

M.Phil. in Christian Civilization

The discipleship and leadership of women in the Bible with special reference to the Lankan writings and Pauline Corpus

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Abstract

The thesis is on “The Discipleship and Leadership of Women in the Bible with special reference to the Lankan Writings and Pauline Corpus”. This will deal with many basic and highly charged issues notably language, power, economics and gender roles expectations.

Chapter1. The research of the status of women in the Greco-Roman world is done. The status of women in the ancient world is uniformly low except in Egypt. In the classical Greco-Roman world the condition of women varied but often restricted.

Chapter2. The study of the status of women in the Old Testament and Early Judaism with the focus on the attitudes in the Wisdom and Pseudepigraphical literature show that Song of Songs is the only book that speaks of women directly and as lovable ones. In other literatures a woman is either portrayed as evil and light headed or praised because of the position and the duties as a mother or a wife of a man.

Chapter3. The attitude of major groups like the Pharisees Sadducees. Essens and the Rabies towards women probed into. The Rabies have very negative view but not misogynistic like the Essens. Pharisees tolerate women, but Sadducees are lenient to some extent.

Chapter4. The research on the life ministry of women in the time of Jesus in the Gospels is done in this chapter. In all encounters women have been given importance and have been empowered by Jesus. The detail study of the life and events of the women who have been mentioned by names shed light on the attitude of Jesus towards women. Mark’s message gives one third to women: Luke reflects women in the parables and in the encounters of Jesus and John portrays women as in direct dialogue with Jesus and as the faithful disciples.

Chapter5. Though the study on the individual women and the images of women in the parables are of quite remarkable, in comparison with other Gospel writers. Luke’s presentation as a theologian is difficult to discern without the study done in the next chapter.

Chapter6. The leadership of women in the Act of the Apostles is done with focus on both male and female parallelism and reception of the Gospel and the ministry thereafter. The leadership of the women in establishing house churches is remarkable if not explicit in the writing.

Chapter7. In this chapter Paul’s attempt to prescribe answers to the sociological and cultural issues concerning women in the churches is analysed. His answers tend to lean on solving the sociological and cultural problems with the intention of the churches growth. A tension is seen between culture and radicalism.

Chapter8. The study of the Epistles of Ephesians and Colossians show that importance was not given to women in the post Pauline literatures.

Conclusion. In this work of my thesis. Which is done as an in-depth study. I have tried to Deconstruct the old views. Retrieve the fragments and Reconstruct the issues of women. My challenge is that we should move from the ‘Hermeneutics of Suspicion to the Discipleship of Equals’. In doing so, we bring God’s Reign a reality in this world.