

## Women Who Followed Jesus According to Luke 8:1–3

<sup>1</sup>Helen Gratia Masambe, <sup>2</sup>Rivay Bobby Palembang, <sup>3</sup>Ferry Sonny Lumintang

<sup>1</sup>Fakultas Teologi, Universitas Kristen Indonesia Tomohon

<sup>2</sup>Fakultas Teologi, Universitas Kristen Indonesia Tomohon

<sup>3</sup>Fakultas Teologi, Universitas Kristen Indonesia Tomohon

Email: <sup>1</sup>[masambehg@gmail.com](mailto:masambehg@gmail.com), <sup>2</sup>[rivaypalempung25@gmail.com](mailto:rivaypalempung25@gmail.com),  
<sup>3</sup>[ferrylumintang05@gmail.com](mailto:ferrylumintang05@gmail.com)

Diterima tanggal: 20 Januari 2025, Disetujui Tanggal: 30 Januari 2025

### ABSTRACT

*In Minahasa, women have been given equal opportunities with men. However, it is also undeniable that they are also face struggles, for instances objects of violence, trafficking, divorce, marginalization, etc. Others are forced or willing to leave their jobs because the demands of marriage and family life. The problem is, even though the society or the church provides space for women to play an active role, some women reject it with cultural or social reasons. Women cannot use the opportunities to explore their abilities to participate in God's missionary work. This research aims to analyze the role of the women who followed Jesus in Luke 8:1-3. This research uses qualitative research methods by collecting data from books and journals that will be analyzed to get the conclusion. The result of this research reveals that women can play active roles in God's ministry. Change of thinking is needed to fight for liberation and life transformation.*

**Keywords:** Church; Jesus's follower; Luke; Ministry; Woman

### ABSTRAK

Di Minahasa, perempuan telah diberikan kesempatan yang sama dengan laki-laki. Namun demikian, merupakan satu kenyataan yang tidak bisa dipungkiri bahwa mereka juga menghadapi tantangan, misalnya, obyek kekerasan, korban trafficking, perceraian, marjinalisasi, dan sebagainya. Yang lain dipaksa untuk meninggalkan pekerjaan mereka karena tuntutan pernikahan dan kehidupan keluarga. Persoalannya adalah, meskipun masyarakat dan gereja telah menyediakan ruang bagi perempuan untuk memainkan peran aktif, beberapa perempuan menolaknya karena alasan budaya dan sosial. Perempuan tidak bisa menggunakan kesempatan untuk mengeksplorasi kemampuannya untuk berpartisipasi dalam pekerjaan misi Allah. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peran perempuan yang mengikuti Yesus dalam Lukas 8:1-3. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif dengan mengumpulkan data dari buku dan jurnal yang akan dianalisis untuk mendapatkan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa perempuan dapat berpartisipasi aktif dalam pelayanan Allah. Perubahan dibutuhkan untuk berjuang demi pembebasan dan perubahan kehidupan.

**Kata Kunci:** Gereja; Lukas; Pelayanan; Pengikut Yesus; Perempuan

## INTRODUCTION

The Bible testifies that since ancient time women have had important role in the life of God's people or believers, in a paternalistic cultural context.<sup>1</sup> The Old Testament mentions female characters such as Eve, Sarah and Hagar, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel, Rahab, Deborah, and others. Meanwhile the New Testament mentions about Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Johanna, Susana, and the women who followed Jesus (see Luke 8: 1-3), Eunice, Lois, Phoebe, Priscilla, and other women who helped Paul's ministry (see Romans 16). These women are told not only as a complement or as a sweetener to the story, but they also have a role and are used by God in his work of salvation for his chosen people. When these women's names are mentioned in Bible writings, it must have had the purpose for which they were written.

Luke is one of the Synoptic Gospels, which gives a deeper place in its Gospel for the stories of women, children, the sick, the poor, those who are considered lowly and "unclean" and/or marginalized. Luke's community is still bound by tradition even though they have become Christians. In the patriarchal Jewish and Greco-Roman traditions, women did not have the same position as men. Both men and women are divided into two regions, women in the domestic sphere in the home and men in the public sphere, whereas in the Christian community, all people are considered equal. In Luke's stories about women, there are many positive things about women, as in the story of the women who followed and served Jesus in Luke 8: 1-3. It is said that they crossed the cultural and social barrier, followed and they supported Jesus with financial support. Despite in patriarchal context, the women play important role in Jesus' ministry/mission. In Luke's context, they play important roles in church ministry/mission.

