Saving God's Face: A Chinese Contextualization of Salvation through Honor and Shame

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1 author:

Brad Vaughn
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Endorsements for *Saving God's Face*

"*Saving God's Face* is a sophisticated and thoughtful monograph written at the intersection of Chinese culture, contextualization theory, and debates about the New Perspective on Paul. Wu leverages a dialogical theory of contextualization in order to show how honor-shame concepts in Chinese culture can help Christians understand the 'glory' and 'honor' images found in the Bible. By reading the Bible with Chinese eyes, a Christian can understand these images in ways that are underemphasized in traditional western theologies. Along the way, Wu manages to draw upon a diverse array of thinkers including Enoch Wan, John Piper, and N. T. Wright. Even if you find yourself in disagreement with Wu, you won't regret the journey upon which he takes you."

Bruce Riley Ashford
Provost and Dean of Faculty
Associate Professor of Theology and Culture
Fellow for the Bush Center for Faith and Culture
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

"Jackson Wu's work pulls together several fields that go naturally together—exegetical and theological insights drawing upon the 'New Perspective on Paul' integrated with theological discussions of contextualization. This integration ought to be seen to be quite obvious, especially since the Apostle Paul is not a professional theologian writing in a dusty office situated in a de-contextualized ivory tower. He is, rather, a missionary practitioner himself, wrestling theologically with the contextual challenges of proclaiming Israel's good news to a non-Jewish world. While this integrative work is a natural and obvious extension of several scholarly conversations in diverse fields, few have the missiological expertise and exegetical skill to pull it off. The publication of Wu's work will be a significant contribution to the study of Paul and to scholarly discussions of contextualization."

Timothy Gombis
Associate Professor of New Testament
Grand Rapids Theological Seminary

"Contextualization is arguably the most important issue in contemporary missiology, as well as one of the most difficult tasks to do well. It requires both an in depth knowledge of a culture and in depth knowledge of the Bible and theology, plus skill in bringing the two together. Author Jackson Wu's work, *Saving God's Face*, reflects all these and thus gives us an excellent example of contextualization done well. He brings an exceptional understanding of the Chinese concept of honor and shame into a helpful dialogue with an insightful theological analysis of the doctrine of atonement in a way that brings out aspects of the doctrine that have been there in Scripture all along but have gone unnoticed or underemphasized by Western theologians. Some may quibble with Wu's use of the New Perspective on Paul but all should be challenged to rethink how they understand and proclaim the atonement, especially those who do so in a Chinese context. This is an important book, well worth the effort necessary to grapple with its argument."

John S. Hammett
Professor of Theology
Associate Dean for Theological Studies
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

Saving God's Face

A Chinese Contextualization of Salvation
through Honor and Shame

Jackson Wu

Saving God's Face

A Chinese Contextualization of Salvation
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This work was originally submitted to the faculty of Southeastern Baptist Seminary in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy.

This book is dedicated to

my wife,

who continually encourages me
to seek God's face.

Editor's Preface

In order to encourage and make known Evangelical missiological scholarship the Evangelical Missiological Society (EMS) launched a dissertation series in 2010. In collaboration with William Carey International University Press, the Society is publishing up to four dissertations per year that its reviewers have judged as scholarly, relevant, and timely for advancing the global cause of Christ. We pray you will find this dissertation informative and stimulating.

Thomas J. Sappington, Editor
EMS Dissertation Series

EMS DISSERTATION SERIES

Series Editor: Tom Sappington

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABD	*The Anchor Bible Dictionary*
Altern. Global Local Polit.	*Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*
AM ANTHROPO	*American Anthropologist*
AM J SOCIOL	*American Journal of Sociology*
AJSP	*Asian Journal of Social Psychology*
AJT	*Asia Journal of Theology*
ASIAN PERSPEC	*Asian Perspective*
AUST J CHINESE AFF	*Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*
BBR	*Bulletin for Biblical Research*
BCAS	*Critical Asian Studies*
BDAG	*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*
BTB	*Biblical Theology Bulletin*
BTDB	*Baker Theological Dictionary of the Bible*
BYU J. Pub. L.	*BYU Journal of Public Law*
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBR	*The China Business Review*
Cogn Emot	*Cognition & Emotion*
Colloq	*Colloquium*
CTJ	*Calvin Theological Journal*
CTR	*Chinese Theological Review*
CurTM	*Currents in Theology and Mission*
CULT PSYCHOL	*Culture & Psychology*
DAO	*Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy*
DBI	*Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*
DBT	*Dictionary of Biblical Theology*
DCH	*Dictionary of Chinese History*
DOTHB	*Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books*
DOTP	*Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*
DOTWPW	*Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry and Writings*
DTWT	*Dictionary of Third World Theologies*
EAJET	*East Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology*
EDNT	*Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament.*
EDWM	*Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions.*
EJEAS	*European Journal of East Asian Studies*
EMQ	*Evangelical Missions Quarterly*
Enc	*Encounter*

