



Question 2 - Christianity - Feminist Theology

Feminist Theology is a school of thought within Christianity which aims to re-examine the tradition from a feminist perspective. It aims to address the position of women in Churches (i.e. as ministers and priests), combat non-inclusive language, challenge the patriarchal and misogynistic portrayal of women in the Bible, and challenge the male-centred imagery present in Christianity.

Feminist theologians study the history of Christianity and the portrayal of women in the faith, stripping it back to the core meaning of the religion. ~~which~~
~~the~~ Feminist Theologian Elizabeth Schuster Fiorenza developed a number of stages of thinking about the Bible. One method is to dismiss the Bible as hopelessly patriarchal, and irrelevant



to the experience of women.

Another view is that the Bible contains eternal truths that affirm ~~the~~ the sacredness of women, however these are hidden beneath the patriarchal views of a male-dominated society. It must therefore be stripped back to its core meaning.

Feminist theologians have challenged the use of male-centred language in the Bible, such as only referring to God as 'He'. This has had the effect of enabling the development of some texts which promote 'inclusive language', such as referring to Sophia - wisdom (Jesus as the Sophia-child), and using non gender-specific words.

Feminist theology has also challenged the male ~~is~~ symbolism in the Christian Faith, such as the trinity (Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit).



The lobbying and debating of some feminist theologians, regarding the ordination of women, has had the effect of increasing the number of women ordained as ministers and priests in the Christian faith. Feminist Theology has given 'birth' to ~~many~~ groups such as the 'Movement For the Ordination of Women' (MOW) which, as a result of lobbying, has also led to the increase in ordination of women. Feminist Theology has also led to the organisation 'Women and the Australian Church' (WATAC) which campaigns for inclusive language and positive images of women in Christianity.

This has a positive effect on Christianity as it raises awareness of the inequality between men and women present in the Church.

WATAC



Feminist Theology has had the effect of raising awareness about non-inclusive language, male-dominated positions, and patriarchal and misogynistic portrayals of women in the Bible.

It has led to the development of organisations such as WATAC and MOW, which ~~are~~ ^{helped to} have ~~altered~~ ^{negative} some aspects of the Christian Faith.

Feminist Theology has also had the effect of leading to the development of 'Womendurch', This was formed by those who ~~reject the~~ see the Christian Faith as hopelessly patriarchal, ~~and~~ with the aim of creating a church that is more relevant to the lived experience of women.

Thus, Feminist Theology has had a profound effect on Christianity.