

TH 502: Theology in a Global Context

Dr. Stanley John

Hagjae Lee

113036

2.3.2023

## **Tennent Reflection Paper #2**

### **Chapter 4: Anthropology: Human identity in shape-based cultures of the far East**

Chapter 4 was a topic of interest to me. Originally, I was very interested in anthropology, and I read many books because I like humanities. Also, it was more interesting to explain the topic of Chapter 4, human identity, by citing the shame-base culture of the Far East as an example.

As an Asian, I also sympathized with the 'the role of shame and honor' premised in this chapter and underlying the culture. This culture of shame is an example of the reality of the ancient Near East, where suicide and accidents occur in the name of honor, and examples of this culture can also be found in the Old Testament. In particular, as an example of Korea in this chapter, in the culture of Korean society, maintaining honor is more important than life. According to Tennent, "importance of maintaining honor and avoiding the humiliation of public shame in cultures around the world.

The very core of this chapter is the culture of shame in the East and the culture of guilt in the West. I think we should know the exact concept of the words "shame" and "guilty" here. Tennent says that when we know the concept of this, we can understand certain cultural dynamics.

As I said before, this chapter takes Korea as an example and says that the foundation of Korean culture is based on "shame". The reason is that family members are more important than individuals. For example, in Korea, children have long been considered a virtue to study hard and succeed in order to live up to their parents' expectations. As a result, when a child failed, the failure was not regarded as an individual failure, but as a failure and shame of the family.

Tennent saw this as the importance of groups and the importance of maintaining face.

Then, Tennent suggests whether shame and guilty culture can be found in the Bible and how to deal with it theologically. "In the teaching of Jesus, both huly and shame play important roles in understanding how we are affected by sin. Conversely, both forgiveness and honor occupy central roles in understanding the nature of God's gracious work in our lives."

In the well-known "parable of the prodigal son," Tennent says that the real reason the first son is angry is because the father forgave the second son despite revealing the shame of the family.

In this shame-based culture, it seems to be showing an example that collective, collective decisions and changes are brought about rather than individuals.

In conclusion, as Tennent said, we, who once were identified by guilt and shame, now have a new identity in Christ and have become partakers of his rightwousness and his honor.