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The Moral Visions of the Epistle of James and Zhongyong

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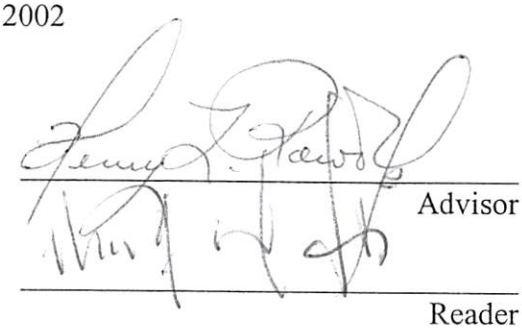

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is a cross-textual study, designed to compare the moral visions of the Epistle of James and *Zhongyong*.[1] The Epistle of James is a book of the Christian New Testament.[2] *Zhongyong* is one of the Four Books of Confucianism.[3]

This introductory chapter will present the relevance and method of this study. First, the ongoing relevance of the present topic will be introduced in the section entitled **China and Christianity**. This section notes the impact of Christianity on China, the Chinese impact upon Christianity, and the consequent importance of investigating Chinese thought in order to understand Chinese interaction with Christianity. **Mainstream Chinese Thought As Predominantly Confucian** will then discuss the way in which Confucian thought has continually been affirmed as the mainstream in Chinese culture. Next, **The History of Confucian and Christian Comparative Studies** will

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[1] For an introduction and defense of cross-textual studies in an Asian Christian context, see Archie C. C. LEE, "Biblical Interpretation in Asian Perspectives," *Asian Journal of Theology* 7:1 (1993): 35-39. For examples of cross-textual studies, see Archie C. C. LEE, "Cross Textual Hermeneutics on Gospel and Culture," *Asian Journal of Theology* 10:1 (1996): 38-48; Archie C. C. LEE, "Genesis 1 From the Perspective of a Chinese Creation Myth," *Understanding Poets and Prophets*, ed. By A. Graeme Auld (Sheffield: JSOT, 1993), 186-198; Archie C. C. LEE, "The Recitation of the Past: A Cross-textual Reading of Ps. 78 and the Odes," *Ching Feng* 39:3 (September 1996): 173-200; Archie C. C. LEE, "Theological Reading of Chinese Creation Stories of Pan Ku and Nu Kua," *Doing Theology With Asian Resources* (Auckland: Pace Publishing, 1993), 230-236.

[2] The Christian Bible includes the Hebrew Bible as Old Testament and twenty-seven Greek books of the New Testament. Most of the New Testament books are written in the form of an epistle (letter) as is the Epistle of James.

[3] The nine 'scriptures' of Confucianism include the Five Classics (*Book of Poetry, Book of History, Book of Changes, Book of Rites, Spring and Autumn Annals*) and the Four Books (*Analects of Confucius, Great Learning, Zhongyong, Mencius*). Ji Won Yong calls them the "Old and New Testaments of Confucianism." He explains that Confucius inherited the content of the Five Books, and he may have edited some or all of them. The Four Books are based on Confucius' own teachings and were written after he died. JI Won Yong, Christian Encounter with World Religions course lecture, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Spring 1996.

express the relevance of this particular study as a continuity within the stream of a four hundred year old movement.

After discussing the relevance of this inquiry in the three sections noted above, the method of this dissertation will be presented in the following sections. **Moral Vision: Point of Comparison** defines moral vision and presents moral vision as the best point of comparison between Christian and Confucian thought. **Cross-textual Study** then introduces the method of comparative textual investigation used in this inquiry. This leads into the justification for the choice of each text: **The Choice of *Zhongyong*** and **The Choice of The Epistle of James**. Further refinement of the method of this cross-textual comparative study follows in **From Exhortations to Metanarrative**, which explains how the moral vision of each text will be presented in order to facilitate comparison. Then, **Procedure of This Dissertation** will describe the flow of presentation. Finally, **Linguistic Matters** will explain translation issues and the use of Chinese romanization and surnames in this dissertation.

China and Christianity

Five hundred years ago, Christian thought and activity was more prominent in Europe than anywhere else. At that time, Christian faith was unknown in China. Today the situation is different. Many European cathedrals are almost empty during worship. In China, Christians crowd into church buildings and individual homes to worship each week. Christianity is growing vibrantly in China. China may become one of the most

prominent locations for Christian thought and activity in future years. This changing dynamic gives ongoing relevance to the study of Chinese interaction with Christianity.[4]

Chinese Christians are increasingly contributing to Christian theology. Along with this contribution comes a cultural influence. This cultural influence is deeply rooted in five thousand years of living history. Chinese civilization has the distinction of being the oldest continuously living culture in history. The influences of culture "become rooted in history, are an inherent part of social behaviour, ways of thinking and feeling, and even languages."[5] Imbedded within the languages used to articulate theology are unavoidable cultural concepts. For the last two thousand years, much Christian theology has been expressed by means of Western philosophical concepts.[6] As Christianity continues its growth in the Chinese world, Christian theology will increasingly be developed and articulated by means of Chinese cultural concepts. This indicates the growing relevance of studies such as the present one. An inquiry into Chinese interaction with Christianity requires an investigation of Chinese thought and a comparison of Chinese thought with Christian thought.

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[4] For a good study of the history of the communication of the Gospel in Chinese, see Ralph Covell, *Confucius, The Buddha, and Christ: A History of the Gospel in Chinese* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1986).

[5] Jacques Gernet, *China and the Christian Impact: A Conflict of Cultures*, trans. Janet Lloyd (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985; originally published in French as *Chine et Christianisme*, Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1982), 2.

[6] Diogenes Allen, *Philosophy for Understanding Theology* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985). This book is based upon the thought conveyed on page iv: "[Western] philosophical knowledge enables one to appreciate more deeply the meaning of virtually every major doctrinal formulation and every major theologian." On the same page, Allen continues: "I have made my selection from the mass of philosophical material by first looking at theologians. I have determined from a study of their works what philosophy influenced them and what philosophical concepts and terms they used." In confirmation of Allen's basic idea, Jacques Gernet comments on the fact that some missionaries felt it necessary to first teach Chinese how to reason according to Western philosophy: "It probably never crossed the minds of the

A study of Chinese thought reveals that Confucian thought is central to Chinese culture. This will be demonstrated in the following section. *Zhongyong* was chosen for this study because it is a good representative of Confucian thought (see **The Choice of *Zhongyong*** on page 22). The Epistle of James is the Christian counterpart in this comparison because of its cross-textual study potential in regard to moral vision (see **The Choice of The Epistle of James** on page 24). Although Confucius was born twenty-five centuries ago and Christ was born twenty centuries ago, the history of Christian and Confucian comparative studies is only four centuries old. An overview of this history will be given after the centrality of Confucian thought is explained.

Mainstream Chinese Thought As Predominantly Confucian

Zhu Xi (朱熹 1130-1200) was one of China's greatest scholars, a man whose Neo-Confucianism has been a profound influence upon Chinese thought for the last 800 years.[7] Chan Wing-tsit writes, "**Chinese thought is predominantly Confucian** [my emphasis] . . . . Chinese thought and the Chinese way of life in the last several hundred years have, generally speaking, been the product of Neo-Confucianism . . . itself an outgrowth of ancient Confucianism, modified by Taoism and Buddhism."[8] Neo-Confucianism was born about 1050 A.D. in the Song dynasty (960-1279). Qian Mu

missionaries that what seemed to them to be Chinese inaptitude was in fact a sign not only of different intellectual traditions but also of different mental categories and modes of thought." Gernet, 3.

[7] Zhu Xi did for the East what Thomas Aquinas (1224-1275) did for the West. Aquinas created a synthesis with the mainstreams of Western thought (Plato, Aristotle and Christianity). Zhu Xi also created a synthesis with the main influences in Eastern thought, assimilating Daoist and Buddhist thought into Confucianism.

[8] CHAN Wing-tsit, ed., *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963), ix.

observes, "The spirit of the Song dynasty Neo-Confucian scholars possesses a high level of traditionality and it also possesses a new creativity. Zhu Xi is its most outstanding representative."[9]

Zhu Xi's first great contribution was to separate the three strands of influence in the thoughts of his Neo-Confucian predecessors.[10] In other words, he identified which aspects of their thought were influenced by Confucianism, which by Buddhism, and which by Daoism. His second great contribution was his magnificent articulation of Neo-Confucian thought, which Qian praises: 此等處皆是極費斟酌而來，亦是極富 創闢精神[11] ("These understandings are all extremely profound and require much thought. They also represent a pioneering spirit"). And again, 此把莊老道家 精一義已盡量接受，而確然轉成其為儒家義。此見朱子思想組織 力之偉大， 消化力之細膩[12] ("This is taking as much of Zhuangzi and Laozi's Daoism emphasis as can be accepted and affirming it as turning into a Confucian emphasis. This is seeing the synthesizing power of Zhu Xi's thought, his smooth assimilating power"). Although Zhu Xi found fault with much Buddhist and Daoist thought, and though he was able to separate these strands of influence in the thoughts of his Neo-Confucian predecessors, his final creation skilfully assimilated much Buddhist and Daoist thought. The mainstream remained Confucian. Thus, it is called 'Neo-Confucianism' rather than 'Neo-Buddhism' or 'Neo-Daoism.'

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[9] QIAN Mu 錢穆, *Zhuzi Xin Xue Wei* 朱子新學案（一） (Zhu Xi's New Leaning Project, Volume One), In *Qian Bin Si Xiansheng Quanji* 錢賓四先生全集 (Complete Works of Mr. Qian), No. 11 (台北 Taipei: 聯經 Lian Ren Publishers, 1998), 56.

[10] Ibid., 128.

[11] Ibid., 43.

In Chinese history, Confucian thought has been challenged, only to re-emerge as the mainstream. A major challenge to Confucian thought occurred during the Qin dynasty (221-206 B.C.). The first Qin emperor was the first emperor of China to call himself 'emperor' (帝).[13] He united the different defensive walls in the North into the Great Wall of China. He also unified measurements and Chinese script. Thus, the first Qin emperor united China and wielded great power. In addition to uniting China, he used his power to kill scholars and burn books.[14] Confucian thought was perceived as a threat since the Qin emperor embraced Legalism. Legalism was a school of thought from the upper Yellow River Valley that believed power, law, force, punishments and rewards were the best ways to govern people.[15] Confucianism teaches that the best way to govern is by moral example. The ruler should cultivate his own morality, be benevolent and lead by example. The Confucian ideal was in great contrast to the Legalist ideal, which brought about the quick demise of the Qin dynasty and Legalism:

> It can be readily seen that Legalism is entirely incompatible with other schools, especially Confucianism, which it bitterly attacked. The Confucianists were dedicated to the cultivation of virtue, the development of individual personality, government for the people, social harmony, and the use of moral principles, moral examples, and moral persuasion. On the contrary, the Legalists were primarily interested in the accumulation of power, the subjugation of the individual to the state, uniformity of thought, and the use of force. It is not surprising that they were instrumental in setting up the dictatorship of Ch'in (221-

[12] Ibid., 48.

[13] See SIMA Qian, *Records of The Grand Historian: Qin Dynasty*, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 33, 43, and 85. In the previous Shang and Zhou dynasties, 帝 referred to God (上帝) or the Heavenly Emperor (天帝). Qin is also romanized 'Ch'in,' which is the source of the word, 'China.'

[14] Ibid., 87.

[15] Francis CHO Min Wei, *The Spirit of Chinese Culture* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947), 40.

> 206 B.C.), in unifying China in 221 B.C., and in instituting the tightest regimentation of life and thought in Chinese history.
>
> The brutality and violence of the Ch'in brought its early downfall in 206 B.C., and the Chinese, fearful of the ruthlessness of the Legalists, have ever since that time rejected them.[16]

After the Qin dynasty fell, the Han dynasty (206 B.C. – 220 A.D.) resurrected Confucianism and strengthened it as the officially sanctioned orthodoxy of China.

Another big challenge to the Confucian mainstream surfaced in the Wei-Jin period (220-420), following the fall of the Han dynasty. During the Wei-Jin period, Neo-Daoism and Buddhist thought arose. Chan observes, "For several hundred years Confucian teachings on ranks, functions, and various social and moral dogmas had been accumulating weight. The minute and endless studies of Confucian Classics had turned the study of Confucian thought into sheer scholasticism."[17] They sought new and fresh ideas.

