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Orality Journal

The Word Became Fresh

**Honor and
Shame
and Oral
Preference
Learners**

**Mischke • Wilson • McFarland • Doll • Hall • Trinh
Patrick • Kabete**

THE 3D GOSPEL

MINISTRY IN GUILT, SHAME, AND FEAR CULTURES



Jayson Georges



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Orality Journal

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Cover Photo

A royal knight of chivalry kneels in prayer in a chapel of the Tower of London. The Tower is one of the residences of the British monarchy – it was founded in 1066 and houses the crown jewels. This whole complex has witnessed the Bohemian Reformation of the 14th century, the Gutenberg Press revolution of the 15th century, the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century and the English Reformation of the 16th century; now, silently it is witnessing the digital revolution of the 21st century.

Because the Sovereign LORD helps me, I will not be disgraced.
Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know
I will not be put to shame.

Isaiah 50:7

After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light [of life] and
be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify
many, and he will bear their iniquities.

Isaiah 53:11

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:
Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality
with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature² of a servant, being made in human
likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled
himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!
Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him
the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the
earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to
the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:5—11

Orality Journal

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Orality Journal is the journal of the International Orality Network. It is published online semi-annually and aims to provide a platform for scholarly discourse on the issues of orality, discoveries of innovations in orality, and praxis of effectiveness across multiple domains in society. This online journal is international and interdisciplinary, serving the interests of the orality movement through research articles, documentation, book reviews, and academic news. Occasionally, print editions will be provisioned. Submission of items that could contribute to the furtherance of the orality movement is welcomed.

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Editor's Note

Samuel E. Chiang

In Sync with the Majority Worldview: Honor and Shame

Our discussions on the “gospel” were lively. The participants at the Houston Baptist University consultation on orality and theological education were fully engaged; this included chancellors, presidents, provosts, academic deans, professors and practitioners. The issue was not the incorrectness of the gospel, but the incompleteness of the gospel presented from a Western evangelical viewpoint. In our modern, reductionist approach to speaking about the gospel, we often neglect the biblical worldview that is included in the Scripture, that of honor and shame.

Ever since the printing press revolution, the reading and understanding of Scripture has helped the spiritual growth of the individual, the understanding of doctrine, and the anchoring of theological moorings. However, in the process we have also privatized our faith; as some would describe it, we have become little popes interpreting the Scripture and expediently transmitting the gospel as we see fit. Often times, I have been reminded on this orality journey, that one of the central objectives is to make available the full counsel of the Word of God to all peoples. Contrary to popular association, orality is not merely storytelling. It is a broad discipline that provides the Church with potential tools from different communication paradigms which can be used so that people of different communication backgrounds can engage the whole Word of God.

Somewhere along the way the Church in the West got side-tracked. We did not teach every book of the Bible. We started to reduce what was to be taught. Combining this trend with the fact that people are engaging with Scripture less robustly, we teach only portions of Scripture—usually the New Testament—often skewed towards certain genre. I was speaking recently with a NT professor who teaches at a famous evangelical university. The professor was lamenting the trend in his NT Survey course: the students cannot even read through the entire New Testament. As a result, the professor was assigning only the book of Luke (not even Luke -- Acts) to be read as a course textbook; the shocking reality is that the students are not even able to finish the book of Luke!

Scripture engagement needs attention, but also understanding of the Scriptural worldview that includes “honor and shame.” The West and the Church in the West are facing the acceleration of societies embracing “honor and shame” so much so that *Christianity Today* devoted major coverage to the topic of “honor and shame” in its 2015 March issue. Incidentally it quoted three of the participant-authors who were at the Houston Baptist University Orality Consultation. (Note their newest books are shown on the inside, outside, and back cover of this issue of the Journal.)

In the West, our literature, reflections, and theological approaches to “honor and shame” have been negligent. On the other hand, the rest of the world, the global south-east, the Majority Church continually to function within an “honor-shame” worldview. A treasury of riches awaits discovery and exploration by the Church. In this publication we intend to invite the richness from the Majority World to speak into this matter so that we can all appreciate better the “fullness” of the gospel.

In this issue, we are well-served by Werner Mischke, who provides an overview of biblical passages covering honor-shame and its implications to oral preference learners. Michael Wilson and Joe Handley disclose from the leadership lab what is succeeding in a highly literate Japan working with a predominantly oral culture. We are grateful to Andrew McFarland for tracing William Carey’s challenges with communication and how he came to embrace oral preference learners. Margaret Doll helps us to look at how the integration of literacy and orality can really work and how important it is to recover orality within the culture so as to be effective. Veteran orality practitioner Annette Hall discusses overcoming the temptations to “over-teach and explain,” which can often short circuit the learning experience for oral preference learners. Paul Trinh’s blog updates us to his own journey in orality and we are grateful to both Susangeline Y. Patrick and Irene Maonei Kabete for their book reviews.

