Hao

Instructor Name

Theological Explorations: Perspectives on Jesus

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Consider Jesus: Waves of Renewal in Christology

Chapter 7 Abstract

**I. Thesis**

This chapter aims to recognize the feminist perspectives on Christology which represents a wide recognition of discriminative ideologies against women which hold depths in patriarchy. A. Johnson, in this chapter tends to explore the feminist ideologies which illuminate the discrepancies women face within Christianity.

**II. Methodology**

Elizabeth A. Johnson describes the notion on the feminist Christology through comprehensive research of the sociological and patriarchal perspectives that affect the position of the women in the society, by both highlighting certain behaviors and treatments that make them ‘second-grade citizens'. A. Johnson define the feminist Christology's perspectives , analyses them, criticizes the pre-existing notions and then defines the feminist liberation theologians perspective and how it has developed by quoting examples from the existential evidence from the gospels and the society.

**III. Argument**

A. Types

Elizabeth A. Johnson discusses the types of feminism involved in the theological development of Christology. She categorizes them as the revolutionary and the reformist. Johnson states that the revolutionary women have left the church due to patriarchal dominance in it, they worship the deity by referring to it as the Goddess. The reformists, on the other hand, have recorded their concerns and find hope in transforming the status quo.

B. Characteristics

A. Johnson highlights the characteristics of feminist theological perspectives. The author recognizes the discriminations and oppression faced by the women in the society since they are treated as ‘second class citizens' in not only in the society but also Church. Therefore the basic criteria for feminist theology are to gain mutuality and recognition within the church. The methodological application of feminist theology has roots in the liberation theology that recognizes and analyzes the practices that oppress women.

C. Analysis

A. Johnson states that women are considered ‘less worthy' in society. The author relays that sexism is the cause of the discrimination and subjugation of women in society. The rationale operates actively through patriarchy, in two ways, first the power structures and second in the pattern of thoughts that create male supremacy. Throughout historical writings and perceptions, the image of women has been highly dominated by notions of androcentric reflections. A. Johnson analyses that the cause of women marginalization lies deeply rooted in the historic, and societal value of women as part of society. The need to transform such exploitative systems stands core to the feminist theologians.

**D. Critique of Christology**

A. Johnson criticizes the Christian narrative and reference of Jesus as the male and that which leads to the image of God as the male. The reference is important in the context that the ideals are although spiritually neutral, God is very often referred to being a male. The maleness of Jesus and God has created male supremacy over the divine. This automatically subjugates women. A. Johnson states that feminist theologians argue that the reference of women to the deity is less than visible in Christianity, while the Jewish script often makes references to the characteristics of Deity as feminine and that of a Redeemer. The Pope has reclaimed and stated God as more of our Mother than our father due to its forgiving characteristics, the reference is taken rather weakly by the followers. Although many authors and historical theologians have made efforts to highlight the feminine features in the Deity, however, the repercussions of these have affected the women more than anything in the human circle, making the representation of God as masculine.

**E. Feminist Liberation Christology**

The feminist theme their opinions around that fact that Jesus and his teachings are more often centered on justice and equality valuing human existence. Moreover, the sense of mutuality and the co-existence is revived by Jesus in his reference to God as ‘Abba’ which sabotages the supremacy of any one gender over the other. The interpretations of the Gospels and the role of the women in the Church has been subject to androcentric perceptions. Another comparison which A. Johnson makes by the end of the chapter is that of the Jesus-Sophia, whereby Jesus preaches the message which was delegated to him by Sophia. The author concludes his thoughts by stating that although Christianity does not support marginalizing women, the interpretations, however, are by far committed to creating a gap between the men and the women.

**D. Discussion Questions**

- Is Elizabeth A. Johnsons analyses of women in Christianity justified?

- How do you view Feminist Christology?

- What can be done to achieve mutuality in Christianity?

# References

Johnson, Elizabeth A. "Chapter 7." *Consider Jesus: Waves of Renewal in Christology.* New York: Crossroad, 1990.