

‘WIFELY SUBMISSION’ AND ‘HUSBANDLY AUTHORITY’ IN
PLUTARCH’S *MORALIA* AND THE *CORPUS PAULINUM*:
A COMPARISON

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Introduction

More than half a century ago Else Kähler wrote that the term ‘submission’ (specifically in relation to women) has hardly been understood in its original context.¹ In recent times Karin B. Neutel similarly observes that the question of the subordination of women is ‘rarely approached from a purely historical perspective’.² This article seeks some clarification. The central purpose is to investigate the following questions: In what ways do the authors of the two corpora (*Corpus Paulinum* and *Moralia*) write about wifely submission and how is such made perceptible in their works? What are the evident implications stated therein? With that in mind, the goal is to have some elucidation of the socio-historic understanding of the *Corpus Paulinum* in regards to the wife-husband relationship, with specific attention to wifely submission. Women in antiquity needed to be submissive to their fathers, husbands and

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1. Else Kähler, *Die Frau in den paulinischen Briefen: Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Begriffes der Unterordnung* (Zürich: Gotthelf-Verl, 1960), p. 11.

2. Karin B. Neutel, *A Cosmopolitan Ideal: Paul’s Declaration ‘Neither Jew nor Greek, Neither Slave nor Free, nor Male and Female’ in the Context of First-Century Thought* (PhD diss.; University of Groningen, 2013), p. 12.

any other male guardian.³ Therefore, this study pertains to the 'how' (implications) rather than to the 'if' of female submission. Similarities as well as differences between the two corpora will be investigated.

The concepts of wifely submission and husbandly authority are intrinsically related and thus treated together. But why 'wives' in particular rather than 'women' in general? First, in the *Corpus Paulinum* specifically—but also in the *Moralia*—the admonishments to submit are given to wives and not to women in general.⁴ Secondly, single women as we have them today were not as common in ancient times.⁵ For these two reasons I have chosen to focus on the wife-husband relationship.

Furthermore, it is possible that neither (deutero-)Paul nor Plutarch describes reality as is. But it should not be concluded that what they prescribe is far from it. They are engaged in *parakletic* discourse which by definition does not state the 'is' but the 'ought to'.⁶

3. On women in antiquity, see the seminal work by Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity* (New York: Schocken Books, 1975). For the first century CE, see Lynn H. Cohick, *Women in the World of the Earliest Christians: Illuminating Ancient Ways of Life* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009). See also David L. Balch, *Let Wives Be Submissive: The Domestic Code in I Peter* (SBLMS, 26; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981).

4. For the *Corpus Paulinum*, see Joel R. White, 'Ehefrauen in den paulinischen Gemeinden', in Tina Arnold, Walter Hilbrands and Heiko Wenzel (eds.), *Herr, was ist der Mensch, dass du dich seiner annimmst?—Beiträge zum biblischen Menschenbild* (Witten: SCM R. Brockhaus, 2013), pp. 265-80.

5. See e.g. Elke Hartmann, *Frauen in der Antike: Weibliche Lebenswelten von Sappho bis Theodora* (Munich: Beck, 2007), p. 11; Catherine Clark Kroeger, 'Women in Greco-Roman World and Judaism', in Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter (eds.), *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), pp. 1276-80 (1277-78); and Cohick, *Women*, pp. 99-131: 'Wives and the Realities of Marriage'.

6. Matthias Becker, 'Ehe als Sanatorium Plutarchs Coniugalia Praecepta und die Pastoralbriefe', *NovT* 52 (2010), pp. 241-66 (242-43).

*Reasons and Methods for a Comparison of the Corpus Paulinum and
Plutarch's Moralia*

Some strong reasons exist for a comparison of the two corpora: Plutarch's writings give some insight into ancient morality and thoughts on wifely submission. Living roughly during the time where the *Corpus Paulinum* took shape, Plutarch (ca. 45–120 CE) is a valuable source for further insights, especially as he wrote on the topic of the husband-wife relationship (see 'Plutarch's *Moralia*' under 'Passages Considered' below). Another reason for a comparison is that there has not been an extensive study on the relationship of the *Corpus Paulinum* and Plutarch's *Moralia* in reference to wifely submission and the stated implications for wives within the New Testament world.⁷

7. Some comparative studies with similar topics are Kathleen O'Brien Wicker, 'First Century Marriage Ethics: A Comparative Study of the Household Codes and Plutarch's Conjugal Precepts', in J.W. Flanagan and A.W. Robinson (eds.), *No Famine in the Land* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975), pp. 141-53; G.W. Peterman, 'Marriage and Sexual Fidelity in the Papyri, Plutarch and Paul', *TynBul* 50 (1999), pp. 163-72; J.W. Thompson, 'Paul, Plutarch and the Ethic of the Family', *ResQ* 52 (2010), pp. 223-26; Becker, 'Ehe als Sanatorium', pp. 242-43; Werner G. Jeanrond, 'Der Gott der Liebe: Entwicklungen des theologischen Liebesbegriffs bei Plutarch und in der frühen Kirche', in Herwig Görgemanns *et al.* (eds.), *Plutarch. Dialog über die Liebe* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2nd edn, 2011), pp. 283-302; Frederick E. Brenk, 'Most Beautiful and Divine: Graeco-Romans (Especially Plutarch), and Paul, on Love and Marriage', in Frederick Brenk and David Edward Aune (eds.), *Greco-Roman Culture and the New Testament: Studies Commemorating the Centennial of the Pontifical Biblical Institute* (NovTSup, 143; Leiden: Brill, 2012), pp. 87-111.

Some related studies on Plutarch include Lisette Goessler, *Plutarchs Gedanken über die Ehe* (PhD diss.; University of Basel, 1962); Hans Dieter Betz (ed.), *Plutarch's Ethical Writings and Early Christian Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 1978); Anastasios G. Nikolaidis, 'Plutarch on Women and Marriage', *Wiener Studien: Zeitschrift für Klassische Philologie und Patristik* 110 (1997), pp. 27-88; Peter Walcot, 'Plutarch on Sex', *Greece & Rome* 45 (1998), pp. 166-87; *idem*, 'Plutarch on Women', *Symbolae Osloenses* 74 (1999), pp. 163-83; Sarah B. Pomeroy (ed.), *Plutarch's Advice to the Bride and Groom and a Consolation to His Wife: English Translations, Commentary, Interpretive Essays, and Bibliography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); H.U. Wiemer, 'Die gute Ehefrau im Wandel der Zeiten—

One needs to keep in mind, however, that we cannot generalize and reconstruct what was 'real life' in ancient times.⁸ The 'classical world' was not a homogenous society⁹ and therefore we should not fall into easy and simplistic generalizations of women's role in antiquity.¹⁰ Manners and customs differed from place to place (both geographically and socially).¹¹ Elke Hartmann also talks about a 'Diskrepanz zwischen Anspruch und Wirklichkeit'.¹² Yet there is (or can be) some 'Realitätsgehalt'.¹³ Nevertheless, we do have depicted reality (and prescription) rather than reality as is (description).¹⁴

von Xenophon zu Plutarch', *Hermes* 133 (2005), pp. 424-46; Herwig Görgemanns *et al.* (eds.), *Plutarch: Dialog über die Liebe* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2nd edn, 2011).

8. See e.g. Bernadette J. Broton, 'Early Christian Women and Their Cultural Context: Issues of Method in Historical Reconstruction', in Adela Yarbro Collins (ed.), *Feminist Perspectives on Biblical Scholarship* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985), pp. 65-91 (67); Barbara Patzek (ed.), *Quellen zur Geschichte der Frauen, Bd. I Antike* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2000), p. 7; Gregory E. Sterling, 'Women in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds (323 BCE–138 CE)', in Carroll D. Osburn (ed.), *Essays on Women in Earliest Christianity, I* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1993), pp. 41-92 (43).

9. S.M. Baugh cautions in his introductory paragraphs against thinking of 'a homogeneous Greek family'. S.M. Baugh, 'Marriage and Family in Ancient Greek Society', in Ken M. Campbell (ed.), *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), pp. 103-31 (103).

10. See e.g. Sterling, 'Women in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds', p. 91. Randall D. Chesnutt, 'Jewish Women in the Greco-Roman Era', in Carroll D. Osburn (ed.), *Essays on Women in Earliest Christianity, I* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1993), pp. 93-130 (95).

11. Philip Barton Payne, *Man and Woman, One in Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Paul's Letters* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), p. 31. See also David W. Chapman, 'Marriage and Family in Second Temple Judaism', in Ken M. Campbell (ed.), *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), pp. 183-239 (183); Rodney Stark, *The Triumph of Christianity: How the Jesus Movement Became the World's Largest Religion* (New York: HarperOne, 2011), p. 122; Pauline Schmitt Pantel, 'Einleitung: Ein Faden der Ariadne' (trans. Andreas Wittenburg), in Pauline Schmitt Pantel (ed.), *Geschichte der Frauen: Band 1. Antike* (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus-Verlag, 1993), pp. 21-28 (23).

