

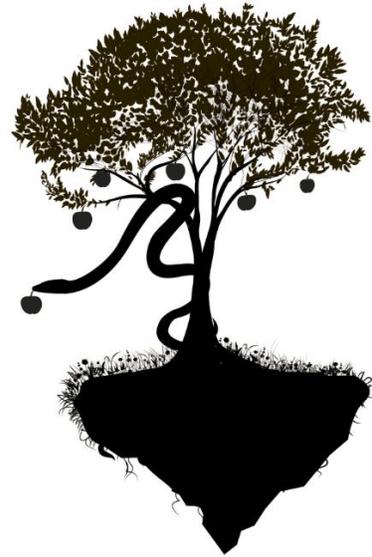
Session Two: Historical Issues of Problematic Biblical Interpretation Regarding Women

Colossians 3:18-25 (NRSV)

¹⁸Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

¹⁹Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly. ²⁰Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is your acceptable duty in the Lord. ²¹Fathers, do not provoke your children, or they may lose heart.

²²Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything, not only while being watched and in order to please them, but wholeheartedly, fearing the Lord. ²³Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, ²⁴since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ. ²⁵For the wrongdoer will be paid back for whatever wrong has been done, and there is no partiality.



Devotional approach: Colossians 3:18-25 or Titus 2:1-14

1. What is God is up to in this text?
2. What is the predominant message in this text?
3. What gets stirred up in me when reading this text?
4. How is asking these kinds of questions different from either a thematic or proof-text method?

Literary approach: Luke 1:26-38, Luke 10:38-42, John 8:1-11

1. How do the women in these stories contribute to the narrative of Jesus' ministry?
2. What does Jesus say about these women in Luke 10 and John 8?

Historical approach: 1 Timothy 2:8-15, 1 Corinthians 14:33-34, 1 Peter 3:1-4

1. What do these passages say about women in antiquity?
2. How do you understand the text in light of our conversation about the different context of antiquity?

Lutheran theological approach: Colossians 3:18-25, Titus 2:1-14

1. How might our sinfulness block God's intent for us as we read Scripture?
2. How is God's grace expressed in these texts?
3. How does one best approach the classic proof-texts that relegate women to "client" status?

To read for next week:

- John 4 (The Samaritan woman)
- Mark 16:1-15 (The resurrection)

Communication guidelines

1. We agree to listen to each other respectfully without making assumptions or judgments.
2. We recognize that each person has different experiences and has different styles of communicating.
3. We will each own our own thoughts and feelings and speak in "I" statements rather than "you" statements that define others.
4. We will approach our conversation from a stance of being curious and ask questions of each other to draw out the intended meaning of the speaker.
5. We will acknowledge the presence of the Holy Spirit and be attentive to what is being stirred up in our midst.
6. We will keep confidentiality, which means not sharing the stories of others outside of the group unless specifically told otherwise.

Useful resource links

- Women and Justice Task Force website: www.ELCA.org/womenandjustice
- ELCA Book of Faith Initiative website: www.bookoffaith.org