Nevertheless, "It is to be noticed that the Neo-Taoists, or at least a large part of them, still considered Confucius to be the greatest sage. This was partly because the place of Confucius as the state teacher was by now firmly established, and partly because some of the important Confucian Classics were accepted by the Neo-Taoists, though in the process they were reinterpreted according to the spirit of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu [Laozi and Zhuangzi]."[18] Laozi (6th cent. B.C.?) and Zhuangzi (between 399 and 295

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[16] CHAN, 251.

[17] Ibid., 314.

[18] FUNG Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, edited by Derk Bodde (New York: The Free Press, 1948), 218. See also Ann Paludan, *Chronicle Of The Chinese Emperors; The Reign-by-Reign Record Of The Rulers Of Imperial China* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1998), 75.

B.C.) were the main teachers of Daoism, which "teaches the doctrine of following nature,"[19] in contrast to the Confucian social emphasis.

Buddhism rose out of Hindu roots in India. Its founder, Gautama Siddhartha (563?-483? B.C.), emphasized meditation and overcoming human desires. Buddhism arrived in China when "in 2 B.C. a Chinese official received instructions on a Buddhist scripture from a foreign envoy."[20] Then, "As translation of Buddhist scriptures began in the middle of the second century, Buddhist thought started to develop in China."[21] Buddhist thought began to flourish in China in the Wei-Jin period, and grew during the Tang dynasty (618-907). By the time of the Song dynasty (960-1279), intellectual life in China was infused with Buddhist thought. It was during the Song dynasty that Confucianism was reaffirmed as the mainstream through the rise of Neo-Confucianism, yet not without substantial influence from Daoism and Buddhism.

A major challenge to the Confucian mainstream also occurred in the twentieth century as China responded to the influence of Western Modernity. China's national examinations for civil service had been based on the ancient Confucian books since 135 B.C. In 1905, they were discontinued. The political and scientific developments of Western Modernity were a shocking blow to China in the twentieth century. Confucianism was attacked as being part of the old, oppressive system of China that had hindered China from advancing along with the West. Confucianism was severely

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[19] Ibid., 3.

[20] CHAN, 336 (footnote 1).

[21] Ibid., 336. See also Paludan, 78ff.

attacked in the May 4th Movement of 1919 and the Cultural Revolution of 1966-76.[22] Many Chinese tried to embrace Western Modernity and shake off the perceived negative traditional Chinese influences, centered largely in Confucian ways. However, by the end of the twentieth century a re-appreciation of Confucian thought was evident. Scholars (e.g. Qian Mu and Tu Wei-ming) and prominent leaders (e.g. Chiang Kai-shek and Lee Kuan Yew) have been influential in advocating a new appreciation for Confucian values. As the Republic of China grapples with the tragedy of the Cultural Revolution, Zhou Enlai has been held up as a Confucian example since he saved a number of scholars from death during the bloodshed of the Cultural Revolution.[23]

Although voices periodically rise up to oppose Confucianism or aspects of its application, Confucian thought is reasserted again and again as the heart of Chinese culture. Francis Cho proclaims: "China is thoroughly Confucian because Confucianism is so typically Chinese . . . It is the culture of the Chinese people."[24] Confucian thought has "the power of a deeply-instilled and almost unconscious ethic."[25] Consequently, "No

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[22] For an account of the May 4th Movement, see "May Fourth Movement" in *Encyclopedia of Asian History*, Ainslie T. Embree, ed. in chief, Vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988), 515. For an account of twentieth century critiques of Confucianism, see Julia CHING, *Confucianism and Christianity: A Comparative Study* (New York: Kodansha International, 1977), 40-52. See also Louie KAM, *Critiques of Confucius in Contemporary China* (Hong Kong: Chinese University, 1980).

[23] When I studied at Nankai University in Tianjin (1997) and Peking University in Beijing (1998), Chinese students told me that China was experiencing a crisis of good examples. They said that Zhou Enlai was being held up as a Confucian example since he protected some intellectuals during the Cultural Revolution.

[24] CHO, 94. For similar statements, see also CHANG Chi-yun, *Confucianism: A Modern Interpretation*, trans. Orient LEE (Yangmingshan, Taiwan: The Hwa Kang Press, 1980), 6; The Council of Chinese Cultural Renaissance, *English Translation of the Four Books* (Taipei: The Council of Chinese Cultural Renaissance, 1979), I; *Companion Encyclopedia of Asian Philosophy*, edited by Brian Carr and Indira Mahalingam (New York: Routledge, 1977), 491; JI Won Yong, "Challenge of Eastern Spiritualities to the West," *Concordia Journal* 17:2 (April 1991), 135.

[25] E. W. F. Tomlin, *The Eastern Philosophers: An Introduction* (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1952), 268.

one can understand East Asia without understanding its Confucian past and its Confucian future."[26] Chang Chi-yun summarizes the powerful influence of Confucius:

> He absorbed China's cultural traditions accumulated during the 25 centuries before his time. They were rich, but somewhat schematic. He co-ordinated them, re-organized them, evaluated them, and developed them into a profound new system of ethics and political philosophy for the benefit of posterity, thus providing a solid foundation for national existence during the 25 centuries after him. . . . He has actually personified the cultural characteristics, the aspirations, and the ideals of the average Chinese, so much so that to understand him is to understand China, Chinese, and Chinese history.[27]

Thus, Chinese thought is predominantly Confucian. But it was not until the sixteenth century that the Western world began to discover and pursue the study of Confucian thought.

The History of Confucian and Christian Comparative Studies

Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) was the first known Western person to appreciate the central importance of Confucian thought in China. Ricci was the Italian Jesuit missionary to China who initiated the comparison between Christian and Confucian thought. He arrived in Macao in 1582 and in 1601 moved to Beijing, capital of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). Since Ricci discovered that the Confucian scholars were the most influential in Chinese society, he directed his missionary efforts toward them. He wrote a number of works, "His most influential work, however, was the *T'ien-chu shih-i* (The True Doctrine of the Master-of-T'ien), which was a comprehensive explanation of

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[26] John H. Berthrong, *All Under Heaven: Transforming Paradigms in Confucian-Christian Dialogue* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994), 2.

[27] CHANG, 1. See also WU Ching-hsiung, *Chinese Humanism and Christian Spirituality* (New York: St John's University Press, 1975), 11.

Christian principles based on what Ricci termed 'Original Confucianism.'"[28] Young claims that "Ricci became the first missionary in China to believe (or discover) that the idea of God was evident in the Confucian classics."[29] Through his study of the Confucian classics, Ricci also "ascribed ethical ideas compatible with Christianity."[30]

Most of the Jesuit missionaries who went to China followed Matteo Ricci's lead in both recognizing the centrality of Confucianism in Chinese thought and continuing the comparative study of Christianity and Confucianism. Adam Schall (1591-1666) and Ferdinand Verbiest (1623-1688) were some of the most influential. Besides continuing the comparative study in China, the Jesuit missionaries also brought Confucian thought to Europe.

As Europeans studied the Confucian classics that the Jesuits brought to Europe, "China was in various ways idealized by Europeans in their own quest for the good, the true, and the beautiful."[31] In Europe, "Sinophilism, the fascination with and idealization of China, characterized the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries."[32] Leibniz (1646-1716), C. Wolff (1679-1754) and Voltaire (1694-1778) led the way in promoting an appreciation for Confucian thought. Leibniz agreed "with the Jesuits in considering the Chinese to be

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[28] John D. Young, *Confucianism and Christianity; The First Encounter* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1983), 28. See also, Matteo Ricci, *The True Meaning of The Lord of Heaven (T'ien-chu Shih-I)* trans. with introduction and notes by Douglas Lancashire and Peter HU Kuo-chen, a Chinese-English edition, edited by Edward J. Malatesta (St. Louis, Missouri: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985).

[29] Young, *Confucianism*, 29.

[30] Ibid., 35.

[31] Julia CHING and Willard Oxtoby, eds., *Discovering China: European Interpretations in The Enlightenment* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1992), xiii.

[32] Ibid., xiv.

mainly theist, as did Voltaire after him."[33] They admired the understanding of morality in Confucian thought. An important effect of the seventeenth and eighteenth century comparison between Confucianism and Christianity in Europe was that of idealizing Chinese thought and minimizing Christian claims: "Christianity, with its exclusive claims of revelation and its dogmatic system, appeared unnecessary, while a universal, natural religion seemed more attractive and desirable."[34] Such comparative study contributed to Enlightenment thought, including the idea that "human reason alone suffices for the grounding of both morality and happiness."[35] The Enlightenment thought that minimized Christian revelation differed from the thought of the Protestant missionaries in China. They represent the next major wave of Christian and Confucian comparative studies.

In contrast to European Enlightenment thought, "The heart of the Protestant gospel in Chinese is derived from the Bible. The principle of *sola scriptura* of the Protestant reformation nearly three hundred years earlier was evident in the work of the first Protestant missionary, Robert Morrison, who reached Canton in 1807."[36] Among the Protestant missionaries, W. A. P. Martin (1827-1916) and James Legge (1815-1897) emerge as the major representatives in the Christian and Confucian comparison. Martin believed "the Christian church must relate its theology to the central aspects of Chinese

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[33] Ibid., xix.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid., xxv.

[36] Covell, *Confucius*, 85.

culture."[37] He read Ricci's *T'ien-chu shih-i* and wrote a similar comparison between Christianity and Confucianism in 1854 entitled, *Tiandao Suyuan* (Evidences of Christianity). Covell observes: "Fan Yungtai, a friend of Martin's who wrote the preface for the first edition in 1854, observed that the Doctrine of the Mean [*Zhongyong*] and the Christian faith did not conflict; they were in perfect harmony."[38] Quoting Martin, Covell notes: "Martin's basic principle was that 'Confucianism and Christianity may be distinguished in terms of breath and narrowness but not in terms of truth and error.'"[39]

James Legge's evaluation was similar: "Confucianism is not antagonistic to Christianity . . . ."[40] He says, "Let no one think any labour too great to make himself familiar with the Confucian books."[41] Legge admired the power of Confucian thought:

> When we bear in mind that for four thousand years the people have been living and flourishing there [in China], growing and increasing, that nations with some attributes perhaps of higher character—the Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian, the Roman, and more modern empires, have all risen and culminated and decayed, and yet that the Chinese empire is still there with its four hundred millions of inhabitants, why, it is clear that there must be among the people certain moral and social principles of the greatest virtue and power.[42]

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[37] Ralph R. Covell, *W. A. P. Martin: Pioneer of Progress in China* (Washington D.C.: Christian University Press, 1978), 255.

[38] Covell, *Confucius*, 99.

[39] Ibid., 106 quoting W. A. P. Martin, *Tiandao Suyuan* (Evidences of Christianity) (1854).

[40] James Legge as quoted in Helen Edith Legge, *James Legge: Missionary and Scholar* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1905), 37.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid., 28.

Although he praised Confucian thought and noted many similarities, one of the biggest differences Legge discovered between Christianity and Confucianism was "the want of any deep sense of sin"[43] in Confucian thought.

The outstanding work of scholars like Ricci and Legge prepared the way for twentieth century comparative studies. Non-Chinese Catholic and Protestant scholars continued the research, including many listed in the bibliography of this dissertation: Berthrong, Bloom, Covell, de Bary, Küng, Neville, Sanders, Schwartz, Smith, Weber, and Young. However, a prominent feature of twentieth century comparisons between Christianity and Confucianism is the entry of many Chinese, Korean and other Asian Catholic and Protestant Christians, including many listed in the bibliography of this dissertation: Ching, Cho, Choong, Ji, Kim, A. Lee, P. Lee, Lin, Luo, Oh, Sih, Wu, Yao, and Yeo. Many of these studies are very broad comparisons, like those of the previous centuries. Generally, Confucianism is evaluated in positive ways by East Asian Christians. Peter K. H. Lee writes: "Characteristically, most of the Chinese Christian thinkers and writers have identified Confucianism as the mainstream of Chinese thought. Indeed most scholarly-minded Chinese Christians acknowledge their indebtedness to Confucianism. Seldom do you find a Chinese Christian who repudiates Confucianism wholesale. Not to speak of repudiation, criticism of Confucianism is uncommon among Chinese Christians. This may be symptomatic of superficial understanding of Confucianism, however."[44]

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[43] Ibid., 37.