Rene Padilla in his essay "The Unity of The Church and The Homogeneous Unit Principle," evaluates Donald McGavran's statement that "men (people) like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic or class barriers". Padilla states that Jesus's community contains people from different backgrounds, women-men, Jewish-Gentiles, poor-rich, lower-high class, etc.<sup>2</sup> This community appreciates the differences between them, and the ministry/mission is done well. In the context of Jew's patriarchal culture, there was also a barrier-crossing process. Women in Luke's Gospel had crossed the cultural and social barrier. Culturally and socially women were not allowed to be in public sphere, only in domestic, but in Jesus's community they were actively doing mission together with their men-fellow. That is why this theme is interesting for further study.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses qualitative research methods which doing literature study or analyze the text using primer and secondary data. All information gathered from the Bible, Greek New Testament, commentaries on Luke, New Testament theologies, books and articles about women's roles in the church, etc. All informations collected, are analyzed to get theoretical

---

<sup>1</sup> Marie Claire Barth-Frommel, *Hati Allah Bagaikan Hati Seorang Ibu* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2003), 29.

<sup>2</sup> Rene C. Padilla, "The Unity of the Church and the Homogeneous Unit Principle," dalam *Exploring Church Growth*, ed. oleh Wilber Shenk (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983).

foundation and teaching for the believers that can be done in their daily life as Christian. Conclusion and recommendations will be given as the positive contribution from this reasearch.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *Luke's Context*

It was not until the 2nd century that most New Testament scholars accepted that the Gospel of Luke was written by a man named Luke.<sup>3</sup> He was a healer or doctor at that time. He had been Paul's traveling companion on his travels and missionary work.<sup>4</sup> He was a Gentile (in Colossians 4: 10-11, Luke is called an uncircumcised man) but believed in Christ and lived a godly life.<sup>5</sup> The community of Luke or the early readers of this Gospel are a congregation in Rome or the suburbs of Rome that live in the early first century or in the early church. In the introduction to the Gospel of Luke, chapters 1: 1-4, it is stated that this gospel is written for Theophilus. There are two opinions as to whom Luke is referring to Theophilus. First, Theophilus is an official in the Roman government. He is also a Christian who is active in the fellowship of the church. Second, this Theophilus does not refer to a person but rather refers to the Christian community living in Rome. The word Theophilus can be interpreted as "lover of God" or "beloved by God." That is, this word refers to all those whom God loves, namely the church.<sup>6</sup>

The congregation is not only made up of Jewish but also Gentiles. Not only consists of rich and upper-class people but also poor and lower-class people with various problems and challenges they faced. Ehrman insists "in the world of early Christianity, there were very few people in the upper class, most of whom were poor, many people were suffering from incurable diseases, high infant mortality rates and low levels of education."<sup>7</sup> These effect their life together as a Christian community and in the work of ministry performed by the church, because even though the members came from different backgrounds and faced persecution and suffering, the early church was growing.

### **Women in Luke 8:1–3**

In Luke's gospel, there are at least 20 stories about women or using women as characters in the story. Twelve stories only exist in Luke, while the other eight stories have parallels with other Gospels. Luke leaves ample space to speak about women, children and other people who are considered unclean or lower-class. One of Luke's texts that talks about

<sup>3</sup> J. M. Creed, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (London: MacMillan and Co. Ltd, 1960); I Suharyo, *Pengantar Injil Sinoptik* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1989), 109; William Barclay, *Pemahaman Alkitab Setiap Hari: Injil Lukas* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2010), 1; Bart D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 105.

<sup>4</sup> Barclay, *Pemahaman Alkitab Setiap Hari: Injil Lukas*, 2; Norval Geldenhuys, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), 15–22; Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, 138; John Drane, *Memahami Perjanjian Baru* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1998), 212; Suharyo, *Pengantar Injil Sinoptik*, 110–11.