12. Hartmann, *Frauen in der Antike*, p. 72.

13. Hartmann, *Frauen in der Antike*, p. 208.

14. Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, 'Vorwort: Eine Geschichte der Frauen' (trans. Brigitte Große), in Pauline Schmitt Pantel (ed.), *Geschichte der Frauen: Band*

Some comments are appropriate concerning methodology. Since words do function within so called ‘fields’ or ‘domains’, a mere comparison of the same words is of no help.¹⁵ One author might just use different words to convey the same concept.¹⁶ As the goal is to look for similarities and differences in the two corpora concerning wifely submission, passages in which the authors explicitly write about submission of wives or the authority of husbands will be considered. Within this semantic domain the following terms will be looked for:¹⁷

In regards to wifely submission:

ἀκούω	to obey
εὐπειθεια	ready obedience
ὑπειξίς	yielding
ὑποταγή	submission
ὑποτασσώ	to submit/subordinate
φοβέομαι	to fear, to show great reverence/respect for

In regards to husbandly authority:

ἄγω	to guide
ἄρχω	to govern/rule
αὐθεντέω	to control (negatively stated for women)

1. *Antike* (Frankfurt a.M.; Campus-Verlag, 1993), pp. 9-20 (11); Brooten, ‘Early Christian Women’, p. 72; Cohick, *Women*, p. 69; Susan Marks, ‘Women in Early Judaism: Twenty-Five Years of Research and Reenvisioning’, *CRBS* 6 (2008), pp. 290-320 (293).

15. *ABD*, V, p. 1078. See also the seminal work of James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961).

16. See M. Wojciechowski, ‘Paul and Plutarch on Boasting’, *JGRChJ* 3 (2006), pp. 99-109 (101-102), who shows that Paul’s primary word for boasting (καυχάομαι) is used only once by Plutarch in his treatment on self-praise. Here we surely have the same concept (self-praise and boasting) but different words are being used.

17. See also Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 2nd edn, 1989), domain numbers 36 and 37. The list above is limited to the words used in the two corpora.

γυναικοκρατέομαι	to be ruled by women
δεσπότης	ruler
ἡγεμονία	leadership/dominance
κρατέω	to rule

Concerning both:

ἐξουσιάζω	to have/exercise rights
ὀφειλή	obligation
Concepts	like head-body and soul-body

Passages Considered

Plutarch's *Moralia*¹⁸

There are four major Plutarchian works discussing the wife-husband relationship: *Advice to Bride and Groom* (*Conj. praec.* = *Mor.* 138A–146A); *Consolation to his Wife* (*Cons. ux.* = *Mor.* 608A–612B); *Dialogue on Love* (*Amat.* = *Mor.* 748E–771E); and *Virtues of Women* (*Mulier. Virt.* = *Mor.* 224E–263C).¹⁹ It is the first one, however, which has a dominant position as

18. The Teubner editions of the Greek will be used. Plutarch, 'Coniugalia Pracepta', in W.R. Paton, J. Wegehaupt and W. Sieveking (eds.), *Plutarchi Moralia*, I (Leipzig: Teubner, 1925); Plutarch, 'Consolatio ad Uxorem', in W.R. Paton, M. Pohlenz and W. Sieveking (eds.), *Plutarchi Moralia*, III (Leipzig: Teubner, 1929); Plutarch, 'Amatorius', in W.R. Paton, M. Pohlenz and Kurt Hubert (eds.), *Plutarchi Moralia*, IV (Leipzig: Teubner, 1938); Plutarch, 'Mulierum Virtutes', in W. Sieveking, John Bradford Titchener and Wilhelm Nachstädt (eds.), *Plutarchi Moralia*, II (Leipzig: Teubner, 1971). The English translations are from Plutarch, *Selected Essays and Dialogues* (trans. Donald Russell; Oxford World's Classics; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). For *Conj. praec.* and *Cons. ux.* the translation by Russell with small variations in Pomeroy, *Plutarch's Advice to the Bride and Groom and a Consolation to His Wife*, will be consulted.

19. See Simon Swain, 'Plutarch's Moral Program', in Sarah B. Pomeroy (ed.), *Plutarch's Advice to the Bride and Groom and a Consolation to His Wife: English Translations, Commentary, Interpretive Essays, and Bibliography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 85-96 (91-92); Brenk, 'Most Beautiful and Divine', p. 88; Russell's introduction in Plutarch, *Selected Essays and Dialogues*, p. xxi.

Plutarch exclusively writes about the husband-wife relationship. Other writings of Plutarch within the *Moralia* too will be consulted if they give further insight.

Corpus Paulinum

Considering the *Corpus Paulinum* as a literary body the following passages are of primary importance: 1 Corinthians 7; 11.2-16; 14.33-35; Eph. 5.21-33 (Col. 3.18-19 is subsumed here); 1 Tim. 2.8-15; and Tit. 2.4-5.

Topics

The following inductively derived topics guide the investigation: marital (sexual) fidelity, public head-covering, public appearance and attire, public speech, religion and sexual activity within marriage.

Marital fidelity seems to be one of the major areas in which the implications of wifely submission can be detected and will be therefore treated first. Closely related to marital fidelity are the topics of head-covering as well as public appearance and attire. In Plutarchian writings silence is linked to a wife's seclusion and the topic of silence and speech will follow 'public appearance'. Religion and sexual activity are the last two topics in which parallels can be drawn. At last I will briefly introduce Plutarchian material (see 'Unique Plutarchian Material' below) which finds no parallel in the *Corpus Paulinum*.

Plutarch's Moralia and the Corpus Paulinum on 'Wifely Submission' and 'Husbandly Authority'

Before the implications of wifely submission can be dealt with, some general remarks concerning the issue within the two corpora need to be introduced. The connection of terminology of submission to the topics will be made in each subsection.

The authors of both corpora demand wifely submission. One reads e.g. in Plutarch that 'women who prefer to dominate (*κρατέω*) fools rather than obey (*ἀκούω*) men of sense are like people who would rather guide the blind on the road rather than follow the sighted man who knows the way' (*Conj. praec.* 6 = *Mor.* 139A). He also states that 'every action performed in a good

household is done by agreement of the partners, but displays the *leadership* (ἡγεμονία) and *decision of the husband*' (11 = *Mor.* 139C-D; emphasis mine).

That husbands are to rule (ἄρχω) their wives is also stated in precept 8 = *Mor.* 139B in which Plutarch also advises the husband to pay close attention to a wife's status should he marry above his own social standing. In 33 = *Mor.* 142D-E a clear submission-leadership relation is stated by Plutarch: 'If they [wives] submit (ὑποτάσσω) to their husbands, they are praised. If they try to rule them, they cut a worse figure than their subjects. But the husband should rule (κρατέω) the wife, not as a master rules a slave, but as the soul rules the body.'

In the *Corpus Paulinum* demands of wifely submission can be found in several places (see list above): 'Let wives keep silent in the churches. For it is not allowed for them to speak, but they should be in submission (ὑποτάσσω), as the Law also says' (1 Cor. 14.34). That women should be in submission can be also be seen in 1 Tim. 2.11. Further, one reads 'Wives, submit (ὑποτάσσω) to your own husbands, as to the Lord' (Eph. 5.22). Older women are to teach younger women to love their children and husbands and among other things to be submissive to their own husbands (ὑποτασσομένας τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν; Tit. 2.5).

Having looked at some of the general remarks of submission, it is the task to investigate the stated implications in the two corpora in regards to wifely submission or husbandly authority. Throughout this paper Plutarch's *Moralia* will be treated first. The *Corpus Paulinum* will be consulted second to see whether similarities or differences can be detected.

Marital (Sexual) Fidelity

Plutarch's Moralia

In marriage two people come together and adjustments need to be made. But 'most of the adjustments were to be made by the wife'.²⁰ So, what about marital fidelity?

20. Mary R. Lefkowitz, 'Wives and Husbands', *Greece & Rome (Second Series)* 30 (1983), pp. 31-47 (46). Brenk, 'Most Beautiful and Divine', p. 95 calls *Conj. praec.* 'advice to a bride, with a little bit thrown in for the groom'. It is of interest to observe that out of 48 short advice-statements 25 are directed towards the bride,

In Plutarchian writings the sexual faithfulness of the wife to her husband is demanded. One reads in the words of Daphnaeus—arguing alongside Plutarch against their antagonists—that the ancients called it grace or favor when yielding (ὑπειξίς) was done by the female towards the male (*Amat.* 5 = *Mor.* 751D). Further, a man (here the young man Baccho) should prevail in marriage, but that the wealthy woman (here Ismenodora) is used to govern (ἄρχω) and rule (κρατέω) is looked down upon by Pusias (an antagonist; 7 = *Mor.* 752E-F). Man is to rule and woman is to submit (*Conj. praec.* 33 = *Mor.* 142D-E)

Within the overall discussion it is stated (*Amat.* 21 = *Mor.* 768B) that a noble woman will be loyal to her lawful husband: ‘[She would] rather be embraced by bears and serpents than be touched by, or go to bed with, any other man.’

