



BUILDING BIBLICAL INTERPRETIVE RESILIENCE AND RESISTANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF GENDER VIOLENCE

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CONTEXTUAL BIBLE STUDY

- Contextual Bible Study uses the mat of scripture as a safe and sacred site on which ordinary readers of Bible and socially engaged biblical scholars read the Bible together, interpreting scripture contextually for individual and systemic social and theological transformation.
- The Ujamaa Centre for Community Development and Research began Contextual Bible Study on the story of Tamar (2 Samuel 13:1-22) in 1996.

LAUNCHING THE TAMAR CBS IN KENYA, 2005



A 'REDEMPTIVE MASCULINITY' CBS

- 1. Listen to the text being read. Have you heard this text read publicly, in church, ... on a Sunday? Share your experiences of this text with each other.
- 2. Who are the characters and what do we know about each of them?
- 3. What is the role of each of the male characters in the rape of Tamar?

- **4. How would you characterise Amnon's masculinity? What kind of man is Amnon?**
- **Consider:**
 - **What prevents Amnon initially from acting on his 'love' for Tamar (v2)?**
 - **What is it that changes Amnon's 'love' (v1) to 'sickness' (v2), and what then enables him to act on his sickness/lust (v4-6)?**
 - **How does he react to Tamar's attempts to reason/argue with him (v12-14)?**
 - **How does he behave after he has raped Tamar (v15-17)?**

- **5. What kind of man does Tamar expect or hope Amnon to be? What kind of man could Amnon be according to Tamar?**
- **Consider:**
 - **What does she say (v12-13,16), and what do each of the things she says tell us about her understanding of what it means to be 'a man'? Pay attention to each thing she says.**
 - **What does she do (v19), and what do each of things she does tell us about her understanding of what it means to be 'a man'?**

- **Question 6: What are the dominant forms of masculinity in our contexts (in each age group), and what alternative forms of masculinity can we draw on from our cultural and religious traditions?**
- **Question 7: How can we raise the issue of masculinity in our various gender and age-groups?**
 - **Action plan 1: an immediate plan of action for your context**
 - **Action plan 2: a more long-termed action plan**
 - **Action plan 3: a 'dream' action plan**

THE TAMAR BIBLE STUDY, 2 SAMUEL 13:1-22

- **1. Listen to 2 Samuel 13:1-22. Have you heard this scripture read publically before? What you think the text is about?**
- **2. Who are the main characters in this story and what do we know about them?**
- **3. What is the role of each of the male characters in the rape of Tamar?**
- **4. What does Tamar say and what does Tamar do?**

- **5. Are there women like Tamar in your church and/or community? Tell their story.**
- **6. What resources are there in your area for survivors of rape?**
- **7. What will you now do in response to this Bible study?**

Summarizing 'Contextual Bible Study' (CBS)

CBS begins with the
reality, experience and resources of the community ...
'community-consciousness' = people's theology

SEE

In-between we re-read the Bible,
slowly, carefully and closely
using the critical resources of biblical scholarship ...
'critical consciousness'

JUDGE

=

Thematic-semiotic (in-front-of-text)
Literary-narrative (on-text)
Socio-historical (behind-text)
Thematic-semiotic (in-front-of-text)

... and ends with the
reality, experience and resources of the community ...
'community-consciousness' = prophetic theology

ACT

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- <http://ujamaa.ukzn.ac.za/Homepage.aspx>
- <http://www.otago.ac.nz/ctpi/projects/west.html>