<sup>5</sup> Barclay, *Pemahaman Alkitab Setiap Hari: Injil Lukas*, 2; Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, 138.

<sup>6</sup> Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, 107.

<sup>7</sup> Ehrman, 16.

woman is Luke 8:1-3. This article focuses on Luke 8:1-3 which give interesting information about women who followed Jesus. This text can be divided into three parts: Verse 1a: Jesus went on through cities and villages proclaiming the good news about the kingdom of God; verses 1b-3a: People who followed Jesus; verse 3b: Women provided out of their means.

### **Verse 1a: Jesus went on through cities and villages proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God**

This verse begins with a statement shortly thereafter which indicates that this text is a continuation of the previous text Luke 7:36-50. Jesus did not stand still, he continued to work on his mission. The text states that Jesus walked around (*διώδευεν* diodeuen dari *διοδεύω* diodeuo) from city to city and from village to village. He did not stay at one place but continued to walk. Moving from one place to another is not an easy thing and requires effort, time, and money. Nevertheless, this journey is very important because it is undertaken to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God (*κηρύσσων καὶ εὐαγγελιζόμενος τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ* kerusson kai euaggelizomenos ten basileian tou theou). Traveling to various places is carried out so that more and more people listen to the teaching and receive or experience the work of Jesus.

### **Verses 1b-3a: People who followed Jesus**

Jesus did not travel alone, but rather he was accompanied by many people. The second part of this text informs the people who followed Jesus on his missionary journey. There are interesting things from this text that need to be discerned. This text provides important information about women who participated in Jesus' ministry. It states that the people who follow Jesus are his twelve disciples and some women.

**Verse 1b:** The twelve apostles. This part mentions that the twelve apostles were with him. The Greek word *σὺν* *sun* refers to togetherness and fellowship. Here the names of the twelve are not mentioned. This is clearly different from some of the women whose names are mentioned. Probably this part only confirms that the twelve were with Jesus and they were not the focus of this text.

**Verses 2-3a:** Information about the twelve disciples is very few, in contrast to information about the women. It states that some women have been healed (*τεθεραπευμένοι* *tetherapeumenai*: heal, cure, restore) of evil spirits and various diseases. This explains that those women had received Jesus' healing ministry which became their motivation to follow him. It is a transformative and liberating act that enables them to transcend cultural and social boundaries to serve Jesus. Those women who follow and serve Jesus are as follows:

### **Mary Magdalene**

There are at least six women named Mary in the New Testament, Mary the mother of Jesus; Mary the sister of Martha of Bethany, sister of Lazarus; Mary Magdalene; Mary, mother of James; Mary the mother of Mark; and Mary to whom the apostle Paul greeted.<sup>8</sup> Some scholars often equate Mary Magdalene with Mary of Bethany and/or the woman who anoints Jesus' feet in Luke 8. But Ehrman says that "her depiction as a completely disreputable figure

<sup>8</sup> J. D. Douglas, ed., *Ensiklopedi Alkitab Masa Kini Jilid 2: M-Z* (Jakarta: YKKBK, 2005), 27-28.

does not emerge until nearly 500 years after the New Testament, when she began to be identified as the 'sinful woman' who anoints Jesus in Luke 7: 36-50."<sup>9</sup> The Mary referred to in this text is Mary Magdalene, who come from the village of Magdala in the Galilee region.<sup>10</sup> The caption in the text states that she has been delivered by Jesus from seven demons. Apart from this text, the name Mary Magdalene also appears in the story of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. Mary Magdalene is one of the women who have experienced Jesus's healing work for her. Norval Geldenhuys quotes Greydanus, states that "we nowhere read that being possessed by evil spirits had any connection with marked sinfulness."<sup>11</sup> But by stating that the healing of the seven evil spirits, it is to say that "the greatness of her healing."<sup>12</sup>

### ***Johanna, Wife of Khuza, Herod's Treasurer***

She is said to be one of the women who is healed of her disease, although it is not clear what the disease is, but she also experiences the work of healing Jesus for herself. In the Bible it is stated that her husband is an employee of Herod Antipas.<sup>13</sup> Other information about Johanna is that she also takes care of Jesus' body before burial and become a proclaimer of Jesus's resurrection to the disciples (Luke 24: 1-10). She follows Jesus and become a supporter of Jesus' traveling ministry and his disciples.