Later (23 = *Mor.* 769A-B) Plutarch writes of sexual relations being the foundation of honor, devotion, mutual affection and faithfulness.²¹ The thought is continued in 23 = *Mor.* 769D. Here a reputable (χρηστή) and chaste (σώφρονα) woman takes care that her husband does not seek pleasure somewhere else.²²

In the story of Micca and Megisto, the latter—wife of Timoleon—says that they (the women) call their husbands masters (κύριος) as she confronts the tyrant (*Mulier. virt.* 15 = *Mor.* 252B).²³ Within the overall framework of wifely submission Chiomara’s story²⁴ is also one of fidelity in sexual matters (22 = *Mor.* 258E-F). She was taken as prisoner and raped by a Roman centurion. After he agreed to return her for money, she planned his murder. When she came back to her husband she threw the head of the centurion to her husband’s feet. He exclaimed: ‘Wife ... it is honorable to keep one’s word.’ To which she stated: ‘Yes ... but it is more honorable that there should be only one man living who has had me in bed.’ A wife’s (sexual) fidelity is stressed

14 to the bride and the groom and only 9 to the husband; see Wiemer, ‘Die gute Ehefrau’, p. 424.

21. See Nikolaidis, ‘Plutarch on Women and Marriage’, p. 45; Brenk, ‘Most Beautiful and Divine’, p. 94.

22. Lit.: ‘go to waste with (or: run off to) another woman’; μή πρὸς ἑτέραν ἀπορρυσίς ὁ ἀνὴρ.

23. In 24 = *Mor.* 260A Timoclea also calls the violent man who wants to take her as his wife guardian (κηδεμών), master (δεσπότης) and husband (ἀνὴρ).

24. See also the loyalty of Camma towards her husband in 20 = 257E–258C.

in Plutarchian writings. As for Plutarch, wives need to submit to their husbands, and sexual fidelity seems to be one of the implications of that submission.

In *Conj. praec.* 42 = *Mor.* 144A-B Plutarch advises the couple to keep themselves 'pure of any unholy or lawless intercourse with others'. This advice indicates that the husband is to be loyal to his wife as well. 44 = *Mor.* 144C-D adds that '[The husband should keep himself] pure and clean of intercourse with others when [he] goes to [his] wife's bed.'

But it is possible that this precept points to a timely manner rather than a general prohibition. Plutarch advises men not to have sex with other women right before they come near their own wives.²⁵ Yet, shortly after that he states that a husband who 'prohibits in his wife' pleasures he himself is surrendering to—sleeping with others—is acting foolishly (47 = *Mor.* 144F–145A). Also, the pain he causes his wife to experience because of his infidelity might not be worth the cause.²⁶

On the other hand, he also writes that the husband has to see that he cannot have his woman as 'both wife and as a *hetaira*' (29 = *Mor.* 142C). In 16 = *Mor.* 140A-B Plutarch recounts the Persian custom of kings dining with their wives and then sending them out once they want to engage in their drinking and sexual endeavors (for which they have singing-girls and concubines):

When Persian kings dine, their legal wives sit beside them and share the feast. But if they want to amuse themselves or get drunk, they send their wives away, and summon the singing-girls and the concubines. And they are quite right not to share their drunken orgies with their wives. So, if a private citizen, intemperate and tasteless in his pleasures, commits an offense with a mistress or a maidservant, his wife ought not

25. Sarah B. Pomeroy, 'Reflections on Plutarch, Advice to the Bride and Groom: Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed', in Sarah B. Pomeroy (ed.), *Plutarch's Advice to the Bride and Groom and a Consolation to His Wife: English Translations, Commentary, Interpretive Essays, and Bibliography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 33-42 (37); Brenk, 'Most Beautiful and Divine', p. 96.

26. Cynthia Patterson, 'Plutarch's Advice to the Bride and Groom: Traditional Wisdom through a Philosophical Lens', in Sarah B. Pomeroy (ed.), *Plutarch's Advice to the Bride and Groom and a Consolation to His Wife: English Translations, Commentary, Interpretive Essays, and Bibliography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 128-137 (130).

to be angry or annoyed, but reflect that it is his respect for her that makes her husband share his intemperance or violent behavior with another woman.

Plutarch concedes to that kind of behavior and states that a wife should not be grieved by a private person nor should she be angry concerning infidelity.²⁷ Rather, she is to think of it as some form of respect, as the husband is not engaging in such intemperate and violent behavior with her. Yet, one wonders if Plutarch (by referencing Persian customs) is showing, and thus painting a contrast to the ‘Greeks’, how ‘barbarians’ behave. After all, he calls the husband ‘intemperate and tasteless in his pleasures’ and says that he is committing ‘an offense with a mistress or a maidservant’.²⁸

But again Plutarch further notes that ‘a jealous woman’ should not easily write a certificate of divorce if she thinks her husband has a lover. This would be exactly what her rival would want her to do. A wife should not throw away her household and marriage (41 = *Mor.* 144A).

Plutarch uses a double standard in terms of marital fidelity.²⁹ Though it seems that he prefers husbands to be loyal to their wives, he conforms to the idea of husbands seeking sexual pleasure outside the marital bond. At all times husbandly authority is a given and his sexual faithfulness is advised for but not demanded.

27. Bruce W. Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows: The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), p. 20 takes this passage as demonstrating the ‘widespread acceptance of a husband’s adultery’.

28. Eran Almagor shows how Plutarch sees the Persians often as barbarians referencing Plutarch’s biography of Artaxerxes II *De Iside et Osiride*, *De Alexandri magni fortuna aut virtute*, and the *Life of Alexander*. Eran Almagor, ‘Plutarch on the End of the Persian Empire’, *Graeco-Latina Brunensia* 16 (2011), pp. 3-16. See also the broader study on Plutarch on barbarians: Thomas S. Schmidt, *Plutarque et les Barbares: La rhétorique d’une image* (Collection d’Études classiques, 14; Louvain-Namur: Peeters, 1999).

29. Wicker, ‘First Century Marriage Ethics’, p. 146; See Peterman, ‘Marriage and Sexual Fidelity’, p. 163, quoting *Against Neaera* (Demosthenes 59.122); Walcot, ‘Plutarch on Sex’, p. 176. Contra Nikolaidis, ‘Plutarch on Women and Marriage’, p. 72.

Corpus Paulinum

In the *Corpus Paulinum* one finds that wives need to submit to their husbands (see 1 Cor. 14.34; Eph. 5.22; and 1 Tim. 2.11) and to show great reverence for him (Eph. 5.33). The husband is the head of the wife (1 Cor. 11.3; Eph. 5.23) and he is to love his wife as Christ loved the church and as one loves one's own body (5.25, 28).

In Paul too, submission-leadership language (e.g. ἐξουσιάζω in 1 Cor. 7.4) is linked to sexual relations (v. 3) within marriage (see also 2.6.2). At this point marital fidelity is the focal point.

But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over (ἐξουσιάζει) her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over (ἐξουσιάζει) his own body, but the wife does. Do not defraud one another, except perhaps by agreement for a time, so that you can devote yourselves to prayer (1 Cor. 7.3-5 ESV).

Are there similar or different admonishments to marital faithfulness which we have seen in Plutarch? That is, are there demands that a wife needs to be faithful to her husband? Are there demands for the husband to be faithful to his wife? And if so, are these absolute?

A wife needs to be sexually faithful to her husband. One way to avoid sexual immorality³⁰ is given in 1 Cor. 7.2b: Each woman should have her own man (τὸν ἴδιον ἄνδρα). A wife should have (a euphemism for sexual relations)³¹ her own husband. The personal pronoun shows that Paul is talking about an exclusive sexual relationship with the husband.³² The wife has to fulfill her obligations (7.3 τὴν ὀφειλὴν ἀποδιδότω). Paul does not explicitly state what these obligations are—though sexual obligations seem to be in

30. 'Paul takes for granted that the only rightful place for sexual intercourse is within marriage and that those who marry are sexually active.' David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), p. 256.

31. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, p. 256.

32. Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Der erste Brief Des Paulus an die Korinther* (HTA; Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 2006), p. 357.

view.³³ Further, the wife does not have rights over her own body (v. 4) but the husband does.