ERT	*Evangelical Review of Theology*
ExAud	*Ex Auditu*
GDT	*Global Dictionary of Theology*
HTS	*Harvard Theological Review*
IBMR	*International Bulletin of Missionary Research*
IDB	*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*
IJERE	*International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*
IJFM	*International Journal of Frontier Missions*
IJLE	*International Journal of Leadership in Education*
IJP	*International Journal of Psychology*
IJST	*International Journal of Systematic Theology*
IS	*Issues & Studies*
JapChrQ	*Japan Christian Quarterly*
JAPSS	*Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JCP	*Journal of Chinese Philosophy*
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
JME	*Journal of Moral Education*
JOCP	*Journal of Chinese Philosophy*
JOSP	*Journal of Social Philosophy*
JP	*The Journal of Psychology*
JPh	*The Journal of Philosophy*
JR	*The Journal of Religion*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JTP	*Journal of Theory and Practice*
JTSB	*Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*
L&N	*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic*
MDB	*Mercer Dictionary of the Bible*
NDBT	*New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*
NIB	*The New Interpreter's Bible*
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
PEGLMBS	*Proceedings–Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Societies*
PSB	*Princeton Seminary Bulletin*
PTR	*Princeton Theological Review*
QR	*Quarterly Review*
SEAJT	*South East Asia Journal of Theology*
SJT	*Scottish Journal of Theology*
Soc Sci Med	*Social Science and Medicine*
SSC	*Social Sciences in China*
SWC	*Studies in World Christianity*
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
ThTo	*Theology Today*

TJTh	*Taiwan Journal of Theology*
TNDT	*The New Dictionary of Theology*
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
VeE	*Verbum et Ecclesia*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
WBC	*Word Biblical Commentary*
WTJ	*Westminster Theological Journal*
WW	*Word & World*

BEFORE YOU READ THIS BOOK

It's alright to question assumptions

Years ago, I had a startling realization. Theologians and pastors have long taught on the glory of God and its central importance in the Bible. However, because I was living in East Asia, it also dawned on me that this sort of talk about God's glory, praising him, and magnifying his name was simply another way of talking about honor and shame. When I looked at most theology and missions-related books, I found that honor and shame seemed to be treated differently. Anthropologists talked about honor-shame, but theologians largely focused more on legal metaphors. I could see both themes in Scripture but couldn't find help as to how to bring them together.

The problem became more serious for me as I thought about Chinese culture. In Mandarin, the word for "sin" is translated literally as "crime." Therefore, when people hear the gospel, they were being told, "You are criminals!!" Naturally, people do not understand what they are hearing. In China, as in other countries, people think primarily in terms of "face" and relationships. "Law" is less a prominent theme in daily life.

This raised a number of questions.

Theologically, why have Christians favored law-language when so much of the Bible emphasizes God's glory and his people not being put to shame? How could I reconcile the gap between these two metaphors, not choosing one over the other? Why did people get nervous whenever I would talk about honor-shame, as if I were denying what the Bible said about law and absolute truth?

Missiologically, how do we share the gospel in honor-shame cultures in a way that both reflects what the Bible really says and does not come across as superficial? How are we supposed to reconcile the conviction that God's word is absolutely true but that our perspectives are limited? Why has so much been written about contextualization yet there is little agreement about how to actually do it?

Beware of two temptations

Many readers will face one of two temptations when reading this book.

First, some will jump right into the discussion about contextualization and culture but be discouraged by the slower pace required in the last major chapter, where the book deals with weighty issues like the atonement and justification. At times, the argument will get a

bit technical, especially in the footnotes. Be patient and remember this—the entire book was written ultimately in order to better understand what the Bible says about salvation. This is a central concern for every Christian, whether a missionary, theologian, pastor, or layperson.