### ***Susana***

The name Susana appears only here, and very little information is given about her. But judging from her name she is a Gentile.

### ***Many Other Women***

There is no clear information about who they are but in saying this, Luke's writer would like to say that there are a large number of women who experience Jesus' work in their lives and become believers and follow and serve Jesus. These women come from different backgrounds, Jewish-Greek/Gentiles, poor-rich, noble-ordinary people, lower-high class, etc. Nevertheless, Luke states that there is something in common: they had experienced Jesus' work in their lives and have given themselves to follow and serve Jesus and his company.

### **Verse 3b: Women provided out of their means**

This text then says in verse 3b that "these women served the company with their wealth." Even though Jesus's ministry was for the poor, some wealthy and powerful people also accepted and support Jesus's ministry.<sup>14</sup> If we notice, the Greek word which used in this verse is *ton huparchonton autais τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐταῖς*. The words *τὰ ὑπάρχοντα ta huparchonta* in neuter plural form translated as a substantive "what one has at one's disposal, property, possessions." ESV translates it "**means.**"<sup>15</sup> The word "**means**" can be translated as "an action, an object or a system by which a result is achieved; the money that a person has."<sup>16</sup> **Property**

<sup>9</sup> Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, 365.

<sup>10</sup> Douglas, *Ensiklopedi Alkitab Masa Kini Jilid 2: M-Z*, 1679.

<sup>11</sup> Geldenhuys, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, 239.

<sup>12</sup> ESV, *Global Study Bible* (London: Bible Societies, 2012), 1436.

<sup>13</sup> LAI, *Alkitab Edisi Studi* (Jakarta: LAI, 2010), 1679; Douglas, *Ensiklopedi Alkitab Masa Kini Jilid 2: M-Z*, 607.

<sup>14</sup> ESV, *Global Study Bible*, 1436.

<sup>15</sup> ESV, 1436.

<sup>16</sup> A. S. Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 828.

means “a thing or things that are owned by somebody; land and buildings; a quality or characteristic that something has.”<sup>17</sup> **Possession** means “the state of having or owning something; something that you own or have with you at a particular time; the situation when somebody’s mind is believed to be controlled by the devil or by an evil spirit.”<sup>18</sup> So, the word **τὰ ὑπάρχοντα** *ta huparchonta* can be interpreted in a broad sense. It could be interpreted as money (gold or silver) but also everything that owned by the women, for instances, the wisdom to manage everything in one group which travel together, “hospitality, providing food and a place to stay.”<sup>19</sup> The women in this context give or use their resources to care for Jesus’s ministry. Moxnes called it “an act of service” yet the role is a kind of *patron role*. Moxnes states,

we may consider Luke’s description of women patrons as an effort to integrate traditional social patterns into the structure of the “new community” of believer... This, it becomes a privilege to act as host and benefactor to Christ, to the apostle or to the missionary. The usual pattern of patronage with its unequal relationship between patron and client is now put within the structure of the new community and transformed.<sup>20</sup>

Luke explains a new order of life and a new form of relationship in the fellowship of those who follow him. Women are given the equal role and opportunity. They play active role in Jesus’ mission. This is clearly different in the context of the early church. Here, women have been given the courage to cross their cultural and social boundaries. We can say that this is also one of the missions that Jesus did for women and the whole society, namely the mission of liberation and transformation.

### **Women in Luke’s Gospel**

So far, we have read from Luke 8:1–3 that women who followed Jesus came from different backgrounds and has experienced Jesus’ teaching and healing ministry. This changed their lives and therefore they use their resources to support Jesus’ mission as their active participation or service. It is interesting that Luke wrote this text in the context of his reader (the early church) who were facing several problems, one of which concerns the role and position of women in the church. On the one hand, the traditions that have bound them for so long have divide women and men into domestic and public spheres. While on the other hand, in the Christian fellowship, the congregation learns that Jesus views and treats all people as equal. This is the background for the writing of the stories about women in the Gospel of Luke.

