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Reflections of a pious Margery in *The Book of Margery Kempe*

In 14th century England, Christian women had many reasons to declare vows of chastity. For instance, many single women became chaste for the purposes of remaining a virgin for their future husbands; of course, certain women also sought chastity as a tool for the moral progression of their Christian communities. In Margery Kempe's spiritual autobiography, *The Book of Margery Kempe*, a married Kempe stated that God spoke to her; and she declared that sexual abstinence from her husband would purify her relationship with God. Although Kempe's vow of chastity could be deemed as a declaration of her spiritual devotion, it appears as if this spiritually authoritative action was most empowered by an unwavering will to possess a purity that exceeded contemporary practices of chastity, and to align her sexuality with this vision of piety.