I am personally delighted that Geoffrey W. Hahn has joined the Editorial Committee and that William Coppedge is agreeing to serve as Associate Editor.

On the journey together,

Samuel E. Chiang
From Hong Kong, SAR, China

The Importance of Repetition for Oral Communicators

Annette Hall

Annette Hall, who retired with 38 years of service with the International Mission Board, has used Bible stories as her principle outreach method since 1994 and has taught others how to craft and tell Bible stories. She is still involved in story trainings both in the US and in other countries.

I first learned about Chronological Bible Storying in 1994, and I was an instant adopter of the process. One of the things I was told in that first workshop was that oral communicators learn by repetition. I've heard this fact at nearly every workshop I've attended. I teach it when I do trainings. Oral communicators learn by repetition.

However, I've also learned through personal experience that my own literate background frequently takes control, and I want the oral communicator to learn from hearing the story once or twice. I try to tell a story every time I visit with someone, but usually that is a one-time telling. Seldom do I get to repeat the story in that home visit setting. Yet, I know that oral communicators need to hear the story more than once. I believe that a large part of the problem

is my own hesitation to "impose" on my listener and repeat the story. In addition, my own literate background whispers that once is enough.

I often struggle to keep teaching out of the way and allow the oral communicator discover the teaching from the story itself. I want to explain the meaning of the story.

I often struggle to keep teaching out of the way and allow the oral communicator discover the teaching from the story itself. I want to explain the meaning of the story.

I have learned that this does no harm, but it also does no good. Explanations just go over the head of the listener, who sits politely while I move into my explanation mode. I don't explain as a rule, but it is a constant struggle in my head to keep this out of the story time.

I had an amazing experience in 2011 that helped illustrate this for me. I was part of a training team that went to one country to train several groups of oral

communicators on how to craft and tell good Bible stories. Then, I returned for a follow-up training. During that training, we had four teams of women, most of whom were primary oral communicators. We used multiple sources to teach them the Bible stories and they then crafted these stories in their own dialects.

They went home each night to test the stories. I was able to visit a home each afternoon and observe the various women telling and testing their stories. We set the expectation that each woman would tell the story at home and generally most of them did.

The stories for that week of training were stories of people who met Jesus and had their sins forgiven through believing in him. The religion of these women was works-based. Through many activities, including acting out the story, they learned and processed the story. We learned a new story each day. The last story we worked on that week was the story of the Woman with the Alabaster Vase. Here is the story as it was told to the women as a model and as one of the sources for their crafting:

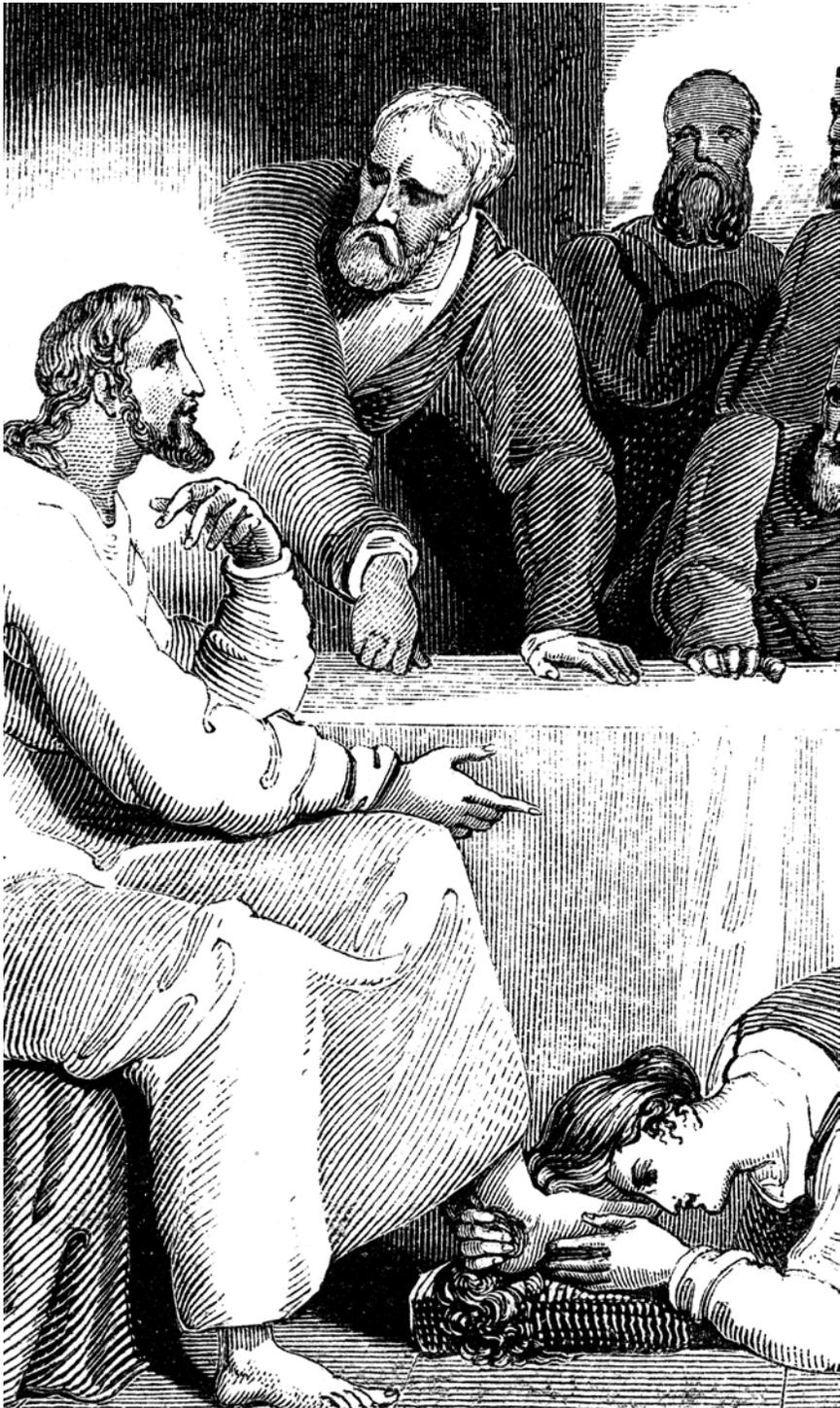
A religious leader invited Jesus to come to his house for dinner. He also invited some