Luke tells how these women met Jesus and experienced Jesus’ works in their lives. Jesus accepted them, healed them, called them to be disciples, taught and edified them, forgiven them, and so on. In essence, it can be said that Jesus also serves women and women serve him in love, loyalty, and obedience.

---

<sup>17</sup> Hornby, 1058.

<sup>18</sup> Hornby, 1024.

<sup>19</sup> Halvor Moxnes, “Patron-Client Relations and the New Community in Luke-Acts,” dalam *The Social World of Luke-Acts*, ed. oleh Jerome H. Neyrey (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 262.

<sup>20</sup> Moxnes, 263.

We also learn from this text that the women mentioned by Luke come from different social backgrounds: Jewish-Gentiles, poor-rich, noble-ordinary people, lower-high class and others. But they are people who have accepted Jesus' work of ministry for themselves or for their family members and then decide to follow and serve Jesus. But despite their different backgrounds, they form a close alliance and work together in mission. The results of their work encourage the Christian church to grow and spread throughout the world. Rene Padilla says that "women had been accepted on the same basis as men, despite the common view, expressed by Josephus, that a woman 'is in every respect of less worth than a man.'"<sup>21</sup> In the context of Luke's Gospel, Padilla quotes Mackay's opinion as saying that "the unifier is Jesus Christ and the unifying principle is the 'Gospel.'"<sup>22</sup> This clearly states what is written in the text of Luke 8:1-3.

In Jesus' community, those who follow him are people who come from different backgrounds. They experience the work of Jesus' ministry in their personal or their family life which make them believe and follow him. Some of the followers of Jesus are women who also come from different backgrounds. But they work together and support each other in following Jesus on his mission. This is one of the interesting things we can learn from this text. Another interesting thing that we can notice is that Jesus himself and peoples who followed him, including women, cross the barriers. The position and status of women in Jewish and Greco-Roman culture, women who are considered to exist only in the domestic space, in Luke's text, are also move in the public sphere. They go on a ministry trip together with men and even support this mission. In this alliance, women also cross the boundaries of differences in social status, rich-poor, social class (low-upper class). And Luke reveals it in his gospel. He not only talks about unity in diversity or diversity in unity, but he also wants to say that the fundamental differences between men and women, and other forms of background differences, do not hinder evangelism but instead help the process of preaching the gospel and making the fellowship of believers (the church) grow.

In his essay, 'The Unity of The Church and The Homogeneous Unit Principle', Rene Padilla elucidates:

... true, he had not demanded a rigidly structured uniformity, yet he had attained the formation of a community that had been held together by common commitment to him, in the face of which all the differences that could have separated them had been overcome. Members of the revolutionary party (like 'Simon who was called the Zealot,' Lk 6:15) had become one with 'publicans' – private businessmen in charge of collecting taxes for the government of the occupying power (like Matthew, in Mt 9:9-13; Lk 19:1-10). Humble women of dubious reputation (Lk 7:36-39) had mixed with wealthy women whose economic means made the traveling ministry of Jesus and his followers possible (Lk 8:1-3). Women had been accepted on the same basis as men, despite the common view, expressed by Josephus, that a woman 'is in every respect of less worth than a man'.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Padilla, "The Unity of the Church and the Homogeneous Unit Principle," 288.

<sup>22</sup> Padilla, 287.

<sup>23</sup> Donald McGavran, *The Homogeneous Unit in Mission Theory* (Wilmare (KY): First Fruits Press, 2018), 288.