[44] Peter K. H. LEE, ed., *Confucianism-Christian Encounters in Historical and Contemporary Perspective* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), 16.

The end of the twentieth century witnessed a trend toward scholars of all types (Catholic and Protestant, Non-Christian and Christian, East Asian and Western) participating to narrow the scope of comparison into particular studies of various types. As he began to speak at the 1999 international Ricci conference, Paul Rule said, "My only misgivings about being invited to speak on Confucianism and Christianity were whether the topic might be regarded as exhausted. . . . Is there anything more to say?"[45] Yet he answered his own question in finding and recommending topics of narrowed scope. The closing words at this conference were given by Philip Wickeri. He called for more particular studies that compare individual Christian texts with Confucian texts.[46] This dissertation is a response to that call.

Moral Vision: Point of Comparison

The purpose of this study is to compare a Confucian text with a Christian text. Confucianism can be studied according to its many dimensions: political theory, family life, religion, philosophy, ethics, economics, sociology, psychology, history, influence and application in various locations (China, Japan, Korea, Viet Nam, and other places), missionary interaction, education theory, interaction with other philosophies, etc. This study will focus upon the moral dimension, specifically the moral vision of *Zhongyong*. The moral focus makes sense in this context for two reasons: morality is often asserted

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[45] Paul Rule, *Does Heaven Speak? Revelation In The Confucian And Christian Traditions*, paper presented as part of the international Ricci conference, "China And Christianity: Burdened Past, Hopeful Future," The Ricci Institute for Chinese-Western Cultural History and The Center for the Pacific Rim, University of San Francisco, 14-16 October 1999, 2.

as the major emphasis of Confucian thought,[47] and morality is probably the best and broadest basis for cross-textual communication between Confucian thought and Christian thought.[48] The goal is to compare the similarities and differences in the moral visions of the two texts. Thus the title of this dissertation: *The Moral Visions of The Epistle of James and Zhongyong*.

Moral vision here refers to ethical systems that have positive and social characteristics. This description will be clarified by means of contrast with various moral schemes that have been rivals to the Christian and Confucian moral visions, including Emotivism, Stoicism, Epicureanism, Daoism and Buddhism.

Moral vision in this study is akin to Richard Hays' understanding. He hopes *The Moral Vision of the New Testament* "will facilitate a clearer discussion about how to read

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[46] Philip Wickeri, closing comments for the international Ricci conference, "China And Christianity: Burdened Past, Hopeful Future," The Ricci Institute for Chinese-Western Cultural History and The Center for the Pacific Rim, University of San Francisco, 16 October 1999.

[47] Julia Ching writes, "Confucius and the school named after him offered a moral or ethical answer to the question regarding life's meaning and order in society, an answer that would dominate Chinese philosophical thinking for about two millennia." Hans Küng and Julia CHING, *Christianity and Chinese Religions* (New York: Doubleday and Collins Publishers, 1989), 65-66 (see also page 68). Louie Kam writes, "Confucius' ethical concepts have long been recognized as the core of his thinking." KAM, 149. For similar statements, see Judith A. Berling, *A Pilgrim in Chinese Culture; Negotiating Religious Diversity* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1997), 43-44; Berthrong, 74; CHING, *Confucianism*, xxii; John E. HO, *East Asian Philosophy With Historical Background and Present Influence* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 1992), 16; Paul Kwang Tsien SIH, *From Confucius to Christ*, with a preface by Bishop Fulton J. Sheen (New York: St John's University Press, 1975), 37; Frank K. Sanders and committee, *The Presentation of Christianity in Confucian Lands* (New York: Board of Missionary Preparation, 1917), 69 and 76;TU Wei-Ming, *Centrality and Commonality: An Essay on Confucian Religiousness* (a revised and enlarged edition of *Centrality and Commonality: An Essay on Chung-yung*) (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989), 68; Max Weber, *The Religion of China* trans. and ed. Hans H. Gerth, with an introduction by C. K. YANG (New York: The Free Press, 1951), 152; WU Ching-hsiung, 33.

[48] See CHING, *Confucianism*, xxiii, 53, and 177; KIM Heup Young, *Wang Yang-Ming and Karl Barth: A Confucian-Christian Dialogue* (New York: University Press of America, Inc., 1996), 178-180; Gerald R. McDermott, *Can Evangelicals Learn From World Religions?: Jesus, Revelation & Religious Traditions* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 173; John D. Young, *East-West Synthesis: Matteo Ricci and Confucianism* (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong, 1980), 42-44, and 49.

the New Testament and how to live in imaginative obedience to its moral vision."[49] He writes, "The ethic envisioned by the New Testament writers is not an impossible ideal. If we fail to live in obedient responsiveness to their moral vision, that is because of a failure of the imagination—or perhaps a lack of courage—on our part."[50] Similarly, in this dissertation, moral vision refers not only to moral viewpoint. More importantly, 'vision' carries the connotation of a moral view that looks forward to fulfillment of positive exhortations.[51] The title of this dissertation implies that the Christian Epistle of James and the Confucian *Zhongyong* both express this positive type of morality. In addition, a strong social dynamic is an integral part of each.

Historically and presently, the Christian and Confucian views of morality have been surrounded by rival views, including Emotivism, Stoicism, Epicureanism, Daoism and Buddhism. These rivals are characterized by a tendency to emphasize restraining exhortations and/or a tendency toward individualism. The Christian and Confucian moral schemes include prohibitions, yet they are replete with positive exhortations. The goal of the positive exhortations is to build outgoing moral behavior. Some of their rivals emphasize prohibitions or restraining exhortations to the neglect of building positive moral behavior.

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[49] Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: Community, Cross, New Creation; A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1996), xi.

[50] Ibid., 469. See also, Paul R. Raabe, "The Law and Christian Sanctification: A Look at Romans," *Concordia Journal* 22:2 (April 1996): 178-185 (especially page 179, where the author writes: "The Gospel helps Christians keep the Ten Commandments. . . . by the Holy Spirit working through the Gospel Christians begin to lead a life of new obedience, a life characterized as keeping the Decalog.").

[51] See Paul R. Raabe and James W. Voelz, "Why Exhort a Good Tree?: Anthropology and Paraenesis in Romans," *Concordia Journal* 22:2 (April 1996): 154-185 (especially page 159, where the authors note that "Pauline paraenesis exhibits a twofold character of negative warning and positive encouraging. . . . Paul gives more specific and concrete guidance in both negative and positive form.").

Another way in which the rivals of Confucian and Christian morality differ is a tendency toward individualism. Christianity and Confucianism are similar in their goal of positively fulfilling the common desires of humanity. They have a corporate human element, an integral social dynamic. An important moral exhortation in both Christianity and Confucianism is to treat others as one would want to be treated.[52] This implies a commonality among humanity. In other words, the way an individual wants to be treated is a good guide for behavior toward others. This common human social dynamic with vision for fulfilment of positive exhortations is what distinguishes the Christian and Confucian moral systems from their rivals. The following are some prominent examples.

Emotivism tends toward individualism. Western Enlightenment-born Emotivism holds that morality is merely individual preference. The word, 'merely', is what distinguishes this theory from those which emphasize universal positive moral imperatives based upon commonality among humanity. "Treat others as self" as a moral exhortation (connected to a common humanity) differs vastly from the emotivist individualistic imperative to do as you please (regardless of what pleases others). Alasdair MacIntyre writes: "We live in a specifically emotivist culture," and, "It is indeed in terms of a confrontation with emotivism that my own thesis must be defined."[53]

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[52] Matthew 7:12 and *Zhongyong* XIII.4.

[53] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981, 1984), 22. On this same page, MacIntyre connects both Nietzsche and Sartre to emotivist morality: "Nonetheless when Nietzsche sought to indict the making of would-be objective moral judgments as the mask worn by the will-to-power of those too weak and slavish to assert themselves with archaic and aristocratic grandeur, and when Sartre tried to exhibit the bourgeois rationalist morality of the Third Republic as an exercise in bad faith by those who cannot tolerate the recognition of their own choices as the sole source of moral judgment, both conceded the substance of that for which emotivism contended."

[54] Ibid., 170.

Stoicism and Epicureanism are two more rival moralities of the Western world. Though articulated more than 2000 years before the rise of modern emotivism, Stoicism "strikingly anticipates some aspects of modernity."[54] Regarding their retreat from social ties, MacIntyre comments: "The individual who asks, What do I desire, as a man, apart from all social ties, in the frame of the universe? is necessarily working with a meager stock of description, with an impoverished view of his own nature, for he has had to strip away from himself all the attributes that belong to his social existence. Consider in this light the doctrines of Stoicism and Epicureanism."[55] The proponents of these two philosophies were some of the disciples of Socrates, those who emphasized independence: "Independence and self-sufficiency become for them the supreme values; the only way to avoid injury from changing circumstance is to make oneself radically independent of circumstances."[56] They place "a large stress upon self-sufficiency, upon avoiding disappointment rather than seeking for positive goods . . ."[57] Epicurus' "detachment of the individual from the Platonic-Aristotelian morality of social life is as complete as it is in the Stoics."[58] Similar in some ways are the Eastern viewpoints of Daoism and Buddhism.

Daoism and Buddhism also tend to retreat from positive social moral exhortation. Daoism retreats into nature and Buddhism into meditation. Zhu Xi says: 釋氏之學，只

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[55] Alasdair MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics: A History of Moral Philosophy from the Homeric Age to the Twentieth Century*, 2d ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), 100.

[56] Ibid., 101.

[57] Ibid., 102.

[58] Ibid., 107.

是克己，更無復禮工夫。世間有能克己而不能復禮者，佛老是也。佛老不可謂之有私欲；克己私了，卻空蕩蕩地。[59] ("Buddhists only learn to subdue themselves, certainly not to exercise bringing forth good moral social practice. In society, having someone who can subdue oneself but can't bring forth good moral social practice, Buddhism and Daoism are this way. We cannot say Buddhism and Daoism have selfish desire; they restrain their selfishness, but then they are just empty without anything.") In similar thought, a contemporary *Zhongyong* scholar from Taiwan began by studying Daoism and Buddhism, but finally settled upon *Zhongyong* as a guide for practical morality (especially in helping him raise his children). Wu Yi explains this in his introduction to 《中庸誠的哲學》 (*The Cheng Philosophy of Zhongyong*). He writes, 禪和老莊的中心旨趣，在於為人類消除由欲望而產生的煩惱，可是 人生的意義不只是為了解脫許多積極的目標，有待完成。[60] ("Buddhism and Daoism's central aim is to reduce human desires and worries, but the meaning of human life is not only that of extricating oneself from the many positive goals there are to complete.")

The experience and awareness of moral failure may contribute to the retreat from a positive social emphasis. Yet it need not lead to minimizing positive social moral exhortations.[61] Indeed, such exhortations are an important part of fulfilling the best

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[59] QIAN, *Zhuzi*, 137.

[60] WU Yi 吳怡, *Zhongyong Cheng de Zhexue* 中庸誠的哲學 (The Cheng Philosophy of *Zhongyong*), 五版 5th ed. (台北 Taipei: 東大圖書公司 Dong Da Tushu Co., 1993), 2.

[61] Hays writes (page 469): "The difficulty of living in conformity with the New Testament vision does not, however, let us off the hook: my experience of struggle and failure to respond to the New Testament's challenge concerning possessions does not authorize me to disregard the New Testament's summons, or to pretend that the new Testament does not mean what it says, or to devise less costly standards for myself and for the church."

desires of humanity. They even play an important role in the fight against evil and selfishness within oneself. For example, Jesus said an unclean spirit can leave a man, but then return with seven worse spirits to inhabit the empty man (Luke 11:24-26 and Matthew 12:43-44). Similarly, Zhu Xi said: 若專務克治私欲，而不能充長善端，則吾心所謂私欲者，日相鬥敵，縱一時按伏得下，又當復作。[62] ("If we concentrate on overcoming and controlling selfish desire, but cannot fill ourselves with growth toward morally good ends, the result is that our heart will be called one of selfish desire. We can struggle together with this enemy every day, but though we restrain it for a short time so that it subsides, it will nevertheless revive again and act.")

Moral vision refers here to social and positive moral schemes like those of Christianity and Confucianism. These moral viewpoints do not merely include restraining exhortations but also envision the practice of positive exhortations with a social dynamic. These positive and social features are the way in which the moral systems of Christianity and Confucianism resemble each other. Their moral visions provide a point of contact and communication, a basis for cross-textual study.