Second, others will be more eager to do the detailed work of exegesis and assess my conclusions about salvation. I understand it is important to keep the end in mind when reading longer books. However, I want to remind those people that perspective is critical for seeing truth. We all have assumptions that influence the way we read Scripture. Our perspectives are always limited by our culture and experience. The early chapters play a critical role. They attempt to help the reader see the world through a distinct pair of "cultural" glasses. Reading Scripture with a new cultural lens can be humbling, confirming, and correcting.

Keep in mind the big picture

So many of the problems we face are systemic. They require a broad perspective and integrative solutions. Yet, contemporary scholarship tends towards greater specialization. It is easy to lose track of the big picture and the practical importance of what is being said. Life and ministry are too complex to easily compartmentalize.

Accordingly, I have intentionally taken an interdisciplinary approach in this study. The advantage is that more voices are brought into dialogue. Therefore, we gain a more comprehensive understanding of the various topics. However, one disadvantage is that readers face a more difficult challenge. Those who tend to read missiology and anthropology may not be aware of many currents debates within other fields, like theology or New Testament studies. The converse could also be true. Consequently, the lack of interaction across academic fields makes it increasingly difficult to solve some of our most pressing problems.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This book argues that a dialogically contextualized Chinese soteriology, which draws

heavily upon honor-shame concepts prevalent in Chinese culture, issues forth in a biblical

understanding of atonement and justification. It proposes an interdisciplinary method of

theological contextualization that intentionally utilizes a cultural worldview for the sake

of exegesis. This approach demonstrates how the integration of cultural, historical, and

biblical contexts is critical for developing a theology that both draws from Chinese

culture and builds upon traditional theological debates. As a result, this study illustrates

the point that "[t]here is no such thing as 'theology'; there is only *contextualized*

theology."[1]

"Dialogical contextualization"[2] tempers some of the bias and limitation inherent

in any culture, paradigm, or scholarly research. After all, theological contextualization

involves a number of contexts, including those of Scripture, the interpreter, the

missionary/messenger, and the recipient of the message. Those who contextualize

theology can bring these contexts into dialogue. Biblical truth transcends any single

context. Unfortunately, efforts to produce contextualized theology tend either to

minimize the original meaning of the text or else import theological categories foreign to

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[1] Stephen Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology* (rev. and expanded ed.; Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2002), 3. Similarly, see David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1991), 423. Emphasis in original.
[2] David K. Clark, *To Know and Love God: Method for Theology* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2003).

a given culture.[3] These problems are evident in past attempts to contextualize the

Christian message in Chinese culture in particular and in honor-shame (HS) cultures in

general. Rather than first interpreting the Bible and then applying the findings to a

cultural context, this book shows that by taking a Chinese HS lens, there emerge a

number of critical theological issues that have otherwise been overshadowed by other

motifs, such as law. If one takes seriously a Chinese collectivist orientation, what

happens when that perspective is applied to biblical interpretation? To be clear, this book

prioritizes exegesis, not eisegesis, so that the interpretations reflect the original meaning

of the biblical text itself. Without forging false dichotomies, one finds that HS

comprehensively accounts for the diversity of biblical texts related to soteriology, all the

while challenging the primacy of traditional Western theological categories.[4] As a result,

one gains helpful insight into how to share the gospel of salvation in a Chinese context.

The proposed soteriology, contextualized in Chinese culture, can contribute to common

views of theology and missiological method—and correct misleading ones.

 This book assumes a conservative, evangelical perspective. Therefore, the Bible is

regarded as ultimately authoritative in theological and missiological questions. Truth

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[3] For a sample of contextualization attempts, see K. K. Yeo, *Musing with Confucius and Paul: Toward a Chinese Christian Theology* (Eugene, Ore.: Cascade, 2008). Also, K. K. Yeo, *What Has Jerusalem to do with Beijing: Biblical Interpretation from a Chinese Perspective* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press, 1998). Also, C. S. Song, *Third-Eye Theology: Theology in Formation in Asian Settings* (Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock, 2002). From Hong Kong and mainland Chinese theologians, see Pan-chiu Lai and Jason Lam, eds., *Sino-Christian Theology* (New York, N.Y.: Peter Lang, 2010); Yang Huilin and Daniel H. N. Yeung, eds., *Sino-Christian Studies in China* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2006).

