

Theory and Method: Gender Section

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Overview

The case study used in this model highlights the ways in which traditional theological doctrine regarding subjects such as “election” and mission, promotes situations that are less than life-giving for the characters in the case study. This section of the module provides an exploration of some of the critiques developed by feminist theologians on traditional theological doctrines, using approaches developed within feminist theology such as African women’s theology and postcolonial feminist hermeneutics. This section will provide a reading of the case study in parallel with a biblical text (Mark 7:24-30/Matthew 15:21-28) which deals with the interconnectedness of gender, race and class oppression. Finally, this section of the course will show how a feminist theological reinterpretation and reconstruction of the oppressive elements in the case study can lead to a more life-giving situation for all concerned.

Section Objectives

- To provide an overview of the development of Christian Feminist Theologies
- To reflect on some specific theological themes such as election and mission from a feminist perspective
- To apply reconstructed feminist theological praxis by developing a sermon
- To engage in feminist modes of interaction in the classroom through interactive tasks and the creation of a “democratic classroom.”
- To develop an independent and considered position with regard to feminist theology and its significance for social justice.

Outcomes

By the end of this section students will:

- ✓ Demonstrate an understanding of the development and the importance of Christian feminist theology to church and social contexts
- ✓ Demonstrate critically reflective understandings of feminist perspectives on subjects such as mission.
- ✓ Be able to apply a feminist theological praxis model to the case study , and apply such themes to professional teaching or ministry contexts such as preaching
- ✓ Demonstrate how their understanding of Christian feminist theology challenges and/or affirms their theological assumptions

Assignment

Write a sermon on the doctrine of “election” that you will preach on from a feminist perspective to a largely Pentecostal and evangelical audience in a township in South Africa. The sermon must contain three good points for reflection, and must be no longer than 1500 words. The sermon must be submitted with a “background document” which details:

- a) The background research you undertook on the text on which the sermon is based on and the hermeneutical framework which you used.
- b) A brief summary of the context in which you will preach this sermon.
- c) How key feminist perspectives helped you prepare the sermon, but how you “translated” these key feminist concerns for an audience that was not necessarily sympathetic to feminist concerns.
- d) A bibliography of works consulted

Due: 19 April 2010

Readings

The readings are based on a selection of chapters and entries in the following books:

Dube, Musa W. 2000. *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*. St. Louis: Chalice.

Rakoczy, Susan. 2004. *In Her Name Women Doing Theology*. Pitermaritzburg: Cluster Publications

Russell Letty and Clarkson, Shannon eds., 1996. *The Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press

****While selected readings from the above books will be provided, the book by Susan Rakoczy is available for purchase in the School of Religion and Theology and it is recommended that you purchase your own copy.