Cross-textual Study

Archie Lee writes, "Cross-textual hermeneutics gives due attention to the two texts at our disposal for doing theology. It is imperative that the Biblical text (text A) has to be interpreted . . . in constant interpenetration and interaction with our cultural-

[62] QIAN, *Zhuzi*, 102.

[63] Archie C. C. LEE, "Biblical Interpretation," 38.

religious texts (text B)."[63] He urges engagement "in a cross-textual hermeneutical effort of bringing the Asian texts . . . into direct interaction or confrontation with the biblical text."[64]

Such cross-textual study has special value for an investigation comparing the Confucian and Christian moral visions since the texts have been chosen from the classics or scriptures of Confucianism and Christianity. As such, the value of each text is greater in each tradition than the various historical interpretations and applications of the texts. The classics or scriptures represent the core body of texts that contain the basic teachings of each tradition. A cross-textual study is the best way to compare the two moral visions because it focuses upon the most valued texts from each. Such texts have been the source of moral teachings, interpretation and application in Confucian and Christian thought. Thus, cross-textual research brings the core teachings of each vision into direct contact and interaction with each other.

In a cross-textual study comparing broad visions of traditions, it is important to choose the texts well. The next two sections explain why *Zhongyong* and the Epistle of James were chosen for this inquiry.

The Choice of *Zhongyong*

Zhongyong has been chosen from the classics as a representative of Confucian thought for this cross-textual study because of its comprehensive presentation of the Confucian moral vision. This characteristic makes it an epitome of the Confucian

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[64] Ibid.

classics. Li Liwu (黎立武) of the Song dynasty said: 經之作，至《中庸》止矣！ 故《中庸》者， 群經之統會樞要也。[65] ("The ancient Chinese classical works go up to *Zhongyong* and then stop! Therefore, *Zhongyong* students have the key to a unified understanding of the group of ancient Chinese classics.") Huang Qiuyun writes, 《中庸》一書，可說是 先秦道德形上學的充極發展。[66] ("The book, Zhong Yong, can be said to be pre-Qin dynasty moral metaphysic's fullest development.") Regarding *Zhongyong*, Lin Yutang observes: "In this book, we see the philosophic basis for Confucianism. . . . In this short book, I find the most complete statement of Confucian philosophy."[67] Because of its comprehensive vision, *Zhongyong* is characterized as the "key" to understanding the classics, Confucianism's "philosophic basis" and the "fullest development" of its moral vision. Thus, *Zhongyong* gives us an important view of the Confucian metanarrative.

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[65] WANG Congming 王聰明, *Zhongyong Xingshang Sixiang Yanjiu* 中庸形上思想研究 Research on Zhongyong's Metaphysical Thought (Guoli Taiwan Shifan Daxue Guowen Yanjiu Suo Boshi Lunwen 國立臺灣師範大學國文研究所博士論文 Taiwan National Normal University National Literature Graduate School Doctoral Dissertation, 台灣 Taiwan, 1998), 100, quoting Li Liwu 黎立武, *Zhongyong Zhigui* 中庸指歸 Zhongyong: Pointing to A Correct Conclusion (Siku Quanshu 《四庫全書》 Four Store-rooms of Complete Books, Jing Bu 〈經部〉 Classical Section, 194, Sishu Lei 〈四書類〉 Four Books Type, 臺北 Taipei： 商務印書館 Shangwu Publishing House), 718.

[66] HUANG Qiuyun 黃秋韻, *Zhongyongde Daode Xingshangxue* 中庸的道德形上學 The Moral Metaphysics of Zhongyong (Furen Daxue Zhexue Yanjiusuo Shuoshi Lunwen 輔仁大學哲學研究所碩士論文 Furen University Philosophy Graduate School Master's Thesis, 台灣 Taiwan, 1994), 57.

[67] LIN Yutang, *From Pagan to Christian* (Cleveland, Ohio: The World Publishing Company, 1959), 81. Lin Yutang gave precedence to *Zhongyong* in his English translation of the Four Books, explaining, "I have put it here at the beginning of the Confucian texts because it gives the best approach to Confucian philosophy. In itself it forms a fairly adequate and complete basis for the philosophy of Confucianism." LIN Yutang, *The Wisdom of Confucius* (New York: Random House, 1938), 101. See also, Roger T. Ames and David L. Hall, *Focusing the Familiar: A Translation and Philosophical Interpretation of the Zhongyong* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), XII; Archie J. Bahm, *The Heart of Confucius; Interpretations of Genuine Living and Great Wisdom*, with a foreword by Thome H. FANG (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1977), 159; CHAN, 96; FUNG, 166.

For similar reasons, Zhu Xi lifted *Zhongyong* into prominence. After reproducing Zhu Xi's preface to his *Zhongyong* commentary《中庸章句序》, Wang Congming explains:

> 由這段文字的敘述，可了解，朱子之所以表彰《中庸》，原因有二，一是他認為《中庸》乃儒家道流之所傳，一是《中庸》乃對抗老佛、復興儒學的重要根據。依朱子對道流的看法，堯舜禹湯文武周公之道，為孔子所繼承，並有所創新，孔子又傳於曾子，子思以及孟子，孟子死後遂不得其傳。[68]
> ("From this recounted wording, it is possible to understand why Zhu Xi commended *Zhongyong*. There are two reasons: one is that he thought *Zhongyong* is what was passed down as the mainstream of Confucianism; the second is that *Zhongyong* opposses Daoism and Buddhism and revives the major foundation of Confucianism. According to Zhu Xi's viewpoint regarding the mainstream, the Way of Yao, Shun, Yu, Tang, Wen, Wu, and Prince Zhou was inherited by Confucius, to which he certainly contributed a new creativity. Confucius then passed it down to Zengzi, Zisi and Mencius. After Mencius died, [the direct line of] its transmission was finally no longer inherited.")

In the intellectual atmosphere of the Song dynasty, rival viewpoints competed for hegemony. Zhu Xi felt that *Zhongyong* could re-establish Confucianism as the mainstream. *Zhongyong* gives a clear and comprehensive picture of Confucian thought.[69]

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[68] WANG, 102. The six ancient kings and Prince Zhou are pillars in the Confucian moral vision. In the Four Books, "Seven names, Yao, Shun, Yu, Tang, Wen, Wu and Duke Chou, are repeated again and again as paragons, whose deeds are models of virtuous conduct." Frederick Starr, *Confucianism* (New York: Covici Friede Publishers, 1930), 108-109. They lived in China ca. 2400-1100.

[69] In addition to references in the preceding footnotes, "Mou [牟宗三] . . . call[ed *Zhongyong*] the cosmological heart of the Confucian tradition . . ." Berthrong, 45; James Legge said, "It gives the best account we have of the Confucian philosophy and morals . . ." and Alexander Wylie said that it is the "most philosophical" of the Four Books. Sanders, 62; WU Ching-hsiung, 17, says that all of Mencius and Confucius are based on Heaven's mandate (天命) (the first two characters in *Zhongyong*); Chang Chi-yun proclaims: "Among the *Four Books*, this one is the most profound." CHANG, 462; Yeo Khiok-Knng writes, "In studying the *Four Books* of Confucius, one can also see that Confucius's line of thought moves from the Doctrine of the Mean (*Chung-yung*), to the Great Learning, to the *Analects*, and then to other writings, for what is said in the later works presupposes ideas found in the Doctrine of the Mean. That suggests that Confucius's chief concern regarding human relationships builds on his understanding of what it means to know and to actualize mandates of Heaven. What Confucius teaches about interpersonal relationships is implied by his understanding of actualizing the decree of heaven in human nature and personhood." YEO Khiok-Knng, *What Has Jerusalem to Do With Beijing: A Biblical Interpretation From a Chinese Perspective* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998), 122; In *From Pagan to Christian*,

In accord with Confucian thought as a whole, morality is the predominant emphasis of *Zhongyong*.[70] This moral dynamic provides the basis for comparison in the present cross-textual study with the Epistle of James.

The Choice of The Epistle of James

The Epistle of James was chosen as the Christian counterpart in this cross-textual study because of its strong moral emphasis. In order for cross-textual interaction to occur, a common point of communication is necessary. The Epistle of James was chosen as the Christian counterpart for this study because of its potential for interacting with *Zhongyong* in regard to morality.

Confucian and Christian moral vision include "thickly resemblant views of a common issue,"[71] and are "rooted in the unity of . . . ethical practice."[72] The Epistle of James is considered by many to be strongly focussed upon practical ethics.

Dibelius makes the classical and most influential statement about its ethical content: "*We may designate the "Letter" of James as paraenesis*. By paraenesis we mean a text which strings together admonitions of general ethical content."[73] According

86, Lin Yutang suggests that *Zhongyong* enables us to see that Confucian teaching is not simply a lot of "moral maxims without a central moral philosophy behind it."

[70] Tu Wei-Ming observes, "*Chung-yung* can be characterized as approaching man and politics from a moral point of view." TU, *Centrality and Commonality*, 67; Ames and Hall state, "The central message of the *Zhongyong*, then, is to encourage the ongoing productive confluence of 'the way of *tian*' and 'the way of human beings' through human vituosity." Ames, 27. See also LIN, *Pagan*, 81-86, and KU Hung-ming's (辜鴻銘) English translation of *Zhongyong*, in which he translates *Zhongyong* (中庸) as "universal moral order" and *Zhongyong*'s "Way" (道) as "moral law." LIN, *Wisdom*, 102ff.

[71] KIM, *Wang*, 178.

[72] Ibid., 180.

to Ropes, it is a "simple expression of sincere moral earnestness."[74] Others observe, "The epistle of James is the most consistently ethical document in the New Testament,"[75] "it is a series of loosely connected moral and ethical admonitions and instructions,"[76] "James is known for being eminently practical,"[77] is a "general call to a life of virtue,"[78] and "it is thoroughly ethical in its outlook."[79] Luke Timothy Johnson, once a Benedictine monk himself, writes: "Monks are always moralists, and for obvious reasons, monks in every region made enthusiastic use of James."[80] He states, "James stands within a great stream of exhortatory literature, both Greco-Roman and Jewish, from the ancient Mediterranean

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[73] Martin Dibelius and Heinrich Greeven, *James: A Commentary on the Epistle of James*, trans. Michael A. Williams (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 3.

[74] James Hardy Ropes, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of St. James* (ICC; Edinburgh: Clark, 1916), 38.

[75] Sophie S. Laws, *A Commentary on The Epistle of James* (BNTC; London: Adam & Charles Black, 1980), 27.

[76] R. A. Martin and John H. Elliott, *Augsburg Commentary on The New Testament: James; I-II Peter/Jude* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing House, 1982), 10.

[77] Kurt A Richardson, *The New American Commentary: James* (USA: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997), 22.

[78] C. Freeman Sleeper, *James* (ANTC; Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1998), 18.

[79] Wesley Hiram Wachob, *The Voice of Jesus in the Social Rhetoric of James* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 22. See also J. B. Adamson, *The Epistle of James* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 20; Richard Bauckham, *James* (NTR; New York: Routledge, 1999), 3 and 7; Paul A.Cedar, *Mastering the New Testament: James; 1,2 Peter; Jude* (Word, Inc., 1984), 11-12; R. Kent Hughes, *James: Faith That Works* (PTW; Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1991), 15; Guy H. King, *A Belief That Behaves: An Expositional Study of the Epistle of JAMES* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, Ltd., 1941), vii; Richard Kugelman, C.P., *James & Jude* (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1980), 7-8; James Moffatt, *The General Epistles: James, Peter, and Judas* (MNTC; London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1928), 3-4; David P. Nystrom, *James; The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997), 11, 16, and 28; E. M. Sidebottom, *James, Jude and 2 Peter* (NCB; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1982), 3 and 14; Robert W. Wall, *Community of the Wise: The Letter of James*, (TNTIC; Valley Forge, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1997), 2-4.

