

ABSTRACT

Women's Ordination and the Seventh-day Adventist Church

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This research sought an examination of the androcentric ordination policy of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The purpose of this research is to discover the basis for denying women the right to be ordained to pastoral ministry. During the one hundred and twenty-five year struggle both theological and cultural arguments have been prefaced as the basis thus this research, through an examination of both arguments set about to understand the basis for denying women this right to be ordained to pastoral ministry.

The research was pursued using the Critical Principle of Feminist Theory and the historical-grammatical approach which favours the inerrancy of the Bible; a framework used by Seventh-day Adventists. Four methods were generally used throughout the research to interrogate the literature; these are: the historical analysis, the textual analysis and the gender analysis. To a much lesser extent, the language discourse analysis was used.

The findings of the research will show that the Seventh-day Adventist Church does not possess a theological or scriptural basis to deny women the right to be ordained to pastoral ministry. Based on their own admission and inconsistencies in the way the Church treated with other theological matters, the research shows that the decision to debar women is based on culture.

The significance of the results and findings is that the research shows that the current androcentric position of the Church is at odds with the historical, contemporary and theological standing of the Church and shows that the unity of which they boast under this androcentric policy is an illusion rather than a reality. This research will provide for the Seventh-day Adventist Church an additional discourse which could be the platform to allow women to enjoy their full humanity as Seventh-day Adventists.

Keywords: Seventh-day Adventist; Women's ordination; Paul and women.