other men. Jesus arrived and they all reclined at the table with their feet away from the table. There was a woman who lived in that town, and she had a really bad reputation. She came to the house and came into the room where Jesus was eating with the others. She carried with her an expensive vase full of precious perfume.

She went to Jesus' feet and knelt down and began to cry. Her tears flowed and fell on Jesus' feet. So she washed his feet with her tears and then used her hair to dry them. She kissed his feet and then opened the vase and poured the perfume on his feet. She kept on kissing his feet.

Now the religious leader saw this and thought, *If Jesus was really from God, he would know what kind of women this is and he's letting her touch him!* Well, Jesus knew what the man was thinking, so he looked at the man and asked, "Do you see this woman?"

Then, Jesus said, "When I came, you didn't give me any water to wash my feet, but



she has washed my feet with her tears. You didn't even greet me with a kiss on the cheek, but she hasn't stopped kissing my feet." And Jesus continued by saying, "You didn't do me the honor of giving me olive oil for my hair, but she has poured perfumed oil on my feet."

Then, Jesus said, "She is doing this to show her

...Now my great temptation was to go into teaching mode. But I resisted...

love for me because her sins have already been forgiven." Then, Jesus looked at the woman and said, "Because you believe in me, your sins have been forgiven. You have a relationship with God. Go in peace."

The women learned the story and discussed it. They crafted it in their teams and retold the story in their own dialects. At the end of the day, before they left to go home, we were meeting again as a large group. I asked them a question about the story: "How did this woman get her sins forgiven?" They replied that she was forgiven because she washed Jesus' feet.

Now my great temptation was to go into teaching mode. But I

resisted and said to the women, "Let me repeat the end of the story." So I repeated,

"Then, Jesus said, 'She is doing this to show her love for me because her sins have already been forgiven.'"

Then, Jesus looked at the woman and said, "Because you believe in me, your

sins have been forgiven. You have a relationship with God. Go in peace."

I asked again, "How did this woman get her sins forgiven?" This time, they all said that she must have done something before she came to the house. She had to have done something to get her sins forgiven. The story didn't tell us what it was, but it must have been before she came to the house. So I said, "Let me repeat the end of the story." So I repeated,

"Then, Jesus said, 'She is doing this to show her love for me because her sins have already been forgiven.'"

Then, Jesus looked at the woman and said, "Because you believe in me, your sins have been forgiven. You have a relationship with God. Go in peace."

I asked a third time, “How did this woman get her sins forgiven?” This time, they shouted, “It was because she believed. Because she believed in Jesus, her sins were forgiven!” They got really excited and started talking at once. I also asked them what other stories we had studied during the week in which the person was forgiven by believing in Jesus and nothing else. They were able to list the other stories. They repeated many times that it was her belief in Jesus that allowed her to be forgiven.

That afternoon, I visited a believing woman from the group. She told the story to her husband, who isn’t a believer. As a part of the testing, she asked him the same question about how the woman’s sins were forgiven. He replied that she was forgiven because she washed Jesus’ feet.