Padilla does not emphasize on the background differences in Jesus's community, especially between women and men. But he concludes: 1) in the early church the Gospel is proclaimed to all people; 2) the breaking down the barriers that separate people in the world was regarded as an essential aspect of the Gospel, not merely as a result of it; 3) the church not only grow, but it grow across cultural barriers; 4) the NT clearly shows that the apostles, while rejecting "assimilationist racism," never contemplate the possibility of forming homogenous unit churches that would then express their unity in terms of interchurch relationship; 5) there is no indication that the apostles approve of adjustments made in order to avoid the charge caused by abandoning their own culture.<sup>24</sup> After giving the conclusions, he evaluates McGavran's homogeneous unit principles. He states that if his five biblically based conclusions are correct, then:

..... it is quite evident that the use of the homogeneous unit principle for church growth has no biblical foundation. Its advocates have taken as their starting point a sociological observation and developed a missionary strategy; only then, a posteriori, have they made the attempt to find biblical support." He adds that "the analysis above leads us to conclude that the church growth emphasis on homogeneous unit churches is in fact directly opposed to the apostolic teaching and practice in relation to the expansion of the church."<sup>25</sup>

As mentioned in Luke's Gospel, Jesus's community is a special community, which is contains of peoples who come from the different background, but that community works together. Not only Schusler-Fiorenza, Barth-Frommel, Barbara Reid, etc., who emphasize that women have been playing an important role in early church community, Norman E. Thomas quotes Virginia Fabella, who states:

The fact that women were part of equal discipleship that was present for a time in early Christianity. A non-androcentric reconstruction of the history of the early church reveals that in the early church, women were full disciples, and were alike missionaries, prophets, church leaders, and apostles in the broadest sense of that term.<sup>26</sup>

And talking about the crossing-barriers, Senior and Stuhlmüller ascertain that Jesus' ministry is the boundary-breaking ministry. They state that "the right to be included in the community of God's people is not defined by one's heritage or status but only by response to God's universal invitation."<sup>27</sup> Moreover, David J. Bosch insists:

What amazes one again and again is the *inclusiveness* of Jesus' mission. It embraces both the poor and the rich, both the oppressed and the oppressor, both the sinners and

<sup>24</sup> Padilla, "The Unity of the Church and the Homogeneous Unit Principle," 300–301.

<sup>25</sup> Padilla, 301.

<sup>26</sup> Norman E. Thomas, *Teks-teks Klasik tentang Misi dan Kekristenan Sedunia* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2019), 371.

<sup>27</sup> Donald Senior dan Carroll Stuhlmüller, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission* (New York: Orbis Book, 1991), 265.

the devout. His mission is one of dissolving alienation and breaking down walls of hostility, **of crossing boundaries between individuals and groups**.<sup>28</sup>

Luke, on the other hand, was perhaps the only Gentile author of a New Testament book and wrote for Christians who were predominantly of Gentile origin.<sup>29</sup>

Also, to be mentioned is his emphasis on Jesus' association with women – **a stunning crossing of a social and religious barrier in the patriarchal society of his day** – tax-collectors, and Samaritans. The entire ministry of Jesus and his relationship with all these and other marginalized people witness, in Luke's writings, to **Jesus' practice of boundary-breaking compassion**, which the church is called to emulate.<sup>30</sup>

So, there are important things which are interesting which made the early church grow, firstly, the recognition of unity in diversity which includes broad understanding and exemplary, and second, the willingness of Jesus and the people who follow him, women, and men, to cross their cultural and social barrier. Any barrier, cultural, social, gender, economic, political affiliation, cannot hinder the integrity of the fellowship and the missionary work and ministry carried out by Jesus and later by the church.

Therefore, the church today, which is the fellowship of women and men who believe in Christ, who follow and carry out his salvific mission in this world must pay attention to and practice the example set by Jesus and the fellowship of believers who follow him. Because the Bible emphasizes, especially the second part of Luke's writings, that the church is also grow in recognition of those principles.

### **Implication for Minahasan and Minahasan Women**

Luke 8:1-3 has taught that the women who followed and served Jesus came from different backgrounds (cultural, social, economic, etc.). However, they had experienced Jesus' ministry which transformed and set them free to cross social and cultural barriers. Women also had played an active role in Jesus' ministry and in the growth of the early church.

These also important and can be implicated in the lives and services of present Christian women in the congregation and society, including Minahasan Christian women. They also come from different background, yet they have experienced the ministry of Jesus and accepted him as Lord and Savior. The question is: have the Minahasan Christian women used their resources to actively participate in Jesus' mission?