In the Pastoral Epistles (PE) the author states that a true widow is one who was ἐνὸς ἀνδρὸς γυνή (1 Tim. 5.9; see also the discussion below on 1 Tim. 3.2, 12; 5.9; and Tit. 1.6 and the term μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα). As that widow also needed to be sixty years of age and in v. 14 the author advises young widows to remarry, this cannot mean that a true widow can only be a woman who was married once. Rather, she is to be known for her marital fidelity, however often she was married.³⁴

As in the rest of the *Corpus Paulinum* where wifely submission is written about, marital fidelity of the wife to her husband is one implication of that submission.

Paul demands the same strict faithfulness of a husband to his wife. In 1 Cor. 7.2a he writes: Each man should have his own woman (τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα). Again the personal pronoun stresses exclusive sexual relations to one's own spouse. As has been seen above, the wife needed to fulfill her sexual obligations. The verse, however, starts out with stating that the husband needs to fulfill his obligations. Together we see that these are to be fulfilled mutually.³⁵ In regards to v. 4, the first line of argument comes as no surprise in a male-dominant culture. But the second line of Paul's argument has an element of surprise: ὁμοίως the husband does not have rights over his body but the wife does.

But what would happen if the husband is unfaithful to his wife? Here Paul does not explicitly address the issue in this pericope but one can make some

33. See Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), p. 272 n. 15, for textual variants which show early ascetic aspects: 'Not all later Christians shared Paul's view on the obligatory nature of mutual sexual fulfillment in marriage.'

34. George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), p. 223 quotes Theodore of Mopsuestia who wrote: 'If she has lived in chastity with her husband, no matter whether she has had only one, or whether she was married a second time'.

35. Gilbert Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles: What the Bible Says about a Woman's Place in Church and Family* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), p. 129; Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians* (PNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), p. 279: 'Simply put, married men and women are obligated to have sex with their partners.'

other observations from the preceding two chapters (1 Corinthians 5–6) as well as the teachings of Jesus (predominantly in Matthew 19 and Mark 10).³⁶ Within the Corinthian correspondence, Paul had already written about sexual matters. In ch. 5 a case of a man committing incest was dealt with. Here Paul admonishes the church that they should not be in company with a sexually immoral Christian (v. 11). Furthermore, in ch. 6 Paul has been arguing against men going to prostitutes for they are one with Christ and thus cannot be one with a prostitute as well. William R.G. Loader argues that 'adultery terminated a marriage and would require divorce'.³⁷ If it requires or permits divorce is not the question which needs to be answered at this point. What is crucial is to observe is that Paul does not demand a woman to endure that kind of behavior. Also, in light of Jesus' teaching, David Instone-Brewer thinks that women also had the right to divorce in cases of adultery.³⁸ This might also be true in Paul's teaching though this can only be inferred.

In the PE one encounters similar ideas. In 1 Tim. 3.2, 12; 5.9; and Tit. 1.6 an overseer/elder and a deacon need to be *μῖς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα* (*ἄνδρες*; v. 12). There are at least four views in which the phrase *μῖς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα* is understood:³⁹ (1) the elder needs to be married; (2) the phrase speaks against polygamy; (3) it speaks against second marriages; and (4) the elder needs to be faithful to his wife.⁴⁰ Without going into detail, the first three views can be

36. For the Corinthian correspondence, see William R.G. Loader, *The New Testament on Sexuality* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), pp. 152-222. For Jesus' teaching, see David Instone-Brewer, *Divorce and Remarriage in the Bible: The Social and Literary Context* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), pp. 133-88 (178-80).

37. Loader, *The New Testament on Sexuality*, p. 222.

38. Instone-Brewer, *Divorce and Remarriage in the Bible*, pp. 178-79.

39. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, pp. 157-59; Heinz-Werner Neudorfer, *Der erste Brief des Paulus an Timotheus* (HTA; Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 2004), pp. 140-41; Heinz-Werner Neudorfer, *Der Brief des Paulus an Titus* (HTA; Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 2012), p. 77.

40. John K. Goodrich, 'Overseers as Stewards and the Qualifications for Leadership in the Pastoral Epistles', *ZNW* 104 (2013), pp. 77-97 (93), seems to presuppose that position. Ed Glasscock, 'The Biblical Concept of Elder', *BSac* 144 (1987), pp. 66-78 (74) sees this referring to "a one-woman type of man", that is, not a flirtatious man but one who is content with his wife'. See also Ed Glasscock, "'The Husband of One Wife' Requirement in 1 Timothy 3:2", *BSac* 140 (1983), pp. 244-58.

set aside due to other scriptural admonitions.⁴¹ Male freedom in regard to sexual matters certainly needed to be addressed.⁴² The writer of the PE calls the husband to be faithful to his wife.

So one can see that marital fidelity on the husband's side is demanded in the same strict manner as it is for wives. One difference, however, is that the ethical demand of marital fidelity has different reasons for the husband than for the wife. A wife needs to be sexually faithful to her husband because of her submission and respect. The husband, however, does not need to be sexually faithful to his wife because of submission but because he needs to love her.

Conclusion and Comparison

In terms of marital fidelity both corpora show that there is an emphasis on a wife's utter sexual faithfulness to her husband. For both this is linked to her overall topic of wifely submission. The demand to be sexually faithful is one implication of her submission to her husband.

Plutarch leaves the door open for the male partner to have sexual relations outside of his marital commitment. Though it appears that Plutarch would like both sexes to be faithful to each other, he allows the husband to act otherwise. Plutarch stresses a wife's faithfulness to her husband without requiring it on mutual terms.

Reciprocal rights and duties are stressed in 1 Corinthians 7.⁴³ Paul demands a husband's utter fidelity to his own wife. Sexual activities outside the marriage bond are not allowed. The sexual freedom of the husband is thoroughly reconsidered in Paul: negatively he is obligated to have sex with no one outside marriage, positively he is to provide 'sexual pleasure and satisfaction' for his own wife.⁴⁴ The author of PE also demands faithfulness on the husband's side.

41. For good evaluations, see Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, pp. 157-59.

42. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, pp. 159.

43. E. Cantarella, *Pandora's Daughters: The Role and Status of Women in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (trans. M.B. Fant; Baltimore; Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), p. 158: 1 Cor. 7.3-5 and Gal. 3.28 'contributed no small amount to giving women a new consciousness and to teaching men greater respect for women'.

44. Ciampa and Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, p. 281.

Another difference is that marital fidelity for the husband (which is not demanded in the *Mor.*) is tied to his leadership in Plutarch's *Moralia* whereas in the *Corpus Paulinum* it is tied to a husband's love for his wife.

Public Head-Covering

As has been stated above, the issue of head-covering is closely related to marital fidelity. Married women were obligated to wear some form of head-covering when they went out into the public arena.⁴⁵ Bruce W. Winter calls the veil (as one kind of head-covering⁴⁶) as 'the most symbolic feature of the bride's dress in Roman culture'.⁴⁷ Winter further states that investigations show head-covering 'was the symbol of the modesty and chastity expected of a married woman'.⁴⁸ Additionally, it was a symbol of a husband's authority and the removal in public of the head-covering was to withdraw from marriage.⁴⁹

45. Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones, *Aphrodite's Tortoise: The Veiled Woman of Ancient Greece* (Swansea, Wales: Classical Press of Wales, 2003), pp. 3-4, 11, 88-89, 175. White, 'Ehefrauen', p. 270, writes that head-covering 'diente in der gesamten griechisch-römischen und jüdischen Antike als das entscheidende soziosemiotische Merkmal einer verheirateten Frau'. See also D.W.J. Gill, 'The Importance of Roman Portraiture for Head-Coverings in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16', *TynBul* 41 (1990), pp. 245-60 (253-55); J.D. BeDuhn, "'Because of the Angels": Unveiling Paul's Anthropology in 1 Corinthians 11', *JBL* 118 (1999), pp. 295-320 (300); Bruce W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), pp. 126-27.

46. Craig S. Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives: Marriage and Women's Ministry in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1992), p. 22.

47. Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows*, p. 78. See also Gill, 'Roman Portraiture', pp. 253-56.

48. Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows*, p. 80. See also Judith Lynn Sebesta, 'Symbolism in the Costume of the Roman Woman', in Judith Lynn Sebesta and Larissa Bonfante (eds.), *The World of Roman Costume* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), pp. 46-53 (48).

49. Sebesta, 'Symbolism in the Costume of the Roman Woman', pp. 48-49.

Plutarch's Moralia

Within the four primary works considered for Plutarch there are not many statements made concerning this topic. The topic is discussed in *Sayings of the Spartans* (*Apoph. lac.*), *Greek Questions* (*Quaest. graec.*) and *Roman Questions* (*Quaest. rom.*)—though here too the references are scarce.

In his advice to the newly married couple, Plutarch writes about the custom of the veiling of the bride during the marriage ceremony (*Conj. praec. 2 = Mor. 138D*). In another writing one detects that when wives go out in public they are to cover their head. Plutarch writes: ‘When someone inquired why they took their girls into public places unveiled, but their married women veiled, he said, “Because the girls have to find husbands, and the married women have to keep to those who have them!”’ (*Apoph. lac. Charillus 2 = Mor. 232C; LCL*).