The wife then said, “Let me repeat the story for you.” And she repeated the end of the story and then asked the question again. This time her husband gave the correct answer. This woman had learned the story, had learned to repeat the story correctly in her home setting, and had also learned how to keep retelling the story until the other person learned the major point of

the story. We wanted reproduction and we saw it take place!

On the last day of the training, we gave the women the opportunity to talk about what they had learned from the week. Nearly every woman said that the most important thing she had learned was that sins were forgiven by believing in Jesus and only by believing. They could not earn the forgiveness by works.

Sins were forgiven by believing in Jesus and only by believing.

I returned to my home in a large European city where I normally work with immigrants from a different religion, but one that uses works to try to earn salvation. I visited with a friend who has heard many Bible stories, but still remains attached to her religion and works. I told her the story of this experience by telling her the story and telling her the response of the women including repeating the end of the story twice. My friend listened intently and was so into the story that she said, “It was her belief” before I got to that point.

Later I was visiting another friend, a woman who has lived in this city for over 40 years, never been to school and considers herself a religious leader. She is a strict practitioner of her religion. She wears the

“required” clothes and tries to keep all the tenets of the religion. She has even made a pilgrimage. She also has heard many stories of Jesus. When I tell her a story, she turns towards me, folds her hands and listens intently. She tells me that she loves my stories. I told her about this experience including all the repetitions of the story. She was nearly shouting at me, “It was her faith. Don’t they know? It was her faith! That’s why she was forgiven. It was her faith.” My friend has not become a follower of Jesus but she has discovered for herself that she needs to believe and only believe to have forgiveness.

Through this experience I found a simple way to repeat the story. I

told my friend about a personal experience that involved telling the story to someone else and my friend listened to several repetitions. It also led us into a discussion of how this woman’s belief gave her forgiveness of her sins. Each of my friends discovered this from the story and then was willing to talk about it. This experience taught me again the two essential truths of storying with oral communicators.

1. Repeat the story several times. They learn from repetition.
2. Allow them to discover the meaning. If they don’t get the meaning, repeat the story again and again.





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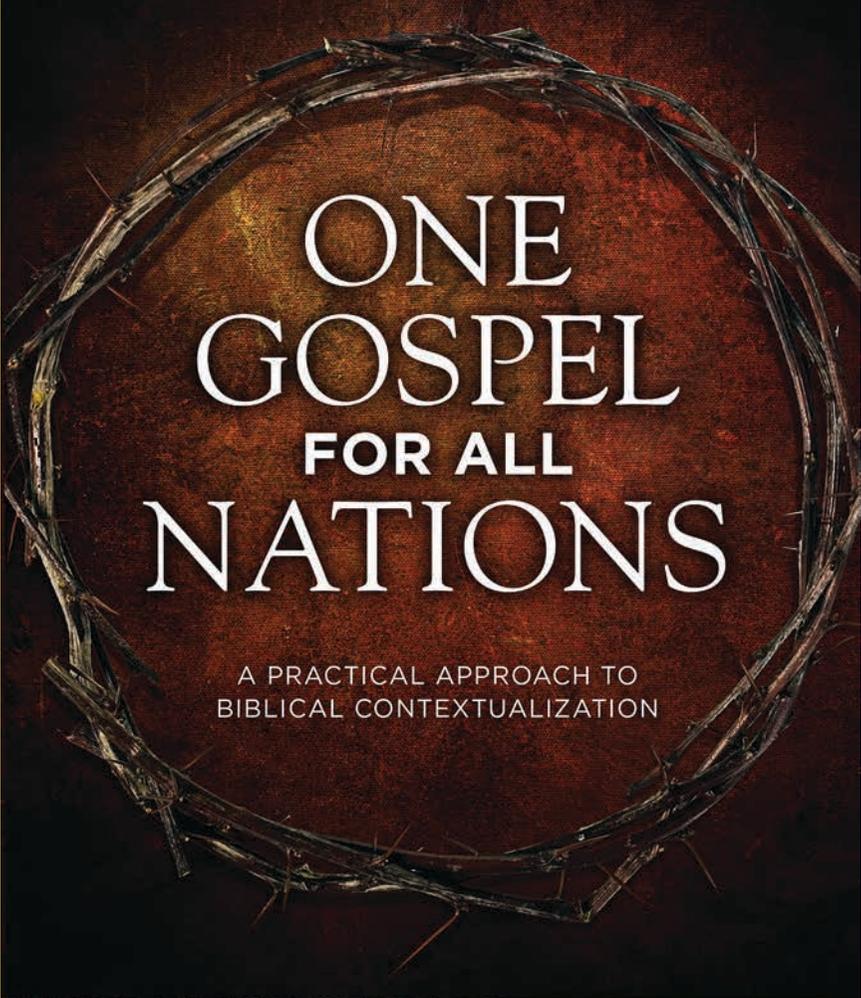


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FOREWORDS BY
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