[80] Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Letter of James: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1995), 132.

world, a literature that, in one way or another, has to do with the right ordering of practical life."[81]

In light of its strong emphasis on practical morality, some have taken the position that the Epistle of James is merely isolated moral maxims: "Dibelius' argument that James lacked theology could be taken to the absurd reduction found in J. T. Sanders, who argues not only that there is 'no consistent principle or set of principles upon which James relies for his paraenesis,' but that the closest he comes to such a sustaining principle is a sort of vague humanism!"[82] In response, Johnson notes:

> In contrast to such a simplistic view are studies that argue that James does have a consistent set of ethical principles, but that they tend to have a communitarian, rather than an individualistic focus, which is expressed, above all, in its concern for the plight of the poor.
>
> James' ethical teaching, in fact, is closely connected to his theology and finds its basis in his theological perceptions. Among the attempts to characterize the theological framework more completely are those that focus on its grounding in the cult, in the word of God, in wisdom, or even in Christology. All of these investigations agree that James' moral discourse is deeply embedded in the theological convictions of Judaism and the nascent Christian community.[83]

The accusation that the Epistle of James is just practical moral exhortation works together with the studies (noted by Johnson) meant to counter this charge. Together they build the case for making James a good candidate for cross-textual interaction with the moral vision of *Zhongyong*.

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[81] Ibid., 26.

[82] Ibid., 159.

[83] Ibid., 159-160. For a list of the studies referred to in this quote, see Johnson's footnotes on these pages.

From Exhortations to Metanarrative

It is simplistic to suggest that either James or Confucian morality is merely humanistic practical moral exhortations without deep grounding in a profound metanarrative. Such a view disrespects the profundity of the Epistle of James and *Zhongyong*. It makes them superfluous and destroys their integrity. Without knowledge of their respective metanarratives, they appear simplistically similar. Their practical moral exhortations are very similar. Without reference to their metanarratives, cross-textual interaction would amount to mutual agreement, a mutual pat on the back. The profound nature of their moral vision would be lost. Recognition and exploration of their metanarratives opens up a world of meaningful cross-textual interaction.

A major theme that is similar in both *Zhongyong* and James is that of encouraging "integrity" (誠) (μηδὲν διακρινόμενος...ἀνὴρ δίψυχος). In an effort to honor their call to integrity, their respective metanarratives will be cross-textually invoked into interaction.

'Metanarrative' refers to largest story in which the individual moral exhortations are framed or grounded. The respective world-views are at work in the metanarratives. These world-views are what the author and reader take for granted. Metanarrative includes the theory in which a practice is rooted. It is the larger picture within which individual maxims make sense, and without which they are isolated and void of wholesome meaning. The largest story conceived in the minds of writer and reader, metanarrative includes cosmology and ultimate goals. It is the unchallenged thoughts and beliefs that are running the show in the background of the particular texts.[84]

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[84] Gernet writes of these unchallenged thoughts and beliefs in his discussion of the Christian missionary encounter with Chinese society: "It is a property of any society, not solely of so-called 'traditional' ones,

The metanarratives of the Epistle of James and *Zhongyong* can be identified within each text. As noted previously, an important reason for choosing *Zhongyong* for this cross-textual study is that within the book itself the Confucian metanarrative is more clearly and comprehensively expressed than any other ancient Confucian classic.

In regard to James, the metanarrative is quite evident in the epistle. James' metanarrative is referenced and alluded to in the text of the Epistle of James, and the moral vision of James makes no more sense than "vague humanism" without an understanding of it. Todd Penner writes: "Taken as a whole, the eschatological, prophetic, and even apocalyptic elements in James push the ethical content beyond being mere practical and conventional wisdom advice towards the urgency and demands which stem from the expectation of the imminent return of the Lord."[85] Similarly, "There are two features of the Epistle of James which are distinctly Christian: 1) the eschatological motivation which undergirds its moral exhortation, and 2) the author's designation of the gospel as the 'law of liberty.'"[86]

The moral vision of James and *Zhongyong* are similar in practical moral exhortations, but quite different in metanarrative. This is the guiding thesis of this study.

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to be founded upon a body of traditions accepted by all its members, who are, indeed, so little aware of the particular nature of these traditions that they consider them to be quite natural." Further, "The reason why they [the missionaries] so often came up against difficulties of translation is that different languages express, through different logics, different visions of the world and man." Gernet, 2.

[85] Todd C. Penner, *The Epistle of James and Eschatology: Re-reading an Ancient Christian Letter* (JSNTS; Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 258-259.

[86] Kugelman, 9. See also Martin, 10: "He reflects a deep concern for the moral quality of life of those who, in Christ, share in the new age and its culmination at his return."

Procedure of This Dissertation

In order to bring the moral visions of James and *Zhongyong* into cross-textual interaction, three chapters follow this introduction: THE EPISTLE OF JAMES, *ZHONGYONG*, and COMPARISON. Each of the works is presented in a similar manner, by means of an introduction, an exposition of its moral exhortations (the core virtue and arenas of exhortation), and an explanation of its metanarrative. Finally, the concluding chapter will draw together and summarize the key results of the study and suggest further related areas of study. Appendix I is a chronology of Chinese dynasties and significant Confucian scholars. Appendix II is a list of Chinese characters with various romanizations.

Linguistic Matters

A few details should be noted regarding translations, James Legge's edition of *Zhongyong*, Chinese romanization, capitalization of important terms and Chinese surnames. The translations from Chinese, Greek[87] and other languages are often mine. When standard English versions of the Bible are used, the version is noted in parentheses after the quotation. Translations of Chinese into English are often mine. When the Chinese appears to be significant, it is included in the text (followed by the English translation in parentheses). At other times, the Chinese may appear in the footnotes for the convenience of the reader. If the bibliography entry has Chinese characters for author

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[87] New Testament Greek quotes are from the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 27th ed., ed. Eberhard and Erwin Nestle, Barbara and Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, and Bruce M. Metzger (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1898, 1993).

and title, the work is Chinese and the English quotes in the text of the dissertation are mine unless specially noted.

Most of the books in the bibliography are written completely in English or completely in Chinese. A notable exception is James Legge's version of *Zhongyong* (which he calls, "The Doctrine of the Mean").[88] Legge's version has been the most widely used because of its long-standing position in the field, and also because of its special characteristics. Those characteristics include the following. Legge includes English prolegomena at the beginning of the book, with some of his own commentary about *Zhongyong*. In the text proper, Legge has three levels on each page: 1. The Chinese text of *Zhongyong*, 2. English translation of the Chinese text, 3. English and Chinese exegetical notes on the Chinese text. James Legge follows Zhu Xi's arrangement of *Zhongyong*. *Zhongyong* is divided into thirty-three chapters and many of the chapters are divided into verses. Chapters are designated by Roman numerals and verses are designated by Arabic numerals (for example, XIX.2 means verse two of chapter nineteen). Legge's chapter and verse arrangement will be consistently followed, even when quoting from other English translations that may have other chapter and verse arrangements.[89]

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[88] James Legge, *Confucius: Confucian Analects, The Great Learning & The Doctrine of the Mean*, Chinese text; translated with critical and exegetical notes, prolegomena, and dictionary of all characters by James Legge (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1971 [an unabridged republication of the second revised edition as published by the Clarendon Press, Oxford, in 1893 as Volume I in "The Chinese Classics" Series]).

[89] Other English translations of *Zhongyong* used in this dissertation are the following: Roger T. Ames and David L. Hall, *Focusing the Familiar: A Translation and Philosophical Interpretation of the Zhongyong* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001); Archie J. Bahm, *The Heart of Confucius; Interpretations of Genuine Living and Great Wisdom*, with a foreword by Thome H. FANG (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1977), 69-126; The Council of Chinese Cultural Renaissance, *English Translation of the Four Books* (Taipei: The Council of Chinese Cultural Renaissance, 1979), 15-38; Wm.

The romanization of Chinese characters used in this dissertation is Hanyu Pinyin. Exceptions are a few names that are recognized by most people according to other romanizations: Confucius, Mencius, Tu Wei-ming, etc. Since various romanizations are used in quotations, appendix II of the dissertation displays the Chinese characters, the Hanyu Pinyin romanization and other romanizations of pertinent terms.

Capitalization of important Confucian terms is practiced by most authors when they translate the Chinese terms into English. Legge generally capitalizes more than most (e.g. "Mean," "Ruler," etc.). The practice in this dissertation will be to refrain from capitalizing except in a few cases. The most important case is that of "Heaven" (*tian* 天), when the word conveys (by context) special authority. In these cases, it means something similar to the word, "God."[90] As the dissertation proceeds, the distinction between the Confucian Heaven and the Christian God will be discussed. The basic difference between the two is that the Confucian Heaven is less person: Heaven does not befriend people or give verbal revelation. On the other hand, the Confucian Heaven is similar to the Christian God in being consistently morally good and responsive to people in respect

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Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom, eds. *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 2nd ed., Vol. 1. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 333-339; E. R. Hughes, ed., *Chinese Philosophy in Classical Times* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1971), 32-42; LIN Yutang, *The Wisdom of Confucius* (New York: Random House, 1938), 104-134.

[90] Ames and Hall object to the convention of capitalizing "heaven" because of the possibility of misunderstanding due to associations with the Judeo-Christian God. They tend toward a pantheistic view. Ames, 79-80. On the other hand, Lin Yutang differs from the convention sometimes in rendering 天 with the word, "God." LIN, *Wisdom*, 104, 131, and 134. Archie Bahm also diverts from the convention at times when he renders 天 as "Nature." Bahm, 69, 77-78, 102, and 122. Most render 天 with the word, "Heaven." CHAN, 18 and 22; CHING, *Confucianism*, 91 and 123; The Council of Chinese Cultural Renaissance, 15; de Bary, *Sources*, 334; Irene Eber, ed., *Confucianism, The Dynamics of Tradition* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1986), xiv; Herbert Fingarette, *Confucius—the Secular as Sacred* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1972), 62; FUNG, 31; Graham, 1; Hughes, 39; Robert C. Neville, "The Chinese Case in a Philosophy of World Religions," in *Understanding the Chinese Mind: The Philosophical Roots*, ed. Robert E. Allinson (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1989), 55, 62, and 66; Rule, 27; TU, *Centrality*, 69.

to rewarding those who do good and punishing those who do wrong. Another important case in which capitalization will be used is the word, "Way" (*dao* 道). This concept also conveys special authority and meaning in Confucian thought. It means something akin to *the* morally good, right, true and only way people should live in order to fulfill their potential, achieve harmony and be the best influence on others.

Chinese surnames are properly placed at the beginning, before the individual name. In some cases, Western names are added and the Western practice of placing the surname last is sometimes followed. Therefore, Chinese surnames are completely capitalized in bibliographical references for easier identification. The same will be followed with Korean and Japanese names. For example: QIAN Mu, Julia CHING, KIM Heup Young, Peter HU Kuo-chen, Joseph M. KITAGAWA, etc.

CHAPTER 2

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the moral vision of the Epistle of James. This is done with a view toward comparing the moral vision of James with that of *Zhongyong*. The moral exhortations of James and the metanarrative of the epistle will be presented.

In the discussion of moral exhortations, the core virtue of James and six arenas of exhortation are identified. Faithfulness is identified as the core virtue in the epistle. A characteristic of the core virtue is that it radiates through all the virtues or moral exhortations and gives a basic unity to them. In addition, the core virtue provides one of the clearest links between the practical moral maxims and the metanarrative in which they are grounded. After a discussion of the core virtue, six arenas of exhortation will be discussed. An arena of exhortation is a broad field in which various individual maxims overlap or are similar enough to be grouped together. Arenas are groupings of similar practical exhortations, similar enough to be grouped together under one title. The six arenas identified in the Epistle of James are the following: revere God, love others, do good works, bridle the tongue, be wise, and be patient. The goal of this method is to achieve a clear and unified overview of James' exhortations in order to facilitate a comparison with the moral exhortations of *Zhongyong*.

The metanarrative of the Epistle of James will be presented after the moral exhortations. The dissertation introduction noted that metanarrative is the world-view taken for granted by author and reader, including the theory in which the practical moral

exhortations are grounded (page 28). The introduction also hinted at the eschatological nature of James' metanarrative (page 29). James' metanarrative is identified in this study as Christian eschatology. The eschatological framework of the epistle's moral vision will be unfolded with a view towards comparison with *Zhongyong*. The purpose of the methodology and logic of identifying and explaining both exhortations and metanarrative is to enhance holistic cross-textual interaction between James and *Zhongyong*.

As prelude to the moral vision of James, a few isagogical issues will be considered. These are intended to set the stage for understanding the epistle's moral vision by drawing attention to the value for its eschatological character. The issues begin with authorship, which leads into Luther's criticism. A response will be given to each of Luther's three major criticisms of the Epistle of James. These responses point to the value of interpreting James via its eschatological framework.

