

Summary

Women experience the world differently from men: biologically, politically, socially, culturally, and religiously. Korean women have been taught subordination in the Korean patriarchal churches and society. As the world changed from premodern to modern to postmodern, the position of Korean women has improved. However liberation is still necessary.

This study introduces Korean women's experience by reflecting on political and historical developments, societal structures and situations, the cultural background and their lives as members of Christian churches. The method of research in this study to investigate Korean women's situations avoids positivism and is deliberately postmodern in its approach. By means of postmodern methodology both modernistic male-dominated culture and Korean literature were critically described. With the support of feminist hermeneutics the situation of the Korean church was seen from a Korean woman's perspective.

This study surveys Korean women's backgrounds from the premodern to the postmodern era. Korean women were politically marginalized in the premodern and modern eras. During the postmodern era women's positions and participation in politics have improved. Up to the 1970s Koreans had experienced widespread poverty. Their desire was to become rich individually and as a nation, so they worked very hard in many fields of industry. During that time the socio-cultural narrative was patriarchal and hierarchical. Korean women were treated as inferior and secondary in the society and even in the Korean churches. Even though Korean Christian women have found a liberating message in Christianity, the men-centered ideology of the culture prevailed also in the churches.

This study discusses and criticizes fundamentalism in general as well as the fundamentalist trait of Korean theology. The study advocates the need for Korean Christian women to read the Bible from their own gender perspectives. The social roles of women in the Bible and early Christianity are closely related to the experiences of Korean women through the ages. Korean women have been socially stereotyped and reduced to gender roles in the Korean churches. However, this study shows that women's roles need not be restricted to the gender conventions of a male-dominated

society. There were women leaders in Israel and the New Testament also witnesses to female leadership. The study especially discusses who Jesus was and what his vision could mean for Korean women.

Key Terms

- Feminist critique
- Fundamentalism
- Hermeneutics
- Image of Jesus
- Korean Christian women
- Women's experience