As seen in passages of Plutarch (*Conj. praec. 2 = Mor. 138D; Quaest. graec. 49 = Mor. 302E–303A; Quaest. rom. 14 = Mor. 267A*), the custom of head-covering is presupposed. Since head-covering symbolizes the authority of the husband and the general demand of wifely submission can be depicted in Plutarch, head-covering is another implication of a wife’s submission to her husband. This is also due to the head-covering symbolizing marital fidelity.

Corpus Paulinum

Within the *Corpus Paulinum* one passage mentions head-covering, 1 Cor. 11.2-16. In this passage Paul mentions that the husband is the head of the wife (v. 3) and that a wife is the glory of her husband (v. 7). Paul writes that ‘every wife who praying or prophesying with her head uncovered puts her head to shame’ (v. 5; AT).

If the above studies are correct and the omission of wearing head-covering by a wife symbolizes her withdrawal from the marital bond, then the demand given by Paul relates to that custom and he wishes wives to be faithful to their husband. This then is symbolized by wearing some form of head-covering. It is a sign of a woman’s fidelity to her husband and another implication or expression of her submission to him.

Conclusion and Comparison

Plutarch and Paul both presuppose the custom of head-covering as a symbol of a wife’s fidelity to her husband when she goes out in public.

Public Appearance and Attire

Wifely submission and how wives are supposed to dress and to appear in public are topics which are addressed in both corpora. Similar to head-covering, apparel signaled social status and conventions.⁵⁰

Plutarch's Moralia

In Plutarch women are to be secluded at home when the husband is away (*Conj. praec.* 9 = *Mor.* 139C): 'We see the moon bright and conspicuous when she is far from the sun; when near, she vanishes and is hidden. A good [better: chaste] woman (σώφρονα γυναῖκα), on the other hand, should be seen most when she is with her husband, and stay at home and be hidden when he is away.'

This precept is sandwiched by Plutarch's statements about male leadership (6 = *Mor.* 139A, 8 = *Mor.* 139B and 11 = *Mor.* 139C-D). Though there should be agreement in decisions being made, it should be led by the husbands who are to rule their wives in gentleness.

The phrase 'reasonable [woman]' (σώφρονα [γυναῖκα]) appears also in 10 = *Mor.* 139C, 17 = *Mor.* 140B-C, 25 = *Mor.* 141D, 28 = *Mor.* 141F-142A, 29 = *Mor.* 142A-B and 31 = *Mor.* 142C. This term 'connotes self-restraint and chastity'.⁵¹ Such virtue will be clearly seen by the public if the woman remains at home (30-32 = *Mor.* 142C-D; *Cons. ux.* 4 = *Mor.* 608F-609A).

Further, women are not to expose much of their skin. Plutarch writes: 'Theano once exposed her hand once she was arranging her cloak. "What a beautiful arm", said someone. "But not for public property", she replied' (*Conj. praec.* 31 = *Mor.* 142C).

50. See also Alan Padgett, 'Wealthy Women at Ephesus: 1 Timothy 2:8-15 in Social Context', *Int* 41 (1987), pp. 19-31; Robert W. Wall, *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus* (Two Horizons New Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), p. 89.

51. Sarah B. Pomeroy, 'Commentary on Plutarch, Advice to the Bride and Groom', in Sarah B. Pomeroy (ed.), *Plutarch's Advice to the Bride and Groom and A Consolation to His Wife: English Translations, Commentary, Interpretive Essays, and Bibliography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 42-57 (48). Wicker, 'First Century Marriage Ethics', p. 142 states that for Plutarch the 'practice of *sōphrosynē* by the husband was reflected in his exercise of authority. Its practice by the wife was reflected in her submissiveness and silence.' See also discussion below on public speech.

In addition, wives (and husbands) should refrain from extravagance (12 = *Mor.* 139D-E; 48.145A-B). A woman needs to guard her body against strangers—physical affection should be exercised in private.

On the one hand, Plutarch rejects Thucydides's opinion of women's public praise and holds the Roman custom of a public commemoration (after the death of the person) in high regard (*Mulier. Virt.* = *Mor.* 242E-F). On the other hand, he does not revise Thucydides's view of women's seclusion which is mentioned in the same reference.

Plutarch—though maybe here and there allowing women to have public appearance—is most comfortable with them being rarely visible in the public square. Modesty in behavior and apparel and reclusiveness (as well as silence) are primary characteristics of a chaste wife. This then is another implication of her submission.

Corpus Paulinum

Within the context of 1 Tim. 2.9-10 women's appearance in public as well as issues concerning attire can be seen. As the author desires men to pray everywhere with holy hands without anger and dispute, he desires⁵² 'likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works' (ESV). This comes right before the statement that women are to be in submission (v. 11).

The author of the PE writes how wives are to dress. Positively wives are to dress 'in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control' and negatively not 'with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire'.⁵³ In this passage of the PE the writer admonishes wives to dress in such a way as to appear modest and in propriety. The opposite of such modesty and propriety is that which appears in the negative clause—hairstyles, gold, pearls and other

52. The author states 'likewise I wish woman to dress in a certain manner', as both to pray (*προσεύχεσθαι*; v. 8) and to dress (*κοσμεῖν*; v. 9) are in an infinitival construction completing the thought of *βούλομαι* (cf. BDF §392).

53. Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows*, pp. 97-122, gives detailed information on women's appearance in antiquity and the connection to our passage. See also Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives*, pp. 103-107.

extravagant attire.⁵⁴ The social indications of such excessive attire would be disadvantageous in a setting in which God is to be glorified (cf. 1 Cor. 10.31).⁵⁵

Conclusion and Comparison

Similar to Plutarch the author of the PE is concerned with male honor and what is communicated via dress and attire, and how a woman should appear in public. The writer cautions wives to dress modestly, in all propriety and discretion. There should be no glamorous and excessive attire.

A possible difference between these two writings is that the reclusiveness of women in their homes is not mentioned in the PE, whereas Plutarch seems to favor that custom. However, in the *Corpus Paulinum* one finds that wives should ask their husbands at home (ἐν οἴκῳ; 1 Cor. 14.35) which hints toward domestic retirement.

Public Speech

What is written in the context of female submission in terms of public speech? As with many of the sections, here too the *Corpus Paulinum* and Plutarch's *Moralia* do not have a fully developed treatment but one can glean some implications.

Plutarch's Moralia

Theano once exposed her hand once she was arranging her cloak.
'What a beautiful arm', said someone. 'But not for public property',

54. T.A.J. McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 154-70, documents the differences in attire of modest women and that of *hetairai*; pointed out by Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows*, p. 100.

55. David M. Scholer, 'Women's Adornment: Some Historical and Hermeneutical Observations on the New Testament Passages', *Daughters of Sarah* 6 (1980), pp. 3-6 (5), links the costly attire to sexual infidelity as well as materialistic extravagance; quoted in Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives*, p. 105. Alicia J. Batten, 'Neither Gold nor Braided Hair (1 Timothy 2.9; 1 Peter 3.3): Adornment, Gender and Honour in Antiquity', *NTS* 55 (2009), pp. 484-501 (486), points out that a modest dress by the matron preserved the husband's honor.

she replied. Not only the arms but the words of a modest woman must never be public property. She should be shy with her speech as with her body, and guard it against strangers. Feelings, character, and disposition can all be seen in a woman's talk (*Conj. praec.* 31 = *Mor.* 142C-D).

Theano's hand is exposed but Plutarch quickly moves to the topic of speech, which a modest woman needs to guard from strangers. This is followed by the statement that women should be submissive (*ὑποτάττουσαι*) and husbands rule (*κρατέω*) their wives 'as the soul rules the body' (33 = *Mor.* 142D-E).

The reason (*γάρ*) for guarding a woman's speech from strangers is that through it she reveals feelings, character and disposition. This then is further elaborated in 32 = *Mor.* 142D where Plutarch explains Phidias's statue⁵⁶ (the goddess Aphrodite resting her foot on a turtle) to 'symbolize homekeeping and silence'. He then advises 'a wife [to] speak only to her husband or through her husband'.⁵⁷ About this a wife should not feel aggrieved, because 'like a piper, she makes nobler music through another's tongue'.

In his *Mulier. virt.*, there is a story of Aretaphila who was invited by the leading men of Cyrene to join the government (19 = *Mor.* 257E).⁵⁸ In that case, public speaking would have probably been a must for her. Yet she did not accept the offer but 'retired into the women's quarters ... [spending] the rest of her days quietly at her loom'.