Authorship and Luther's Criticism

Tradition holds that the author of the Epistle of James is the brother of Jesus, James the Just.[91] This James was leader of the Christians in Jerusalem from ca. 40 A.D. to 62 A.D. In 62, he was thrown off the pinnacle of the temple in Jerusalem and killed because of his confession of faith in Jesus Christ. While James' leadership of early Christianity in Jerusalem remains an established fact,[92] his authorship of the epistle has

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[91] For an extensive study on James, see Robert Eisenman, *James the Brother of Jesus: The Key to Unlocking the Secrets of Early Christianity and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Penguin Books, 1997).

[92] Eisenman, XVIII, states: "To have been 'Head' or 'Bishop' of 'the Jerusalem Church' (*Ecclesia*) or 'Community' was to have been the head of the whole of Christianity, whatever this might be considered to have been in this period." And, XIX, "Because of James' pre-eminent stature, the sources for him turn out to be quite extensive, more than for any other comparable character, even for those as familiar to us as John

been challenged.[93] The outstanding Greek of the epistle,[94] its late attestation,[95] the Hellenistic influences apparent in the epistle,[96], the lack of attention given to Jesus[97], and its apparent tension with Paul's doctrine of justification have been the basis for challenging the traditional view of authorship. The apparent tension with Paul (Romans 3-4, Galatians 3) in James 2:14-26 has received more attention than anything else in the epistle.[98] In this regard, Martin Luther's criticism is well known.

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the Baptist and Peter. In fact, extra-biblical sources contain more reliable information about James than about Jesus."

[93] See Peter H. Davids, *The Epistle of James: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 4, for an extensive list of commentators and where they line up regarding the date and author of the Epistle of James.

[94] Previous to Jan Sevenster's work, the good Greek of the Epistle of James was regarded as a strong point against the direct authorship of James the Just. Subsequent to Sevenster, this point has been largely muted. See J. N. Sevenster, *Do You Know Greek? How Much Greek Could The First Jewish Christians Have Known?* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968), 191: "Hence the question to be considered is rather whether it was possible that James, brother of the Lord, (assuming he really was the author) personally had as much knowledge of Greek and had become quite familiar with its idiom. The example of Josephus proves, in my opinion, that this must not be deemed impossible. . . . Even though absolute certainty cannot be attained on this point, in view of all the data made available in the past decades the possibility can no longer be precluded that a Palestinian Jewish Christian of the first century A. D. wrote an epistle in good Greek."

[95] The first clear quote from the Epistle of James (that specifically references the epistle) is from Origen of Alexandria (185-225 A.D.). The epistle is not included in the earliest canonical lists.

[96] See Johnson, 8-10 and 16-28.

[97] Jesus' name appears only twice (1:1 and 2:1), His death and resurrection are not explicitly mentioned, He is not referred to as a moral example and there is no mention of the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus promised to send. For this reason, it has been suggested that the epistle is a Jewish work to which the name of Jesus was added in order to make it Christian. See L. Massebieau, "L'Épitre de Jacques est-elle l'oeuvre d'un Chrétien?" *RHR* 31-32 (1895): 249-283; Friedrich Spitta, *Zur Geschichte und Literatur des UrChristentums* 2: *Der Brief des Jakobus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1896). In recent decades, this view has been sharply challenged. Regarding their view, Laws observes: "If this were so, it would still be remarkable that the added veneer should be so thin." Laws, 1. Dibelius thoroughly refutes their contention that the Epistle of James is a Jewish writing which has been Christianized by the addition of the name of Jesus in two places. See Dibelius, 21-26 and analysis throughout the commentary. The fact that Dibelius is so strong and thorough in his argument against them (proving that the epistle is essentially Christian) is interesting since Dibelius represents the extreme in holding that the epistle is eclectic paraenesis without a specific overarching theology or system. See Dibelius, 3-11 and 25. In addition, various studies have drawn attention to James' unique implicit use of the Jesus tradition. A prominent example is P. J. Hartin, *James and the Q Sayings of Jesus* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991).

Luther comments: "I do not regard it as the writing of an apostle" because "it is flatly against St. Paul and all the rest of Scripture in ascribing justification to works."[99] But Luther didn't challenge the traditional view of authorship and criticize the Epistle of James merely because of its apparent conflict with Paul. He writes, "In a word St. John's Gospel and his first epistle, St. Paul's epistles, especially Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians, and St. Peter's first epistle are the books that show you Christ and teach you all that is necessary and salvatory for you to know, even if you were never to see or hear any other book or doctrine. Therefore St. James' epistle is really an epistle of straw, compared to these others, for it has nothing of the nature of the gospel about it."[100] Further, "Its purpose is to teach Christians, but in all this long teaching it does not once mention the Passion, the resurrection or the Spirit of Christ."[101] Finally, Luther says that "he throws things together so chaotically that it seems to me he must have been some good, pious man, who took a few sayings from the disciples of the apostles and thus tossed them off on paper."[102] He concludes, "Therefore I cannot include him among the chief books, though I would not thereby prevent anyone from including or extolling him as he pleases, for there are otherwise many good sayings in him."[103] These quotes are

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[98] Laws, 129, observes, "The apparent antithesis between Paul and James can be presented most sharply in the contrast between Paul's judgment in Rom. iii. 28, 'we reckon that a man is justified by faith without works', and James's conclusion in v. [sic – should be ii.] 24, *you see, then, that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.*"

[99] *Luther's Works 35: Word and Sacrament I*, ed. E. Theodore Bachmann, (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1960), 396.

[100] Ibid., 362.

[101] Ibid., 396.

[102] Ibid., 397.

[103] Ibid.

expressions of Luther's most severe criticisms of James. In other places Luther does quote the epistle in an authoritative way.

Luther's criticisms of the epistle are basically three: 1. It contradicts Paul, 2. It doesn't preach the Gospel of Christ Jesus, and 3. It is thrown together chaotically. Some of Luther's most famous words are the ones in which he characterizes the Epistle of James as "an epistle of straw." These criticisms have been very influential in establishing a framework in which the epistle is studied.[104] The contention of the present study is that Christian eschatology is the most appropriate framework in which to approach the Epistle of James, especially in regard to its moral vision. In this light, each of Luther's major criticisms will be discussed. The first criticism will be approached from the angle of perspectival diversity; the second, from the viewpoint of polyvalence; the third, from the standpoint of paraenesis. Finally, overall resolution will be suggested in the epistle's eschatological framework.

James and Paul: Perspectival Diversity

Sophie Laws writes, "It is ironically he [James] and not Paul who gave Luther his term **by faith alone** . . . ."[105] Paul never uses the word "alone" with "faith." James 2:24, the verse which most seems to contradict Paul (and Luther), is the only verse in the Bible with the words "faith alone." This seems to add poignancy to Luther's criticism. With

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[104] While Luther's comments where influential in launching the framework in which the epistle has been studied since the Reformation, "Luther's misgivings about the presence of the epistle in the canon are hardly unprecedented; as he himself comments, the history of its slow acceptance into the canon may indicate that they were felt from an early age." Laws, 1.

[105] Ibid., 137.

"the spirit of critical inquiry associated with the Renaissance,"[106] Luther's criticism combined to launch one of the major Post-Reformation emphases in the study of the Epistle of James. The fixation on James 2:14-26 and its apparent conflict with Paul were key for "the strong position taken by the Tübingen School [which] has proven remarkably influential."[107] Johnson argues for a more comprehensive focus: "The most important gain from breaking the Pauline fixation is that it liberates James to be read in terms of 108 verses rather than 12 verses, in terms of its own voice rather than in terms of supposed muting of Paul's voice."[108] In acknowledgement and agreement with this view, a perspectival suggestion will be applied to the James/Paul discussion.

Both James and Paul agree that good works are the fruit of faith, but they seem to approach the issue of justification from different perspectives. James emphasizes being shown to be righteous.[109] On the other hand, Paul emphasizes being reckoned or declared righteous.[110] James conveys the best of Old Testament and Jewish thought. He expresses a thought that reckons well with common sense and what is apparent to people:

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[106] Johnson, 140.

[107] Ibid., 108. The famous Tübingen School outlook began with an article by Ferdinand Christian Baur in 1831 (F. C. Baur, "Die Christuspartei in der korinthischen Gemeinde, der Gegensatz des petrinischen und paulinischen Christenthums in der ältesten Kirche, der Apostel Petrus in Rom," *Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie*, 1831, heft 4:61-206). His position is more fully developed in F. C. Baur, *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ* 2nd ed., ed. E. Zeller, trans. A. Menzies (London: Williams and Norgate, 1875). Baur argued that the book of Acts is not a dependable historical source for early church history since it represents a late attempt to harmonize what was a major conflict between two parties in the early church (represented by Paul and Peter, James being with Peter's party). For an insightful discussion of Baur, see Moisés Silva, *Explorations In Exegetical Method: Galatians As A Test Case* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1996), 115-127. See especially pages 124-125 where Silva ponders, "There is intense irony in the possibility that Baur was led astray because he treated the Pauline letters as a history textbook!"

[108] Johnson, 114.

[109] James uses the verbs, "show" and "see," to emphasize that he is discussing a justification that can be seen (2:18 - δεῖξόν & δείξω; 2:22 - βλέπεις; 2:24 - ὁρᾶτε).

> The idea of justification is an important one in Old Testament and subsequent Jewish thought. In the forensic context to which the language originally belonged, justification referred to the judge's verdict on the individual before him, who is acquitted or pronounced 'in the right' on the basis of his proven innocence. . . . This understanding of justice is seen as authorized by God, and when the language is used of him, it is of him as the judge who is expected to pronounce the verdict of acquittal, and to confer the status of being in the right with him on those whose obedience (especially to the Law) merits such a verdict; . . . Theological problems arise when God is not seen to be acting in this way . . . when the verdict of justification is pronounced in a situation which seems wholly incompatible with it. This is the particular paradox of Paul. In declaring both that 'all have sinned', and yet that 'we are justified freely' (Rom. iii. 23-24), he is compelled to wrestle with the idea of the justice of God, so central to his Jewish heritage . . . .[111]

James deals with the issue from a simple, expected, visible and phenomenological perspective. Paul is working with justification from a deep, counter-intuitive and profound perspective. It can be said that "both views assemble data in different ways to come to different overall conclusions."[112]

James Voelz gives a good explanation of perspectival theological understanding in "'Newton and Einstein at the Foot of the Cross': A Post-Modern Approach to

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[110] From Louis Brighton, The Epistle of James course lecture, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Fall 1996. David Maxwell corroborates this understanding in a November 1997 unpublished paper in which he demonstrates that Clement uses the word, "justify," in both senses (1 Clement 30.3 [show] and 32.4 [reckon]). Regarding 1 Clement 30.3 ("[Let us] be justified by deeds, not words."), Maxwell observes, "One can indeed attempt to *show* that he is righteous by words. This is what Clement discourages. Instead, one should show his righteousness by deeds. He makes this clear in 30.7, 'Let testimony to our good deeds be given by others.' When the contrast is *words vs. deeds*, 'justify' means 'show to be righteous' and one is 'justified' by works." (Note the contrast between saying and doing in James 2:14,16,18.) Maxwell continues, "On the very next page, Clement uses 'dikaioo' in the Pauline sense: 'We who by his will have been called in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, or by our wisdom or understanding or piety or the deeds which we have wrought in holiness of heart, but through faith, by which Almighty God has justified all men from the beginning of the world.' (32.4)" He concludes: "In 1 Clement, we have independent confirmation that 'justify' can mean two things: 'reckon righteous' as in Rom. 4, and 'show to be righteous' as in James 2. Thus, our righteousness before God is by faith alone, and that righteousness manifests itself by works and not by faith alone." Each of these quotes comes from page 2 of Maxwell's two-page paper.

[111] Laws, 130-131.

[112] James W. Voelz, "'Newton and Einstein at the Foot of the Cross': A Post-Modern Approach to Theology," *CJ* 25:3 (July 1999): 270, fn. 25.