[4] For instance, soteriology has traditionally been framed in forensic or judicial language. This forensic emphasis is mitigated by a more "covenantal" view found in Michael Bird, "Justification as Forensic Declaration and Covenant Membership: A Via Media between Reformed and Revisionist Readings of Paul," *TynBul* 57, no. 1 (2006): 109–30. A classical articulation of the traditional Protestant formulation of the gospel can be found in Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Gospel?* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2010). For implications of a guilt-based perspective on theology, see Krister Stendahl's famous essay "The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West," in his work *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles, and Other Essays* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Fortress Press, 1976).

exists apart from any particular culture. In that sense, it is "supracultural." However, biblical theology must never be reduced to an abstraction. The human act of theologizing is always expressed within a cultural context. In that respect, theological formulations may be incomplete or flawed. Given human limitations, theologies can improve as they become more intercultural. The ensuing chapters interact with scholars of various theological persuasions across academic disciplines. However, at critical points, concentrated attention is generally given to evangelical thinkers.

Chapter 2 ("Theological Contextualization in Practice") argues that a practical model for theological contextualization is most basically a work of biblical interpretation. In short, contextualizers read Scripture through the lens of those in a local culture. Missionaries stunt this process when they prioritize a particular formulation of the gospel before having answered the question, "What is contextualization?" In so doing, they effectively "beg the question" since their assumptions predetermine the framework, emphases, and motifs that must be used to contextualize theology in a given culture. As a result, Western missiological thinking has largely reduced contextualization merely to application and communication.

All human cultures express limited points of view, including Western cultures that have produced the preponderance of traditional Christian theology. Because Western theologies overwhelmingly emphasize the legal motif and the individual, other themes, like HS and collectivism, can be muted. This is despite the fact that one finds these latter ideas in Scripture and the ancient biblical world. Although biblical truth transcends any one culture, it is always contextualized in some cultural form. All people bring to Scripture a worldview, which at points intersects with and diverges from the perspective

of a biblical author. Missionaries and theologians compensate for their subjective

limitations by using an interdisciplinary approach to contextualization. The chapter

proposes a method to help people intentionally broaden their own worldview lens.

Chapter 3 ("Theologizing for a Chinese Culture") identifies a number of

prominent themes and concerns within Chinese culture that will shape a contextualized

theology in China. Scholars from various fields agree that Chinese people have

consistently valued honor (i.e. "face"), harmony, and hierarchy.[5] They are more group-

oriented (versus individualistic) and focus on the practical aspects of life and religion.

People think most basically in terms of relationships (or *guanxi*) not law. In history, the

Chinese worldview divides the world into those who are insiders and those who are

outside the "Middle Kingdom." The increased presence and power of foreigners has

fostered differing degrees of ethnocentrism and nationalism.

Many people have addressed the question of Chinese theology, largely agreeing

on what constitutes a Chinese worldview.[6] Nevertheless, they sometimes differ with

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[5] A sample of relevant works include Enoch Wan, "Practical Contextualization: A Case Study of Evangelizing Contemporary Chinese," *Global Missiology* 1, no. 1 (Oct 2003), n.p. [cited 27 Dec 2011]. Online: http://ojs.global missiology.org/index.php/english/issue/view/27; Enoch Wan, "Christianity in the Eye of Traditional Chinese," *Global Missiology* 1, no. 1 (Oct 2003), n.p. [cited 21 Nov 2011]. Online: http://ojs.global missiology.org/index.php/english/ issue/view/27; Enoch Wan, "Critiquing the Method of Traditional Western Theology and Calling for Sino-Theology," *Global Missiology* 1, no. 1 (Oct 2003), n.p. [cited 21 Nov 2011]. Online: http://ojs.globalmissiology.org/index.php/english/ issue/view/27; Andrew Kipnis, *Producing Guanxi: Sentiment, Self, and Subculture in a North China Village* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997); Richard R. Cook and David W. Pao, eds., *After Imperialism: Christian Identity in China and the Global Evangelical Movement* (Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick, 2011); Chan Kei Thong and Charlene L. Fu, *Finding God in Ancient China: How the Ancient Chinese Worshiped the God of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2009); Haihua Zhang and Geoffrey Baker, *Think Like Chinese* (Annandale, N.S.W.: Federation Press, 2008); Margaret N. Ng, "Internal Shame as a Moral Sanction," *JCP* 8 (Mar 1981): 75–86.