In conclusion a wife's speech needs to be guarded from strangers. A wife should only talk to or through her husband. By implication, she needs to remain silent otherwise. It is the husband who is the guide, philosopher and teacher (see 48 = *Mor.* 145B-C). A wife's submission (or rather the husband's

56. Pheidias's statue is Aphrodite Ourania from Elis (*Pausanias* 6.25.1) which was worth seeing for a visitor to the Peloponnese.

57. Neutel, *A Cosmopolitan Ideal*, p. 217, comments: 'Plutarch thus connects a woman's seclusion and public silence with submission to her husband. As he states elsewhere, "A good woman, on the other hand, should be seen most when she is with her husband, and stay at home and be hidden when he is away"'; the latter referring to precept 9. See also Plutarch, *Is. Os.* 75 = *Mor.* 381E-F.

58. Pointed out by Armin D. Baum, 'Paul's Conflicting Statements on Female Public Speaking (1 Cor 11:5) and Silence (1 Cor 14:34-35)', *TynBul* 65 (2014), pp. 247-74 (265).

rule) is stressed as a soul-body relationship and not a harsh master-slave one and public speech by wives is not wished for.

Corpus Paulinum

Three passages to consider here are 1 Cor. 11.5, 14.34-35 and 1 Tim. 2.11-12. In these women are told to be silent (σιγάω) because they are not allowed to speak (λαλέω) but are to be in submission (ὑποτάσσω). Further, women should learn in all submissiveness (μανθανέτω ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ).

In 1 Cor. 11.3-5, Paul admonishes wives to cover their head if they pray or prophesy. The issue of head-covering has already been dealt with above. What is of interest is that Paul seems to have no problem that women actually do speak—in the form of prayer and prophecy—within the church. How does this passage then fit with the following statement found only a couple of chapters later?⁵⁹ There one reads:

Wives (αἱ γυναῖκες) are to be silent (σιγάτωσαν) in the churches. For it is not permitted for them to speak (λαλεῖν), but they are to be in submission (ὑποτασσεσθωσαν⁶⁰), just as the Law also says. But if they wish to learn something, let them ask their own husbands (τοὺς ἰδίους ἄνδρας) at home (ἐν οἴκῳ). For it is shameful for a wife to speak (λαλεῖν) in church (1 Cor. 14.34-35; AT).

First Corinthians 14.34-35 is oftentimes seen as an interpolation.⁶¹ I am

59. For major interpretations of 1 Cor. 11.5 and 14.34-35 see Baum, 'Paul's Conflicting Statements', pp. 248-51.

60. One should notice the passive form here. Men (or husbands) are not to submit women (wives) but it is a more or less voluntary act done by the female sex.

61. See especially Hans Conzelmann, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther* (KEK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 11th edn, 1969), p. 290; Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, pp. 699-702; Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, 'Interpolations in 1 Corinthians', *CBQ* 48 (1986), pp. 81-94 (90-92). For a detailed bibliography on supporters of the interpolation view, see Payne, *Man and Woman*, p. 226 n. 39. Scholarly opinion is not settled on this issue however. For scholars who hold against an interpolation, see the bibliographic information given in Schnabel, *Der erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther*, p. 843 and Curt Niccum, 'The Voice of the Manuscripts on the Silence of Women: The External Evidence for 1 Cor 14.34-5', *NTS* 43 (1997), pp. 242-55.

not persuaded by the arguments.⁶² Paul writes about silence, speaking and the process of asking questions in the broader topic of female submission. There are many challenges this pericope poses to the interpreter, but the focus is on implications of wifely submission and public speech.⁶³

The imperative for women to be silent is syntactically substantiated (γάρ) first by the prohibition to speak (repeated in v. 35 with the additional phrase ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ) and second by the admonition to submit. Further, in v. 35 the apostle gives a reason (γάρ) why women should ask their men at home and not speak in the church—to do otherwise is shameful.

Two common interpretations (in relation to 1 Cor. 11) are: (1) Paul limits the talking of women in regards to their questions (either evaluative or informative)⁶⁴ or (2) the ‘talking’ is equated with the ‘evaluation of prophecies’.⁶⁵ In general Paul wants women to learn, but not if it brings disorder and confusion (see v. 40).⁶⁶

Another solution is given by Armin D. Baum. He provides two criteria for women speaking in public in antiquity: (1) it needs to be done under (or in consent with) male leadership; and (2) it had to be in congruence with female chastity and modesty.⁶⁷ For Baum, the general prohibition by Paul in 1

62. The arguments on either side are not conclusive and I am willing to change my mind on this topic.

63. There is ambiguity if these verses are referring to married women. The phrase ‘their own men’ (τοὺς ἰδίου ἀνδρας) must not refer to husbands but could refer to any male guardian. See e.g. Ben Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), p. 287. For arguments for a husband-wife relationship, see White, ‘Ehefrauen’, pp. 272-75.

64. James Greenbury, ‘1 Corinthians 14:34-35: Evaluation of Prophecy Revisited’, *JETS* 51 (2008), pp. 721-31 (726).

65. See also Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives*, p. 81; D.A. Carson, “‘Silent in the Churches’: On the Role of Women in 1 Corinthians 14:33b-36”, in John Piper and Wayne A. Grudem (eds.), *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1991), pp. 140-53 (151).

66. Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives*, p. 82 points to Plutarch and his *On Listening to Lectures* to show that interrupting speakers, asking the wrong kind of questions or even whispering during lectures was seen as rude, see *Mor.* 39C-D, 43B-C, 45D, and 48A-B.

67. Baum, ‘Paul’s Conflicting Statements’, p. 270.

Corinthians 14 concerns all kinds of public speaking by women. How does this relate to 1 Cor. 11.5? Women were allowed to pray and prophesy in a public meeting (church gathering) if their heads were covered—the sign for both male leadership and female modesty. Baum (leaning on passages like 1 Cor. 16.19; Rom. 16.3-5, 15; Col. 4.15; Phlm. 1-2)⁶⁸ reasons that in the earlier passage Paul deals with a more lenient Christian group whereas in 1 Corinthians 14 a more conservative group is addressed.

In 1 Tim. 2.11-12, silence within the framework of subordination (ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ) is also addressed.⁶⁹ 'In all submissiveness' modifies the imperative of learning and is in strong parallel structure to 'not αὐθεντεῖν men' if 'in quietness' (ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ) is taken as an *inclusio*. Thus, the submission the author is referring to belongs to a male person.⁷⁰ In this passage, the author states that wives should learn in quietness. Some meanings of ἡσυχία are rest, peace, tranquility, quietness and silence. Ἠσυχία is 'not the absence of noise or speech', but refers to quietness and 'tranquility'.⁷¹ Thus, absolute silence is not necessarily commanded here.⁷² Already in v. 2 the reader notices that the author wishes all to live 'a quiet life' (ἡσύχιον βίον) which certainly does not refer to absolute silence. I. Howard Marshall maintains that the situation of

68. Referring to P. Trebilco, 'Studying "Fractionation" in Earliest Christianity in Rome and Ephesus', in C. Breytenbach and J. Frey (eds.), *Reflections on the Early Christian History of Religion* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), pp. 293-333 (318-20).

69. Does γυνή refer to women or wives? The many *topoi* (e.g. attire) used, the Adam and Eve story, childbearing (v. 15) and the connection of ἀνὴρ and γυνή point to 'wife' as the referent. White, 'Ehefrauen', pp. 275-80. Cf. also Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows*, pp. 60-65, 97-109. I. Howard Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999), p. 452, points out that in v. 15 'the married state is taken as normal'.

70. Contra Payne, *Man and Woman*, pp. 315-16, and Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows*, pp. 113-14, who see Christian instruction as the reference of submission.

71. Ceslas Spicq, 'ἡσυχάζω, ἡσυχία, ἡσύχιος', in James D. Ernest (ed.), *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament* (3 vols.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), II, pp. 178-83 (178).

72. C.H. Peisker, 'Ἠσυχία', in Horst Robert Balz and Gerhard Schneider (eds.), *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (3 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), II, p. 126, writes: 'The request for quietness in worship (1 Tim 2:11, 12) does not forbid questioning or speaking in general, but rather speaking that creates a disturbance.'

women learning alongside men in the church is nothing unusual. What is stressed here is rather the manner in how it is to be done.⁷³ If absolute silence is demanded here it cannot be demonstrated from the text—though it is possible.

