am convinced that Paul is not referring to marriage alone in 1Thess 4:4 but to every aspect of sexuality.

=====

Yes, I seem to think so too. I hadn't known there was any discussion about this verse until I was reading it in Spanish. It's all very interesting. It does seem to just be a matter of interpretation. I'm not sure I like putting so much of it into the translation though. Obviously, you have to interpret as you translate, but my philosophy would be to keep it at a minimum unless necessary.

Thank you everyone for your input.

Re: 1 Thess 4:4 Your wife or your vessel?, on: 2015/8/30 11:05

It would be better to use the Reina Valera Gomez which uses the Textus Receptus and fixes many of the errors of the Reina Valera 1960.

2
Porque ya sabéis qu^o mandamientos os dimos por el Señor Jesús.
3
Porque ésta es la voluntad de Dios, vuestra santificación; que os abstengáis de fornicación;
4
que cada uno de vosotros sepa tener su vaso en santificación y honor;
5
no en pasión de concupiscencia, como los gentiles que no conocen a Dios.

2
For you know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.
3
For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that you abstain from fornication;
4
that each of you know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor;
5
not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God.

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2015/8/30 14:04

Would it not be both for the married man seeing how he and his wife are one flesh (vessel) and only for the individual in the case of an unmarried person?

Re: , on: 2015/8/30 23:08

1 Thessalonians 4:4
That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

Wives are "heirs together of the grace of life". Some camps don't view them as such but only as subservient to the husband, with no individuality at all.

1 Peter 3:7
Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being HEIRS TOGETHER OF THE GRACE OF LIFE; that your prayers be not hindered.

Continuing in the same context where Paul was addressing, "every ONE of you", he now says, "that no man", not "no men". He is still speaking to each individual within the group and it only makes sense since both husband and wife, (heirs together of the grace of life), are individually responsible for their own heart and walk. They are individually responsible for abiding in Christ and possessing their vessel in honor.

1 Thessalonians 4:6
That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2015/9/5 16:32

Quote:
----- Wives are "heirs together of the grace of life". Some camps don't view them as such but only as subservient to the husband, with no individuality at all.

AMEN! Wives are to submit to their husbands and they are to reverence their husbands. If one really studies what this

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means, it is quite eye-opening. Reverence in the context of a wife, "seeing that she reverence her husband" is the Greek phobia, which is the same word used as we are to fear the Lord. At the same time men are to love their wives and give themselves for their wives. It is the order of marriage given by God. It is the way that husbands and wives relate so that they can be the one team that God intends for them to be in serving Him. This does not mean to be subservient as a slave might be. It means to be in subjection to him in the same way that the church loves and is subjection to Christ. My wife and I are heirs together and we both must keep this in mind as we relate to one another. She is a HUGE strength to me, and she often has great wisdom in areas where I lack great wisdom. She balances me in such a wonderful way. Without her, and without her input into my life, I would only be half the man I am.