[6] Many works address the issue like Ralph Covell, *Confucius, the Buddha, and Christ: A History of the Gospel in Chinese* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1986); Bruce J. Nicholls, "Contextualisation in Chinese Culture," *ERT* 19, no. 4 (Oct 1995): 368–80; James Pan, "Contextualization: A Methodological Enquiry with Examples from the History of Theology," *SEAJT* 21, no. 2–1 (1981): 47–64; Chengmian Wang, *Contextualization of Christianity in China: An Evaluation in Modern Perspective* (Collectanea serica; Sankt Augustin; Nettetal: Institut Monumenta Serica; Steyler Verlag, 2007); Benoît Vermander,

respect to how this applies to contextualization. The chapter identifies six general

approaches, each with its own distinctive emphasis. A "situational" methodology

accentuates the Chinese context, even sounding hostile to the West. "Sino" theologians

give greatest weight to ethnic identity. A "synchronistic" approach uses cultural concepts

to convey theological meaning. Others more heavily interact with "scriptural" questions

and categories. A number of "systematic" writers focus on the theoretical concerns of

Chinese contextualization. Finally, missionary practitioners are "soterian" in that they

typically stress soteriology and evangelism. Although the chapter offers a number of

insights about Chinese culture, these issues seem to have little or no effect on the tools

used by this group. This chasm between missionary practice and scholarly consensus is

noteworthy.

Chapter 4 ("Honor and Shame in Context") compares HS in Chinese culture, the

Ancient Near East (ANE), and Scripture in order to understand its relevance for Chinese

theology. Humans universally have a concern for HS. Although the desire for "face"

expresses itself in variegated ways, a few principles are evident.[7] "Honor" refers to the

value placed upon people within their social context. It may either be ascribed or

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"Jesus-Christ and the Chinese Religious World," *Studia Missionalia* 50 (2001): 391–405; Edmond Tang, "The Cosmic Christ: The Search for a Chinese Theology," *Studies in World Christianity* 1, no. 2 (1995): 131–42; Pan-chiu Lai, "Chinese Culture and the Development of Chinese Christian Theology," *Studies in World Christianity* 7, no. 2 (2001): 219–40.

[7] One of the most famous anthropological treatments is J. G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers, *Honor and Grace in Anthropology* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005). See also Jin Li, Lianqin Wang, and Kurt W. Fischer, "The Organisation of Chinese Shame Concepts?," *Cogn Emot* 18, no. 6 (Oct 2004): 767–97; Whitley Kaufman, "Understanding Honor: Beyond the Shame/Guilt Dichotomy," *STP* 37, no. 4 (Oct 2011): 557–73; Olwen Bedford and Kwang-Kuo Hwang, "Guilt and Shame in Chinese Culture: A Cross-Cultural Framework from the Perspective of Morality and Identity," *JTSB* 33, no. 2 (1 June 2003): 127–44; Chester Chun-Seng Kam and Michael Harris Bond, "Emotional Reactions of Anger and Shame to the Norm Violation Characterizing Episodes of Interpersonal Harm," *British Journal of Social Psychology* 48, no. 2 (Jun 2009): 203–19; David Yau-Fai Ho, Wai Fu, and S. M. Ng, "Guilt, Shame and Embarrassment: Revelations of Face and Self," *Culture & Psychology* 10, no. 1 (Mar 2004): 64–84;

achieved. A person's public identity consists in his or her relationships. Thus, those who

live in cultures that emphasize HS are especially sensitive to the importance of gaining,

losing, or lacking honor. "Shame" is the ill repute brought upon a person for some

perceived deficiency or failure to meet the standards issued by his or her community.

Every culture has manifold ways of conveying, assessing, and regulating HS. Laws are

simply one way society expresses its HS standards.[8]

Not only does HS encompass the whole of human life, it is especially pervasive in

Chinese culture. The Chinese language is rich with idioms and terms related to HS.

"Face," typically translated *mianzi* or *lian*, is a kind of "currency" with which social

transactions take place. "Face" is a practical and daily consideration in China. When it

comes to moral issues, Chinese people tend to speak in terms of what is honorable and

shameful. They are cognizant of the fact that different standards of right and wrong are

used in different relationships and situations. HS can be shared collectively, reinforcing a

divide between insiders and outsiders (e.g., "Chinese" versus "foreigners").