Theology." He observes that in the "Newtonian analysis . . . the universe is a very describable, a very stable, and a very predictable place."[113] Einstein and twentieth century physics see it "as a very unusual, a very unstable, and a very unpredictable place."[114] Both Newton and Einstein are correct. They simply view things from different perspectives. In this regard, James is like Newton and Paul, Einstein.[115] Voelz does note, "Much of the Bible is 'Newtonian.' All of Paul's paraenesis is."[116] And Paul's paraenesis is often said to be similar to the Epistle of James. In Paul's discussion of justification, however, the issue is taken to the most profound level as he unfolds a mature and developed understanding of the meaning of Christ and His death and resurrection. Laws observes: "By contrast with thinkers such as Paul, John or the author of Hebrews, the Christianity of James will inevitably be judged as superficial and undeveloped."[117]

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[113] Ibid., 265.

[114] Ibid., 266. Some examples from this same page include the understanding that "as speed increases, time slows down and the length of objects contracts," "at extremely high speeds, matter and energy can be and are interchangeable," "space is curved and time slows down in strong gravitational fields," "one cannot know both the position and momentum (=mass x velocity) of a particle simultaneously," and "matter has a dual nature, so that particles, including electrons, have the properties of and behave like waves."

[115] Voelz, 274-275, notes: "We can notice two things, however, in the theology of Scripture. On the one hand, when an in-depth theological analysis of a problem is being done, 'Newton' recedes and 'Einstein' comes to the fore. . . . On the other hand, when the two models occur in close proximity, generally 'Newton' precedes 'Einstein.' . . . It seems to indicate that phenomenological consideration precedes in-depth analysis, and also that *at some point* it is important to proceed on from phenomenological to in-depth analysis. Using the phraseology of the book of Hebrews (Heb. 5:12), we must at some point move from milk to solid food." In this light, it would make sense to see James preceding Paul. James does convey a variety of thoughts that could be considered seeds of what was later developed more fully by Paul or others (compare: James 3:10 and Romans 7; James 1:9-11 and 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; James 1:2-4 and Hebrews 12:1-13; James 5:7-11 and 1 & 2 Thessalonians).

[116] Ibid., 275.

The Epistle's Polyvalence

Luther's second major criticism of the epistle is that James does not mention the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus, James doesn't explicitly preach the Gospel. In addition, the epistle does not even use Jesus as a moral example: "James's appeal to the prophets and to Job as examples of patient endurance of hardship and suffering has struck many as extraordinary since the example of Jesus would seem the obvious one in this respect for a Christian author, as indeed it does to Peter (1 Pet. ii. 21-23, cf. also the author of Hebrews, for whom in chapter xi the OT provides many examples of faith, but for whom Jesus is 'the pioneer and perfecter' of faith, xii. 2)."[118] Sophie Laws sums up the sentiments of many in her words, "The omission of what might be thought to be central and indispensable Christian themes is glaring."[119]

The attempt to find an explanation for these omissions is made more difficult by the fact that "the epistle of James affords notoriously scanty material for answering . . . date . . . author . . . situation and geographical location of both himself and those whom he addresses."[120] If author, date, situation and audience could be demonstrated with

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[117] Laws, 3.

[118] Ibid., 217.

[119] Ibid., 3. Dibelius has thoroughly refuted the arguments of Spitta and Massebieau who proposed that the epistle was a Jewish writing with the addition of "Jesus Christ" in two verses to make it Christian (footnote 7). Dibelius has shown that the Epistle of James is Christian, and this Christian character of the epistle is unanimously accepted in contemporary scholarship.

[120] Ibid., 2. *Anchor Bible* commentator, Luke Timothy Johnson, gives one of the best arguments for James the Just as the author of the epistle. Yet he still must rest lightly on his conclusion: "These arguments do not prove that James of Jerusalem, the 'Brother of the Lord,' wrote the letter. Such proof is unavailable, for the simple reason that, even if early, the document could still have been penned by some other 'James' than the one who became famous in the tradition. But the arguments do tend strongly toward the conclusion that James is a very early writing from a Palestinian Jewish Christian source. And James the Brother of the Lord is a reasonable candidate. A letter from *this* James to 'the twelve tribes in the dispersion' accords

greater certainty, an explanation for the omissions would be easier. A large number of alternatives have been proposed for the *Sitze im Leben* of James, along with attending interpretations.[121] The isagogical uncertainties of the Epistle of James, the lack of explicit Gospel themes and some other ambiguities point to the epistle's polyvalence.

Polyvalence refers to the epistle's multiple bonding points. The Epistle of James is flexible in that a variety of settings and interpretations are possible. Ambiguities allow application to multiple referents at once. Various words, statements and thoughts in the epistle have multiple bonding points or polyvalence. This flexible feature in James is positive in that it allows for continued application in a wide variety of settings. Yet the uncertainties involved move interpreters to seek more solid foundations upon which to build an interpretation of the epistle as a whole. The eschatological framework of James provides that foundation, especially in regard to its moral exhortations. The epistle's polyvalence will be illustrated by an example that builds upon one of the settings that has been suggested by commentators. This example gives expression to the flexible features of James. It also reflects the tentative nature of such suggestions, leading to the value for a more certain foundation for interpretation in the epistle's eschatological framework.

The following example builds upon the suggestion that the Epistle of James should be dated very early, probably in the 40s.[122] This scenario indicates that James the

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well with the fairest reading of our earliest sources and the self-presentation of the composition itself." Johnson, 121.

[121] Randall C. Webber, *Reader Response Analysis of The Epistle of James* (Bethesda, Maryland: International Scholars Publications, 1996), 9.

[122] Johnson, 121; Joseph B. Mayor, *The Epistle of St. James*, 2nd ed. (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1897), iiiff., clxiv, clxxvii; John A. T. Robinson, *Redating The New Testament* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1976), 139; David P. Scaer, *James, The Apostle of Faith*, with a foreword by Paul L. Maier (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1983, 1994), 23-31.

Just is writing to encourage faithfulness in the wake of the persecution following Stephen's death (Acts 8:1ff.). James is both the leader of the Christians in Jerusalem and respected by many Jewish people who do not believe in Christ. The Christians at that time were mostly Jewish believers and had not experienced a sharp separation from the synagogues yet. The persecution following Stephen's death was the first big persecution of Christians. When this persecution began, some stayed in Jerusalem, but many were scattered (διεσπάρησαν). In James 1:1, the readers are addressed as those among the scattering (διασπορᾷ). Since the mostly Jewish Christians of that time still met in the synagogues, the epistle would potentially be seen and heard by those who might cooperate with the persecution. Therefore, James would be motivated to write such that believers could be encouraged to faithfulness without being unnecessarily exposed to danger. At the same time, the epistle applies to situations that are stable and free of persecution (which would have characterized some of the synagogues to which the believers fled).

Jesus had warned His followers: "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils, and flog you in their synagogues . . . ." (Matthew 10:16-17 RSV) The scanty isagogical data and ambiguity of the epistle fit in well with the idea of being wise as a serpent and heeding the exhortation to beware of men because they will deliver up believers and even flog them in their synagogues. It was not a dishonor for believers to escape persecution and death if they could do so without denying their faith. Jesus had escaped death a few times, before the time was right (John 7:30, 8:59, 10:39; Luke 4:29-30). Peter and Paul also escaped (Acts 9:23-25, 9:29-30, 12:17). Not only

was it not a dishonor, it was a responsibility (especially in response to Jesus' instruction to be wise as serpents and beware of men).

The early persecution suffered by the apostles and Stephen was fueled or aggravated by strong and explicit christological statements (Acts 3:12-4:18, 5:30-33, 7:52-60, 9:20-29). James' lack of explicit christological statements can be explained by the desire to avoid fueling or aggravating similar persecution among his recipients. James 2:2 refers to his recipients' synagogue (συναγωγὴν). In His instruction to be wise as serpents and beware of men, Jesus said that men will flog them in their synagogues. Consequently, if the letter was found or read in a synagogue, it would not provide enough provocation or evidence to incite persecution against the recipients or author. In this regard, the epistle has a certain flexibility or multi-applicability: the issues addressed in the epistle apply to many different settings (hence the variety of discussion in regard to the epistle's date and location).

The Epistle of James is equally applicable to situations in which trials are being experienced and to very comfortable and stable situations. It provides eschatological warning and eschatological comfort. Expectation of an imminent judgement and enduring patience are encouraged. Sudden apocalyptic upheaval and a stable community life are both in view. This elasticity of the epistle allows various groups to hear and heed its exhortations. In the synagogues (2:2) of James' readers, one might imagine that some are strong believers in Jesus, some are borderline, some are unconvinced but affectionately tolerant, and some are hostile. The epistle is variegated enough to have something important to say to each group. Yet it does so without raising issues that would be blatantly provocative enough to cause persecution (e.g. the issue of Jesus' death

and resurrection, which would be an especially explosive issue in the persecution following Stephen's death).

If there is a rebuke against those who killed Jesus and persecute His followers, it is veiled. Such rebuke may be tied to the sharp criticism of the rich. The high priest and his Sadducee associates (Acts 5:17) were people of wealth who reacted in adverse manner to talk of resurrection (Acts 4:1-3, 23:6-10). They had delivered Jesus up and authorized persecution against Christians. Some have found a reference to them and Jesus in 5:6 as the rich are rebuked with the words, "You condemned, you killed the just one; he does not resist you."

James' use of ambiguity is an aspect of the epistle's elasticity that lends support to the suggestion that lack of explicit christology was part of the author's effort to encourage believers while not exposing them to persecution. For example, the introduction of a prominent theme is done so in 1:2ff. with the word πειρασμοῖς. Most English translations translate πειρασμοῖς with the word, "trials," in 1:2 and 1:12. Then they switch to the word, "temptation," in 1:13-14.[123] The Greek word, πειρασμοῖς, can have either (both?) meaning ("trials" and "temptations"). The author could have been unambiguous by using the word, θλῖψις, to refer to trials (as is done in 1:27). It appears that πειρασμοῖς was chosen for the sake of deliberate ambiguity.[124] The implication of

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[123] Including NAS, NKJV, NIV, JB, RSV, and Williams. Beck and NET use "tested" in 1:2, 12, then "tempted" in 1:13-14. A notable exception is the KJV which follows the Vulgate (*temptationem*) in using "temptations" in 1:2, 12, and 13-14.

[124] See P. R. Raabe, "Deliberate Ambiguity in the Psalter," *JBL* 110 (1991): 213-227.

deliberate ambiguity here is that πειρασμοῖς can be understood as either trials (including persecution against Christians) or temptations (such as any Jew would face[125]), or both.[126]

Thus James' ambiguity and consequent elasticity allows multiple applications without endangering the potentially persecuted believers. James can take for granted some basic beliefs in his fellow believers since they are "people who are supposed to know the rudiments of Christianity . . . ."[127] The end result is that those suffering persecution and its threat can be comforted and encouraged without being endangered, and various other important lessons can also be learned.

In the above scenario, one must rest lightly upon the suggestions offered since the epistle's isagogical data is sparse. Although he opts for an early date, John A. T. Robinson writes: "The epistle of James is one of those apparently timeless documents that could be dated almost anywhere and which has indeed been placed at practically every point in the list of New Testament writings."[128] This points to the polyvalent character of the epistle, its flexibility in applying its statements to a large variety of

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[125] Adamson says, "James has a strong and typically Jewish sense of sin . . . ." Adamson, *The Epistle*, 25.

[126] The use of ποικίλοις ("diverse") in 1:2 also adds to the elasticity. Regarding πειρασμοῖς, Adamson comments: "In Jas. 1:2 commentators have generally confined the meaning to 'adversities' or 'afflictions' or the like: Oesterley and Parry are distinguished exceptions. The unity of the passage 1:2-21 must be fully recognized. Certainly blindness, for example, or disease tests a man; but so, for example, does sexual or other lust, or greed, or temper, or pride of wealth, strength, or beauty. In the former category we may use the term 'affliction' or 'adversity,' but in the latter both our friends and we ourselves are more apt to speak and think of 'temptation' than of 'adversity' or 'affliction': the caution expressed in vv. 3f. is not directed only to the sick and similar sufferers, . . . It is characteristic of James that here he powerfully uses *peirasmos* for both the pleasant allurements of Satan and the painful afflictions of the body: both are apt to lead men to sin." Ibid., 28. Other deliberate ambiguities may include the following: διασπορᾷ (Jews/Persecuted Christians), κτισμάτων (creation/regeneration), ἔμφυτον λόγον (scripture/Gospel), οὐχ οἱ πλούσιοι καταδυναστεύουσιν ὑμῶν (normal rich oppression/persecution), τὸ καλὸν ὄνομα (good reputation/Jesus' name), κατεδικάσατε, ἐφονεύσατε τὸν δίκαιον (common poor people/Jesus or persecuted believers), and παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου (Yahweh's visitation/Jesus' return).

