

Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza and the development of a feminist critical hermeneutics for the reconstruction of the history of the first Christian women

Androcentric documents do not mirror historical reality, report historical facts or tell us how it actually was. As androcentric texts, our early Christian sources are theological interpretations, argumentations, projections and selections rooted in a patriarchal culture. Such texts must be evaluated *historically* in terms of their own time and culture and assessed theologically in terms of a feminist scale of values. A careful analysis of their androcentric tendencies and patriarchal functions, nevertheless, can provide clues for the historical discipleship of equals in the beginning of Christianity. These clues can help us to construct a historical model of interpretation that does justice to the egalitarian as well as the patriarchalizing tendencies in the early church.

Source: E. Schüssler-Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her. A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins*, SCM Press Ltd, London 1995 p.60