Not surprisingly, the Bible consistently demonstrates an HS perspective.

Anthropologists have written extensively to show how HS-related issues influenced

ancient biblical cultures and thus Scripture. Theologians have long recognized the

importance of God's glory through the Bible. Yet, on the whole, people have given little

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Stella Ting-Toomey, ed., *The Challenge of Facework: Cross-Cultural and Interpersonal Issues* (Suny Series in Human Communication Processes; Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1994).

[8] A few articles that employ too narrow a view of HS relative to theology include Paul W. Pruyser, "Anxiety, Guilt, and Shame in the Atonement," *ThTo* 21, no. 1 (Apr 1964): 15–33; Jackie D. Leigh, "Honor, Shame, Resurrection," *Proceedings-Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Societies* 23 (2003): 101–8; Brad A. Binau, "When Shame is The Question, How Does The Atonement Answer?," *Journal for Pastoral Theology* 12, no. 1 (Jan 2002): 89–113; Wayne L. Alloway Jr., John G. Lacey, and Robert Jewett, eds., *The Shame Factor: How Shame Shapes Society* (Eugene, Ore.: Cascade, 2010); Laurel Arthur Burton, "Original Sin or Original Shame," *QR* 8, no. 4 (Winter 1988): 31–41; R. Atkins, "Pauline Theology and Shame Affect: Reading a Social Location," *Listening* 31, no. 2 (1996): 137–51.

notice to how this theme is but the tip of the iceberg when it comes to HS's influence on Scripture. HS is foundational to the entire biblical narrative. A number of writers have formulated theologies of HS.[9] Jonathan Edwards famously argues that God does all things for the sake of his glory/honor.[10] Humans are made in God's image and so should publically reflect his worth. All people "have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23). As will be seen, writers are frequently concerned about how to use HS to explain "sin" and thus what Jesus accomplished. However, their attempts are introductory and not comprehensive. At times, they treat HS primarily as a social-science issue, not as a "theological" problem on the same level of law.

Using the mosaic of insights gained thus far, Chapter 5 ("A Soteriology of Honor and Shame") demonstrates how HS frames and gives color to the biblical doctrine of salvation. Texts related to soteriology are diffused throughout the Bible. The gospel of salvation is more comprehensive and complex than some might suggest. Rather than restricting one's interpretive lens to a few select texts that highlight the legal-motif, this chapter notes the diversity of ways that Scripture applies HS language to salvation.[11] In

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[9] Some efforts include: Grant DeVries, "Explaining the Atonement to the Arabic Muslim in terms of Honour and Shame: Potentials and Pitfalls," *St. Francis Magazine* 2, no. 4 (Mar 2007): 1–68; Bruce J. Nicholls, "The Servant Songs of Isaiah in Dialogue with Muslims," *ERT* 20 (1996): 168–77; Ruth Lienhard, "Restoring Relationships: Theological Reflections on Shame and Honor Among the Daba and Ban of Cameroon" (PhD diss.; Pasadena, Calif.: Fuller Theological Seminary, 2000); Christopher L. Flanders, "About Face: Reorienting Thai Face For Soteriology and Mission" (PhD diss.; Pasadena, Calif.: Fuller Theological Seminary, 2005); Bruce J. Nicholls, "The Role of Shame and Guilt in a Theology of Cross-Cultural Mission," *ERT* 25, no. 3 (Jul 2001): 231–41; Timothy D. Boyle, "Communicating the Gospel in Terms of Shame," *JapChrQ* 50, no. 1 (Winter 1984): 41–46; Rafael Zaracho, "Communicating the Gospel in a Shame Society," *Direction* 39, no. 2 (Fall 2010): 271–81.

[10] Jonathan Edwards, "The End for Which God Created the World," in *God's Passion for His Glory* (ed. John Piper; Wheaton, Ill.: 1998), 117–252.