Having positively stated how women are to learn, the author now turns to a prohibition: ‘I do not allow a woman to teach (διδάσκειν) and/or ἀθηνεῖν a man’ with the contrasting *inclusio* to v. 11 ‘but to remain in quietness (ἡσυχία)’. Here two (separate?) implications for women are being stated. First, a woman is not to teach, and second, she is not to ἀθηνεῖν a man. Are these two distinct elements of the prohibition or should they be seen in conjunction? As the author of the PE does want women to teach other women (Tit. 2.3) and states that Timothy had been entrusted with Scripture from his youth (2 Tim. 3.12; probably by his Jewish mother Eunice; 2 Tim. 1.5; Acts 16.1), one can deduce that 1 Tim. 2.12 cannot be a prohibition in regards to women’s general teaching ministry. It seems best then to view the two prohibitions in conjunction.⁷⁴ But what does ἀθηνεῖν mean? Here too a lot has been written.⁷⁵ In general one can say that the word ‘shows no inherent negative sense of grasping or usurping authority ... but simply means “to have or exercise authority”’.⁷⁶ The author is prohibiting a woman to teach and have

73. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 453.

74. See especially Andreas J. Köstenberger, ‘A Complex Sentence: The Syntax of 1 Timothy 2:12’, in Andreas J. Köstenberger and Thomas R. Schreiner (eds.), *Women in the Church: An Analysis and Application of 1 Timothy 2:9-15* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2nd edn, 2005), pp. 53-84. But cf. Payne, *Man and Woman*, pp. 337-59.

75. See e.g. George W. Knight, ‘Authenteō in Reference to Women in 1 Timothy 2:12’, *NTS* 30 (1984), pp. 143-57; L.E. Wilshire, ‘The TLG Computer and Further Reference to AUTHENTEŌ in 1 Timothy 2:12’, *NTS* 34 (1988), pp. 120-34; Henry Scott Baldwin, ‘ἀθηνεῖν in Ancient Greek Literature’, in Andreas J. Köstenberger, Thomas R. Schreiner and Henry Scott Baldwin (eds.), *Women in the Church: A Fresh Analysis of 1 Timothy 2:9-15* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), pp. 269-305; *idem*, ‘An Important Word: Αἰθηνεῖν in 1 Timothy 2:12’, in Andreas J. Köstenberger and Thomas R. Schreiner (eds.), *Women in the Church: An Analysis and Application of 1 Timothy 2:9-15* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2nd edn, 2005), pp. 39-51; Albert Wolters, ‘A Semantic Study of Authentes and Its Derivatives’, *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 11 (2006), pp. 44-65.

76. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 141. See also Wolters, ‘A Semantic Study of Authentes and Its Derivatives’, p. 54; Wall, *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*, p. 91.

authority over men. In other words, he does not allow wives to have a teaching demeanor in conjunction with having authority over their husbands. On the other hand, he wants them to learn. But he wants them to do so in a quiet demeanor and in all submissiveness.

Conclusion and Comparison

For Plutarch a woman's character, feelings and disposition are revealed through her speech. This should be guarded from strangers. She is to 'speak only to her husband or through her husband' or remain silent. Plutarch stresses male leadership with the metaphor of soul-body relationship

In the *Corpus Paulinum* women are to be silent in the churches—but this silence does not necessarily refer to not speaking at all. Either Paul is referring to the critical evaluation of their husbands' prophecies or their asking of disruptive questions. If one accepts Baum's proposal, a general prohibition can be detected. They should learn in all quietness and submission in an orderly manner. The author of PE does not allow a wife to have a teaching demeanor in conjunction with having authority over her husband. Wives are to remain quiet or even be silent.

Both Plutarch and (deutero-)Paul advise the silence of wives. In Plutarch's *Advice to Bride and Groom*, it refers to absolute silence in public (though cf. *Mulier. virt.* 19 = *Mor.* 257E), whereas in the *Corpus Paulinum* it need not refer to absolute silence in public. At least in one instance (1 Cor. 11 where male leadership and female chastity is preserved through the head-covering), Paul does allow wives to speak in public.

Religion

Wifely submission concerning her belief in relation to the male head of the household (usually the husband) is the focus at this point. There were different cults in which only women (often of the elite) were allowed (e.g. Demeter, Thesmophoria, Bacchanalia, Isis in Athens, etc.)⁷⁷ but I will focus on

77. For a general reference on women and religion, see chapter 7 ('Religion') of Lin Foxhall, *Studying Gender in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013) as well as Cohick's section on 'Religious Activities of Gentile Women and God-Fearers' (chapter 5) in Cohick, *Women*, pp. 159-93. For the Isis cult see also Elizabeth J. Walters, *Attic Grave Reliefs That Represent Women in*

Plutarch's and Paul's portrayal of religious adherence of the wife in a marital relationship.

Plutarch's Moralia

A wife ought not to have friends of her own, but use her husband's as their common stock. And the first and most important of our friends are the gods. A married woman should therefore worship and recognize the gods whom her husband holds dear, and these alone. The door must be closed to strange cults and foreign superstitions. No god takes pleasure in cult performed furtively and in secret by a woman (*Conj. praec.* 19 = *Mor.* 140C-D).

Plutarch advises a wife not to have her own friends but rather share her husband's 'as their common stock'. He goes on to state that the gods are the first and foremost friends (θεοὶ φίλοι πρῶτοι καὶ μέγιστοι). In his advice he speaks of a wife's total loyalty to the husband's cult. This is done in utter exclusivity, as the clause 'and these alone' (θεοὺς οὓς ὁ ἀνὴρ ... μόνους) shows. This fits Plutarch's ideal in which the husband leads and decides (11 = *Mor.* 139E-D). It is the husband who 'decides' the religion of the household and it is the wife who needs to conform. Concerning his own marriage with Timoxena (*Cons. ux.* 10 = *Mor.* 611D), he refers to the Dionysian cult which was known to both and which they shared. Further, infidelity in religious matters was equal to that of sexual ones.⁷⁸ As the wife lets the husband take the initiative in sexual activity (see below), she obeys him when it comes to religion.⁷⁹ The gods he honors, she needs to honor.

Corpus Paulinum

In Paul's treatment on sexual matters, marriage and divorce (1 Cor. 7), the theme of religion (vv. 12-16) comes into play in the discussion of mixed mar-

the Dress of Isis (Hesperia Supplement, 22; Princeton, NJ: American School of Classical Studies, 1988).

78. Jo Ann McNamara, 'Gendering Virtue', in Sarah B. Pomeroy (ed.), *Plutarch's Advice to the Bride and Groom and a Consolation to His Wife: English Translations, Commentary, Interpretive Essays, and Bibliography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 151-61 (155).

79. Caroline Johnson Hodge, 'Married to an Unbeliever: Households, Hierarchies, and Holiness in 1 Corinthians 7:12-16', *HTR* 103 (2010), pp. 1-25 (10).

riages—marriages in which one of the spouses is a follower of Jesus whereas the other one is not. Though Paul addresses both genders equally,⁸⁰ this does not mean that in the cultural setting of the Graeco-Roman era the challenges for the sexes were equal. A female person or 'any other subordinate member of the household' (e.g. a slave) could not easily go against the main-male-stream.⁸¹ Paul addresses both believers (male and female) in their respective marriages. Neither of these is to initiate divorce ($\mu\lambda\grave{\alpha}$ ἀφιέτω) but is to stay with their spouses if the unbeliever is willing to do so.⁸²

In v. 14, Paul gives a reason as to why the marriage should not be dissolved. Somehow the uncleanness of the unbeliever is not transferred to the believer but vice versa; the unholy becomes holy through the intimate relationship with the believer.⁸³ The believing partner functions as a priest in the family. Thus, Gilbert Bilezikian thinks that the female spouse (if she is the believer in the equation) 'exercise[s] the same level of spiritual authority in her family as a Christian husband in his'.⁸⁴ To equate the believing spouse's role as 'spiritual authority' might be saying too much. But that Paul thinks of the Christian wife transferring holiness in a mixed marriage the same way the Christian husband does shows an equal understanding of a believing spouse's function.⁸⁵

80. It surprises to see that McNamara, 'Gendering Virtue', p. 155, argues that here one sees 'harmony with the imperial design' in which Paul 'forbade women to leave their husbands'. Yet nothing is said in her work that the apostle stated the same for husbands.

81. Hodge, 'Married to an Unbeliever', p. 4.

82. Margaret Y. MacDonald, 'Virgins, Widows, and Wives: The Women of 1 Corinthians 7', in Amy-Jill Levine (ed.), *A Feminist Companion to Paul* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2004), pp. 148-68 (152), writes that 'Paul was in fact sanctioning a type of marital infidelity within the context of Greco-Roman society', referring Plutarch's advice (see discussion above).

83. Three ideas might have influenced the apostle's thinking: the holiness of the people as God's temple (cf. 3.16-17; 6.19), the transferability of that holiness to other persons (Exod. 29.37; 30.29; Lev. 6.18; contrast Num. 4.15, 20), and the concept of family solidarity and God's concern for the welfare of the whole family; see Garland, *1 Corinthians*, p. 289.

84. Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, p. 133.

85. Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), p. 527.

