

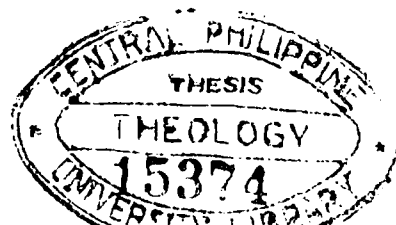
**BAPTIST AND FEMINIST:
TOWARDS A FEMINIST RE-ORIENTATION OF THE WOMEN
MINISTERS OF THE CONVENTION OF PHILIPPINE
BAPTIST CHURCHES (CPBC)**

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE
INSTITUTE OF FORMATION AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES
MAJOR IN WOMEN AND RELIGION

BY
LIZA B. LAMIS

QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES
FEBRUARY 1999



ABSTRACT

This thesis studies the theological basis of a feminist re-orientation in the formation of the women ministers of the Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches (CPBC). The present situation of the women ministers is analyzed using the framework of patriarchy as it manifests in the areas of their reproductive role, labor and consciousness. The ‘authority of the scripture or the Bible,’ a foundational Baptist belief and distinctive, is re-interpreted in relation to the perspective of women and assessed how it would help in cultivating a liberative consciousness.

The study shows that women ministers are dominated and oppressed in the areas of their reproductive role, labor and consciousness. This subordination and oppression is being institutionalized in their ministerial formation, and is sacralized by the misuse of the scripture.

The subordinated status of women ministers informs and radically shapes a new theology, which is holistic and gender-inclusive. This theology is constitutive of the basis for a feminist re-orientation of the women ministers of the CPBC.

A feminist re-interpretation of authority of the scripture is taken from the specific perspective of women whose shared experience of oppression is sacralized by the misuse of scripture. The authority of the scripture resides in its creating and redeeming power, which has the capacity to address the situation of women. This authority is dialogical, relative or not coercive, communal, and is continually constituted by its community of

readers. It means that it requires engagement between the Bible and its readers within the context of community, and that it points beyond itself to God's intention for creation.

Interpretation, then, is a process of dialogical imagination where women discern the truth in the scripture as it speaks to their situation. The scripture or the Bible, therefore, becomes a powerful medium by which to cultivate a liberative and gender-fair consciousness of its readers.

This thesis, therefore, concludes that women's lived experience and subjectivity are to be considered in the theological discourse of the Baptist church. It implies that the church has to embrace a holistic and inclusive theology, which necessarily results to the need for a feminist theological re-orientation in the ministerial formation of the Baptists. A feminist theological re-orientation must embody the principles of liberation, empowerment and transformation.

This thesis also recommends that re-orientation takes the form of mainstreaming, which means the integration of women's perspectives in the courses of ministerial formation. To illustrate an application, syllabi on the Introduction to the New and Old Testament Courses are proposed.