[11] The relationship between the gospel and salvation has become an increasingly debated topic in recent years. See Scot McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel: The Original Good News Revisited* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2011); Michael W. Goheen, *A Light to the Nations: The Missional Church and the Biblical Story* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2011); Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?: Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission*

the atonement, Christ "saves God's face" and objectively pays the honor-debt all humans

owe to God.[12] Subjectively, Christ's death inaugurated the new covenant. God gives his

people new hearts and the Holy Spirit, thus enabling them to obediently honor God in

community. Naturally, one sees in Scripture a constant theme—group identity. On the

one hand, sinful people prefer the approval of others to the praise that comes from God.

On the other hand, Jesus and Paul challenge the boasting of the Jews who honored

themselves as Abraham's offspring. In Romans, Paul expounds upon the doctrine of

justification in part to undermine the notion that salvation is tied to ethnic identity. The

gospel challenges every sense of cultural superiority. Those who boast in Christ are

ascribed as righteous. Because God upholds his own honor, all who trust in Christ are

reckoned as Abraham's offspring and will not be put to shame.[13]

Finally, Chapter 6 concludes the study by posing a series of questions and

possible applications. This book seeks to lay a foundation for theological

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(Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2011); Gilbert, *What Is the Gospel?*. For a wonderful survey of the use of the word "gospel" in ancient literature, see John Dickson, "Gospel as News: ευαγγελ- from Aristophanes to the Apostle Paul," *NTS* 51 (2005): 212–30.

[12] A spectrum of views can be found in Mark D. Baker and Joel B. Green, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross: Atonement in New Testament and Contemporary Contexts* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2000); C. Norman Kraus, "The Cross of Christ: Dealing with Shame and Guilt," *JapChrQ50* 53, no. 4 (Fall 1987): 221–27; Scot McKnight, *A Community Called Atonement: Living Theology* (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 2007); Robert Jewett, "Shame and Atonement in Romans: A Potential Resource for Theology in Korea" (Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea, 1 Nov 2007), Online: http://cafe321.daum.net/_c21_ /bbs_search_read?grpid=DzmC&fldid=TMZ2&contentval=00001zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz&nenc=&fen c=&from=&q=%B0%A5%B6%F3%B5%F0%BE%C6%BC%AD%BF%E4%BE%E0&nil_profile=cafetop &nil_menu=sch_updw&listnum=; Thomas Schreiner et al., *The Nature of the Atonement: Four Views* (ed. James Beilby and Paul R. Eddy; Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2006); Charles E. Hill and Frank A. James III, eds., *The Glory of the Atonement: Biblical, Theological & Practical Perspectives* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2004).

[13] See Halvor Moxnes, "Honour and Righteousness in Romans," *JSNT* 32 (1988): 61–77; Leland J. White, "Grid and Group in Matthew's Community-The Righteousness/Honor Code in the Sermon on the Mount," *Semeia* 35 (1986): 61–90; Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (ed. Eldon Jay Epp; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2006); N. T. Wright, *The Letter to the Romans* (NIB 10; Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 2002); Robert Jewett, *Saint Paul Returns to the Movies: Triumph over Shame* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998); Mark A. Garcia, "Imputation as Attribution: Union with Christ, Reification and Justification as Declarative Word," *IJST* 11, no. 4 (Oct 2009): 415–27.

contextualization in China. It is impossible to address the variety of implications for missiological theory and practice as well as biblical and theological studies.[14] Methodologically, the book may open doors for more fruitful dialogue and integration between missiology and theology. For instance, this study shows what dialogical contextualization looks like when applied to a specific cultural context, namely, a Chinese context. It demonstrates that contextualization and theology cannot be so neatly separated; in fact, they essentially refer to the same process as described from different perspectives. Examining how others have utilized the HS motif can assist prospective attempts to theologize in HS cultures, train church leaders and missionaries, and more broadly foster unity within the global church. One benefit gained in the process is that Christians from both East and West alike can become increasingly cognizant of all the Bible teaches so as not to fall prey to theological or cultural provincialism. Naturally, since the Bible conveys a message for the world, it is hoped that people in the West would likewise benefit from these insights from Asian culture. Many who are more accustomed to a law-based presentation of salvation could benefit from hearing a message about the restoration of God's glory and the removal of human shame.

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[14] An example of how honor-shame may influence ecclesiology can be found in Jackson Wu, "Authority in a Collectivist Church: Identifying Crucial Concerns for a Chinese Ecclesiology," *Global Missiology* 1, no. 9 (Oct 2011), n.p. [cited 21 Dec 2012]. Online: www.globalmissiology.org.