Conclusion and Comparison

Plutarch advises a wife's total loyalty to the husband's cult. She is to exclusively worship and recognize the gods of her husband and to conform to her husband's cult. For Paul the Christian spouse (whether male or female) is not to initiate divorce; he only allows this if the unbelieving partner wants to leave. He reasons that the unbelieving partner is made holy and the believing spouse functions as priest at home. A difference is that Plutarch singles out the female partner and advises her to accept and worship the gods (to participate in the cult/s) of her husband. Paul, on the other hand, addresses both sexes.

Sexual Behavior within Marriage:

Male leadership concerning sexual matters can be detected in Plutarchian writings. It is the implication of wifely submission thus to let the husband take the initiative in marital relations. Within Pauline writings too, submission-leadership-language (e.g. ἐξουσιάζω in 1 Cor. 7.4) is accompanied with sexual relations (v. 3) within marriage. With that it can be stated that exertion of sexual activities of wives is to some extent part of her submission to her husband.

Plutarch's Moralia

A Spartan girl, when asked if she had yet come to her husband, replied, 'No, but he has come to me'. This is how the true housewife should be; she does not avoid or show displeasure with such things, if her husband takes the initiative, but neither does she take the initiative herself; the latter would be forward and more like a mistress than a wife, the former shows arrogance and lack of affection (*Conj. praec.* 18 = *Mor.* 140C).

For Plutarch a chaste (σώφρονα) and orderly (κοσμίαν) wife (*Mor.* 140B-C) lets the husband take the leadership also in sexual matters. In 18 = *Mor.* 140C, he recounts a story about a Spartan girl who, when asked if she approached her husband, said, 'No, but he has come to me'. This, according to Plutarch, is appropriate behavior. She should 'not avoid or show displeasure with such things' as long as the husband takes the initiative (τοῦ ἀνδρός

ἀρχομένου). She is not to do so because passivity in sexual matters befits a virtuous wife.⁸⁶

In his *Dialogue on Love* one reads:

It proves also that Solon [c. 640 to c. 560 BCE] was a very experienced legislator in marital matters, because he laid down that a man should have intercourse with his wife not less than three times a month—not for pleasure, of course, but because he wished the marriage, whatever difficulties it encountered from time to time, to be renewed by this expression of fondness as cities periodically renew their peace-treaties with each other (*Amat.* 23 = *Mor.* 769A-B).

Here a legal obligation is put on the husband to have sexual relations with his wife three times a month. Yet, it is the wife's obligation to take care that her husband does not seek pleasure somewhere else (23 = *Mor.* 769D).⁸⁷

The husband is active whereas the wife is passive. She needs to take care that he does not seek pleasure elsewhere. An implication of her submission then is to let the husband take the initiative in sexual matters. Do we find similar exhortations in the *Corpus Paulinum*?

Corpus Paulinum

The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over (ἐξουσιάζει) her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over (ἐξουσιάζει) his own body, but the wife does. Do not defraud one another, except perhaps by agreement (εἰ μήτι ἄν ἐκ συμφώνου) for a time, so that you can devote yourselves to prayer (1 Cor. 7.3-5; ESV).

The textual structure shows a reciprocal understanding of sexual obligations and both sexes are addressed on equal terms.⁸⁸ Both do not have the right over their own bodies and both should not deprive the other (v. 5). Paul

86. Peterman, 'Marriage and Sexual Fidelity', p. 168.

87. Lit.: 'go to waste with (or: run off to) another woman'; μή πρὸς ἑτέραν ἀπορρῦεις ὁ ἀνὴρ.

88. Hodge, 'Married to an Unbeliever', p. 3; R. Zimmermann, 'Marriage, Sexuality, and Holiness: Aspects of Marital Ethics in the Corpus Paulinum', *AcT* 31 (2011), pp. 363-93 (379).

allows for sexual abstinence within marriage for a certain time but only when done in mutual agreement.⁸⁹ Here one sees that the wife is no mere object for sexual pleasures; she too has real ‘sexual needs and rights’.⁹⁰ Neither the husband nor the wife is singled out to approach sexual matters actively or passively. Both are equally engaged in this endeavor.

Conclusion and Comparison

Both Plutarch and Paul stress reciprocal sexual relations. For Plutarch wives are to be passive when it comes to sexual approaches to their husbands. Husbands should take the initiative. He advises a woman to be careful not to let her husband seek pleasure with another woman. Sexual passivity is an implication for wifely submission.

Paul reminds his readers that each partner has sexual obligations to his spouse (neither of them has authority over their own bodies). Abstinence for a certain time within marriage is to be done in mutual agreement. Sexual activities should be done in mutual agreement. Both are active as they need to act in concord.

Unique Plutarchian Material

Relationship to In-Laws

It is the wife’s duty to make sure that the relationship of her husband to his mother is in no way weakened by his love for his wife. A wife’s subordination implies her endurance of possible hostility from her mother-in-law (*Conj. praec.* 35 = *Mor.* 143A-B). Right after this precept Plutarch writes that the wife is not only to endure ‘jealous rivalry’ but to actually honor the in-laws

89. Jeanrond, ‘Der Gott der Liebe’, p. 300: ‘Weiter fällt die Parität der Ehepartner in dieser Eheologie auf. Mann und Frau bilden eine neue gleichberechtigte körperliche Gemeinschaft, die der gegenseitigen Heilung dient’ (emphasis mine).

90. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, p. 259; Schnabel, *Der erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther*, p. 358. Neutel, *A Cosmopolitan Ideal*, p. 191: ‘What is exceptional about Paul’s view is that he warns against *porneia* and yet at the same time encourages what seems to be recreational, rather than procreational, sex between husband and wife.’

more than her very own.⁹¹ Similar to the precepts on marital quarrels which need to be resolved by the wife, quarrels with the in-laws or quarrels between the parents are also to be resolved by the wife (36 = *Mor.* 143B-C).

Finances

Plutarch seems to promote equality among the sexes.⁹² It is the last sentence in *Conj. praec.* 20 = *Mor.* 140E-F which indicates male leadership in financial aspects. Though the wife might bring most of the money into marriage; nevertheless, it should be called the husband's. But, referencing the Roman law-giver (34 = *Mor.* 143A), he states that it is forbidden to exchange presents within the marriage relationship: 'This was not to stop them sharing, but to make them think everything their common property' (cf. *Amat.* 7 = *Mor.* 752E-F and 9 = *Mor.* 753F-754E).

Emotions

For Plutarch, the leadership of the husband (*Conj. praec.* 11 = *Mor.* 139E-D) touches the inner being of the wife. She is to have no feelings of her own, but needs to resemble those of her husband (14 = *Mor.* 139F-140A). It is 'the lower tone to which the melody belongs' (11 = *Mor.* 139E-D). To 'achieve control and guidance which is both honourable and practical' the husband needs to have a strong personality himself (*Amat.* 9 = *Mor.* 754B).

Comparative Results

In conclusion I would like show the similarities and variances of these two ancient writers. Their *similarities* are the following:

(1) In both corpora, sexual faithfulness of the wife is demanded. This is part of her submission to her husband.

91. Cf. Lisette Goessler, 'Advice to the Bride and Groom: Plutarch Gives a Detailed Account of His Views on Marriage', in Sarah B. Pomeroy (ed.), *Plutarch's Advice to the Bride and Groom and a Consolation to His Wife: English Translations, Commentary, Interpretive Essays, and Bibliography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 97-115 (107).

92. Nikolaidis, 'Plutarch on Women and Marriage', pp. 54-55, sees the commonality in Plutarch's advice—the couple has 'a common fund'—but seems to neglect the statements in which the property is called the husband's.

(2) Plutarch and Paul presuppose the custom of public head-covering as a symbol of a wife's fidelity to her husband.

(3) In both corpora wives should dress modestly and discreetly—not in extravagance.

(4) In Plutarch's *Moralia*, the reclusiveness of wives is explicitly mentioned. In the *Corpus Paulinum*, there might be a hint in 1 Cor. 14.35 of this as well.

(5) In both corpora, public silence of wives is demanded. Whether or not the silence in the *Corpus Paulinum* in 1 Corinthians 14 is universal can be debated.

Their *differences* are shown by the following:

(1) Contra Paul, Plutarch allows for the husband to have sexual relations outside the marital bond. Further, marital fidelity for the husband (wished for by Plutarch) is tied to love in the *Corpus Paulinum* whereas it is tied to husbandly leadership in Plutarch's *Moralia*.

(2) Paul allows wives to speak in public if certain criteria are met.

(3) Plutarch demands a wife's total allegiance to the husband's religion whereas Paul addresses both sexes equally.

(4) For Plutarch, it is the husband who takes the initiative in sexual matters. For Paul, both partners have mutual obligation and should act in agreement.

Plutarch's and (deutero-)Paul's relationship could be described as one of similar outlook on wives' submission in general. But when one looks at the specifics, one finds that Plutarch demands more accommodations to be made by the wife than (deutero-)Paul does.