

She Who Is

Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1992),

Regarding the image of God,

The two initial biblical creation stories include women equally in their purview of the human race. When the priestly author of Genesis 1 depicts God creating the human race in the divine image and likeness on the sixth day, the text makes clear that the compliment is intended for “male and female” together. Similarly, the Yahwist author of Genesis 2 constructs the narrative in such a way that the “earth creature” does not become sexually differentiated until the divine act radically alters ‘adam to create woman and man together as one flesh. “Their creation is simultaneous, not sequential.” Nor does Scripture polarize the human couple into a binary pattern of sexual complementarity with its hidden theme of domination. In both creation stories mutuality is the key to their relation. ¹

Fordham 대학의 신학과의 교수인 Elizabeth Johnson 에 의하면 성서의 두 창조 설화는 인류의 활동범위(purview)에 여성들을 포함시킨다. 창세기 1 장의 priestly 자료의 자자는 하나님이 제 6 일에 신의 형상대로 인류를 창조한 것으로 나타낼 때 그 본문은 “남녀”를 함께 찬사(compliment) 하려는 의도가 있었음을 확실히 말하고 있다. 이와 비슷 하게 창세기 2 장의 야외자료의 저자 (Yahwist author)는 하나님이 남녀를 함께 한 몸으로 지으 시기 위해 아담을 극적으로 변경시킬 때까지 인간은 성적으로 남녀 구별이 되어 있지 아니 했다는 방향으로 이야기를 구성하고 있다. 남녀의 창조는 동시에 (simultaneous) 된 것이지 순서적으로(sequential) 된 것이 아니다. 성경도 이 인간부를 지배(domination)의 의 뜻이 숨어있는 성적인 보충물이 되는 형태로 두사람을 갈라놓지 않는다. 두 창조설 모두에 있어서 상호성 (mutuality)이 [처음] 부부의 관계의 열쇠(Key)이다. ¹ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1992), 70.

As women’s experience of their own worth is articulated today, ownership of the *image Dei* doctrine is occurring as a foundational level...as matter of theological self-definition. Women are *image Dei* in the exercise of stewardship over the earth and the capacity to rule as representatives of God, with ecological care; in their kinship by nature with holy mystery; in their rationality and intelligence and in their freedom capable of union with God; in their creativity, their sociality, their community with each other and with men, children, and the whole earth; in their bodiliness, their destiny. The wholeness of women’s reality is affirmed as created by God and blessed with identity of being in the divine image and likeness. Practically speaking, this leads to the moral imperative of respect for women, the responsibility

¹ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1992), 70.

not to deface the living image of God but to promote it through transformative praxis. In linguistic terms it offers basic justification for speech about God in female symbols, since women themselves are theomorphic. If women are created in the image of God, without qualification, then the human reality offers suitable, even excellent metaphor for speaking about divine mystery, who remains always ever greater.²

하나님이 여성을 창조하시고 하나님의 형상을 가진 실존으로 축복받았다는 사실은 여성을 존중해야되는 도덕적인 명령(imperative)과, 살아계신 하나님의 형상을 손상시키지 말고 transformative praxis 를 통해 [여성속에] 있는 하나님의 형상을 촉진시키는 (promote) 책임으로 우리를 인도한다. 여성이 하나님의 형상으로 창조되었다면 이는 또한 하나님을 여성의 상징으로 생각할 수 있는 가능성을 제시한다. 아무 자격없이 여성이 하나님의 형상으로 창조되었다면 이 현실은 신의 신비에 대해 말할 수 있는 은유적인 표현 (metaphor) 을 허용할 수도 있다. Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1992), 71.

Regarding the image of Christ,

From the earliest days Christians are indeed marked by the confession that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the anointed, the blessed one. But this confession also witnesses to the insight that through the power of the Spirit the beloved community shares in this Christhood, participates in the living and dying and rising of Christ to such an extent that they can even be called the body of Christ. Identified with the redemptive acts of Christ's historical and risen life, women and men together form one body that lives through, into, with, and in Christ.³

An early Christian baptismal hymn cited by Paul sets the theme as it announces that the old barriers of race, class, and sex are transcended in a new form of identity: "As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are once in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:27-28). Through baptism the Christian is ontologically identified with the death and resurrection of Christ, putting on Christ through the vitalizing power of the Spirit. This happens corporately, through becoming a member of the whole Christ. As a consequence the baptized are recreated in every dimension of their existence: "If anyone is in Christ, that one is a new creature (2 Cor 5:17). Destined for the fullness of participation in Christ in eschatological glory, the Jews, Greeks, slaves, free persons, males and females of the body of Christ are even nor equally united

² Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1992), 71.

³ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1992), 72.

with Christ in a union that connotes one flesh: “Don’t you know that your bodies are members of Christ?” (1 Cor 6:15).⁴

The guiding model for the *imago Christi* is not replication of sexual features but participation in the life of Christ, which is founded on communion in the Spirit: those who live the life of Christ are icons of Christ. Furthermore, the whole Christ is a corporate personality, a relational reality, redeemed humanity that finds its way by the light of the historical narrative of Jesus’ compassionate, liberating love: Christ exists only pneumatologically. Finally, what is essential to the saving good news about Jesus is not his bodily sex but the solidarity of the Wisdom of God in and through this genuine human being with all those who suffer and are lost. To make the maleness of Jesus Christ a Christological principle is to deny the universality of salvation.⁵

In Genesis Chapter 1, when [God creates the human couple, male and female, in the divine image](#), no such discrimination is made; neither male nor female is more divine image than the other. In fact, both taken together in the divine image. Feminist theology reasons that since both male and female are created in God’s image, then presumably God can be imaged wither as male or as female, always aware of the limitation of our metaphors.

In fact, in the Jewish scriptures, **God is imaged in female form** by some of the prophets in very moving and beautiful ways – a mother, as midwife, as nurse, as a mother bird spreading her wings over her chicks, as Sophia (Wisdom). Jesus, too, spun out female images in his preaching. The reign of God is like the yeast that a woman kneads into dough so that the whole loaf rises: this is an image of God as baker woman, kneading the yeast of the new creation into the world and working over it until the whole world rises. The parable of the woman searching for her lost coin appears together with the parable of the good shepherd in Luke chapter (15:1-10). They both tell the same story of God’s active search for the sinner. In one, a man loses a sheep and leaves his ninety-nine others to seek for it vigorously; when he finds it, he calls upon his neighbors to rejoice. This marvelous image of God the Redeemer has worked its way into the Christian imagination. But the same drama is played out in the other story, a woman loses one of her ten coins and drops everything to search the whole house until she finds it; when she does, she calls her friends and neighbors to rejoice with her. Here we have another image of God the Redeemer. Jesus is saying that we are precious to God, even when we sin, as

⁴ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1992), 72.

⁵ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1992), 72-73.

money is to a woman who cares very much for it. The same message is being proclaimed in both stories, one in terms of male work and the other in terms of female work. Both reflect the active, consuming love of God the Redeemer.

Jesus even referred to himself in female imagery, wishing, he could gather the people of Jerusalem within his arms as a mother hen gathers chicks under her wings (Mt. 23:37-39).⁶

⁶ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *CONSIDER JESUS* (New York: Crossroad Pub. Co., 1990), 104-105.