In the context of Minahasa, women have been given equal opportunities with men. Many women have professions and even have roles in various educational, governmental, and religious institutions. Some of the leaders in government, church and education institutions are women. But it is also undeniable fact that women in Minahasa are also face a lot of struggles. Some women become objects to domestic or workplace violence, trafficking, divorce, marginalization in the workplace, etc. There are women who are forced or willing to leave their jobs because of the demands of marriage and family life. The increase in the number of acts of

<sup>28</sup> David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission* (New York: Orbis Book, 2011), 21.

<sup>29</sup> Bosch, 67.

<sup>30</sup> Bosch, 69.

violence against women in recent years is a strong indicator that the value of egalitarianism in Minahasa is being eroded. In such a situation, reclaiming egalitarian value becomes very important. This article is also one of the reclaiming efforts.

So, even though the society or even the church provides space for women to play an active role, some women reject it with cultural or social reasons. The problem lies with women who cannot use the opportunities to explore their abilities that God has given them to work with others in God's missionary work. Women must be able to cross the barriers. There are also women who are comfortable with their circumstances and are reluctant to make changes to their existence and position. There are also women who feel inadequate, weak, and not confident that she has the ability and able to work with men in God's mission. Therefore, a change of thought is necessary if what is expected is a change of action. Change of thinking from women themselves to be willing to fight for liberation and transformation in her life and other people's life through church's mission/ministry.

## **CONCLUSION**

From this perspective, we learn that study about women and their important roles in the early church community and its mission practices and its growth in the Bible and other resources, is needed to expand or to broaden Minahasan women's understanding about their own role in their life and ministry. Women must dare to step out of their comfort zone and struggle for their lives. This is what I call crossing the comfort-zone barriers. For God alone is a good God and accepts women in their existence because God is the one who creates women and men. There are no customs, no earthly laws that can prevent it. Women must change their own mindset and pattern of action. Women must dare to continue to learn to understand the essence of herself as a woman created by God along with men. Woman must dare to explore her capabilities as God has granted her and use it in her life in this world. Minahasan women would be more courageous and confident in fighting and struggling for good things that bring about liberation and change in their lives and their relationships with men and other creations in their context. Women and men are called to reclaim the value of equality that is almost buried by acts of violence and behavior that marginalize these values in society. They are required to see each other as equal Minahasa people. Women and men must recognize that relationships between them can be created in all spaces of life and are not limited by the distinction of public or domestic space. Women and men can live and work together in the common sphere of life. Women and men also can do the ministry together in making the church and community grow.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barclay, William. *Pemahaman Alkitab Setiap Hari: Injil Lukas*. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2010.
- Barth-Frommel, Marie Claire. *Hati Allah Bagaikan Hati Seorang Ibu*. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2003.
- Bosch, David J. *Transforming Mission*. New York: Orbis Book, 2011.
- Creed, J. M. *The Gospel According to St. Luke*. London: MacMillan and Co. Ltd, 1960.
- Douglas, J. D., ed. *Ensiklopedi Alkitab Masa Kini Jilid 2: M-Z*. Jakarta: YKKBK, 2005.
- Drane, John. *Memahami Perjanjian Baru*. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1998.
- Ehrman, Bart D. *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- ESV. *Global Study Bible*. London: Bible Societies, 2012.
- Geldenhuis, Norval. *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979.
- Hornby, A. S. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- LAI. *Alkitab Edisi Studi*. Jakarta: LAI, 2010.
- McGavran, Donald. *The Homogeneous Unit in Mission Theory*. Wilmore (KY): First Fruits Press, 2018.
- Moxnes, Halvor. "Patron-Client Relations and the New Community in Luke-Acts." Dalam *The Social World of Luke-Acts*, disunting oleh Jerome H. Neyrey. Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991.
- Padilla, Rene C. "The Unity of the Church and the Homogeneous Unit Principle." Dalam *Exploring Church Growth*, disunting oleh Wilber Shenk. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.
- Senior, Donald, dan Carroll Stuhlmueller. *The Biblical Foundations for Mission*. New York: Orbis Book, 1991.
- Suharyo, I. *Pengantar Injil Sinoptik*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1989.
- Thomas, Norman E. *Teks-teks Klasik tentang Misi dan Kekristenan Sedunia*. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2019.