[127] Ibid., 20.

referents. This leads to the desire to find a more solid basis upon which the epistle can be interpreted. That basis is to be found in the epistle's eschatological framework.

James as Paraenesis

Luther's third criticism is that "he throws things together . . . chaotically." Martin Dibelius was the one who launched a major stream of activity in this arena when he wrote, "*We may designate the 'Letter' of James as paraenesis.* By paraenesis we mean a text which strings together admonitions of general ethical content."[129] In James, this includes eclecticism (choosing from various ethical sources), lack of continuity (no unified theme is carried through) and catchword association ("One saying is attached to another simply because a word or cognate of the same stem appears in both sayings."[130]). Dibelius also asserts, "*Jas has no 'theology.'* For even though, in spite of his eclecticism, the world of ideas and values to which his writing bears witness is relatively homogeneous, still paraenesis provides no opportunity for the development and elaboration of religious ideas. At best they are only touched upon, and in most instances they are merely presupposed."[131] Dibelius represents the epitome in anti-structure arguments. He "adheres to this position so strongly that he excludes in principle any contextual reading."[132]

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[128] Robinson, 118.

[129] Dibelius, 3.

[130] Ibid., 6.

[131] Ibid., 21.

[132] Johnson, 11.

In contrast to Dibelius, many have tried to demonstrate a deliberate, well-structured and unified outline in the epistle.[133] However, the fact that so many different outlines have been proposed gives credence to Dibelius' (and Luther's) analysis. There is no strong consensus of agreement in regard to a deliberate and well-structured outline in James. The Epistle of James appears to be loosely connected thoughts, composed without a strong sense of unified structure. Dibelius' contends that the epistle's topics are linked merely by catchword connections, along with the repetition of some key themes.

Although consensus on a deliberately structured outline in James is hard to achieve, recognition is given to the fact that the epistle is framed in the larger theology of Christian eschatology in which it participates and in which its moral exhortations are understandable. As such, the ethical exhortations of James are grounded in a larger unity of thought. The loosely strung together thoughts and themes are given a sense of unity and coherence in respect to the epistle's eschatological theology.

James' Moral Exhortations

The practical exhortations are where people meet the moral vision in daily life. James is like Paul in regard to moral exhortation: "With respect to exhortation, Paul addresses Christians in terms of their everyday life and appeals to them as concrete, down-to-earth human beings."[134] In each moral vision, the exhortations are grounded in a larger theory, the world-view or metanarrative of that scheme. James' metanarrative will

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[133] Dibelius, 6, fn. 22, lists numerous examples. Johnson, 11-12, lists various more recent examples.

be presented in the final sections of this chapter. It is appropriate to present the exhortations first since they are the first place people usually encounter a moral vision. They are the concrete, down to earth way in which people daily meet the moral vision that has an impact upon their lives. After the exhortations are discussed, the metanarrative that provides the foundation for the exhortations will be explored.

In order to understand the exhortations of the Epistle of James, the core virtue will be identified. A characteristic of this core virtue is that it radiates through all the virtues or moral exhortations and gives a basic unity to them. After a discussion of the core virtue, six arenas of exhortation will be identified.

Faithfulness as Core Virtue

Faithfulness is the core virtue of the Epistle of James. In conjunction with the eschatological framework of James, this virtue can be described as eschatological faithfulness. The one who is faithful in enduring trials will receive the crown of life (1:12). The one who is faithful in prayer will see great things (1:5-8, 5:13-18). The lowly person who is faithful in patience and humility will be exalted and inherit the kingdom of God (1:9, 2:5, 4:6-10, 5:7-11) and the rich oppressors of the lowly one will be humbled (1:10-11, 5:1-9).

The ones to whom the epistle is written are exhorted not to be deceived (1:16), not to have workless faith like the demons (2:19-20), to live according to the works of wisdom from above rather than demonic wisdom (3:13-18), to avoid the friendship with the world that makes one an enemy of God (4:4), to resist the devil (4:7), to be humble

[134] Raabe, "Why Exhort," 161.

and not to boast (4:7-16), to be patient without grumbling (5:7-11), and to restore the one who wanders from the truth (5:19-20). The readers "seem to be in a position to make decisions, to be led astray, to be reminded, to be encouraged, and to be persuaded . . . as if they are a third party standing between two powers, sin and [God] . . . ."[135] James urges them to resist temptation, pray for wisdom from above, resist the devil, avoid deception, avoid friendship with the world, etc. because all these things are dangers that can pull a believing person or community away from their eschatological hope. Sin, the devil, the world, unfaithfulness, deception, dead faith, arrogance, impatience and wandering are all threats to fulfillment of the eschatological promises in their lives. Therefore, the readers are encouraged to be faithful to God, patiently awaiting the fulfillment of His eschatological promises.

Others speak of "whole-heartedness," "steadfastness," "unwavering faith," or "integrity" to describe what is referred to here as faithfulness.[136] Penner observes: "The call to steadfastness opens and closes the letter. This unity in expression ties the two sections together and provides a framework for stressing the eschatological horizon . . . ."[137] He writes, "Jas 1.5-8 establishes that the double-minded individual is one who lacks faith and steadfastness. Such a person will not endure until the end and

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[135] Ibid., 160.

[136] According to Adamson, "This theme of unwavering faith (and its opposite) dominates the entire Epistle . . . ." James B. Adamson, *JAMES: The Man and His Message* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 171-172. Mayor writes that in James "the leading principle is the necessity of whole-heartedness . . . ." Mayor, cix. Laws notes that in the epistle "doubleness is of the essence of sin. . . . the ideal state for man to achieve is one of singleness or integrity . . . ." Laws, 29. Laws continually affirms integrity as the key exhortation throughout her commentary: 29-30, 52, 58-61, 91-93, 97, 102, 116, 168, 184.

consequently stands under judgment (they will receive nothing from God)."[138] It is similar to what Brighton writes when he says that there is an urgency involved in "the last times, in which all things will be brought to an end—an urgency which reminds the Christian to hold fast to the faith . . . ."[139]

Thus the exhortation to faithfulness is at the core of the epistle's moral exhortations. As already noted, James does not have a strong unity of structure in a deliberate outline that is readily apparent. But his thought is unified. The core virtue is directly linked to the epistle's eschatological metanarrative and it radiates through the various arenas of exhortation.

Arenas of Exhortation

Six arenas of exhortation in the Epistle of James are identified here:

1. Revere God
2. Love others
3. Do good works
4. Bridle the tongue
5. Be wise
6. Be patient

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[137] Penner, 201. He calls attention to the way that "in Jas 5.11 'steadfastness' is explicitly connected to the παρουσία of Christ, and in 1.3-4, 12 it occurs again in a context of future reward (τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς)." Ibid., 200.

[138] Ibid., 203. Penner's comments here provide a foretaste of James' metanarrative as he links the core virtue of the epistle to its eschatological framework. On pages 211-212 he observes, "The epistle's framework deals explicitly with the call to remain steadfast in the trials of the 'last days', and to do so with the expectation that the παρουσία of Christ will soon take place at which time the Judge will mete out justice to the righteous and judgment to the wicked/rich/proud. Such a framework should control how the main body, 1.13-4.5, is viewed, and it does so by providing the background against which the main content and key themes which undergird the letter are read."

[139] Louis A. Brighton, *Revelation* (CC; Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 1.

Each of these is introduced in chapter one of the epistle. Beginning with chapter two, each theme is randomly covered. Sometimes a number of verses constitute a short essay on the theme. Sometimes a theme is simply touched upon in one verse.

1. <u>Revere God</u>, the first arena, appears in 1:9-12. The lowly one is instructed to "glory in his exaltation" and the rich one in his humiliation, and the one who is faithful in enduring trials will receive the promised "crown of life." This conveys the work God will perform as judge. He works reversals: lowly are exalted, rich are humiliated. God will put down and lift up. Therefore, eschatological faithfulness is expressed by revering God. This means honoring God as the one who ultimately puts down and lifts up.

A few verses later (1:17-21) God is spoken of as the giver of every good gift and the one who "brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures." (NKJ) Therefore, we are to be "quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger" since the anger of man "does not produce the righteousness of God." (NKJ) Then, verse twenty-one says, "Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls." (NKJ) The "therefore" (διὸ) of this verse connects it with what preceded: every good gift comes from God who brought us forth, so the proper response is to be righteous, get rid of wickedness and receive the implanted saving word in humility. He is giver every good gift, giver of birth and His word saves, so He is to be revered by righteousness and humility. This arena of exhortation is introduced in the first chapter in regards to God working reversals, giving the crown of life and every good gift, giving birth and saving.

The arena of reverence is later taken up in chapter four (most notably 4:6-12). First, the issue of strife and selfish desire is addressed, leading into the warning that "friendship with the world is enmity with God," and "whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." (NKJ) Then come the verses that most strongly emphasize repentance, humility and submission to God because He is a judge who is able to save and destroy (4:6-12 NIV):

> 4. You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. 5. Or do you think Scripture says with reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely? 6. But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." 7. Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up. 11. Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. 12. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?

The final verses of this chapter continue in the same vein with a rebuke against boasting about the future. According to 4:13-16 (NKJ), "You do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. 15. Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.' 16. But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil." These verses contrast the transience of human life with the Lord's will. As lawgiver, judge and Lord, He has all things in His hands, including both the near and distant future. Therefore, the reader is called to humility before Him.

The first six verses of chapter five continue the emphasis upon repentance. The rich are called to repentance because they have "stored up treasure in the last days," (5:3)

and held back by fraud the wages of their laborers. Most strongly, they are rebuked, warned and called to repentance (5:1-6 NKJ):

> 1. Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! 2. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. 3. Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. 4. Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. 5. You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. 6. You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.

The words of the Epistle of James in 4:1-5:6 constitute one of the Bible's strongest calls to repentance and humility before God. They emphasize both God's judgment and His grace. His judgment and grace are then the basis for the strong exhortation to revere God in the epistle. Eschatological faithfulness is expressed by humble, repentant reverence for God in light of His ability to judge and save.

2. <u>Love others</u> is the next arena of moral exhortation in the Epistle of James. It appears in 1:27 (NKJ): "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." The theme of loving others continues in the next verse (2:1), which is the beginning of a short essay on partiality. He writes, "My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality." (NKJ) Then he goes on to explain that if a rich man and a poor man come into their synagogue, they shouldn't give preference to the rich man and treat the poor man dishonorably. Verse eight then exhorts them to "love your neighbor as yourself." This is the way they can avoid showing partiality. Then, 2:13 says, "For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy." (NKJ) Finally, 2:15-16 refer to a brother or sister in need of clothing and food. Verse sixteen

implies that they should be given clothing and food, and this care is the work of faith. Other verses in the epistle rebuke strife (4:1-2), speaking against one another (3:10, 4:11, 5:9), and rich oppression (5:1-6).

Finally, the epistle ends with a series of exhortations that involve caring for one another (5:14-20 NKJ):

> 13. Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. 14. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. 16. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. 17. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. 18. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit. 19. Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, 20. let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

The arena of loving others, then, involves caring for others as well as avoiding partiality, strife, speaking against others and oppression.

Loving others in James expresses faithfulness to God in light of the eschatological realities of judgment and mercy. James 2:13 notes that "judgment is without mercy to the one who shows no mercy." (NKJ) On the other hand, the exhortations to care for one another in 5:13-20 have healing, forgiving and saving results. Eschatological faithfulness in James is expressed in part by loving others.

3. <u>Do good works</u> is the next arena of moral exhortation. James 1:22 says, "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." (NKJ) This hearing and not doing is similar to the saying and not doing of 2:14: "What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save

him?" Hearing and saying but not doing seems to have been a problem for at least some of the ones to whom the epistle is directed. James exhorts his readers to be doers of the word and to have works. The word and faith are to be put into practice.

In chapter one, the one who merely hears the word and does not follow through with doing it is characterized as a self-deceiver (1:22) and a forgetful person (1:23-24). However, "He who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does." (NKJ) There is blessing for the one who does the work.

Chapter two speaks of the deadness (2:17, 20, 26) and unprofitability (2:14, 16) of faith without works. James first uses the example of those in need (2:15-17 NKJ): "15. If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16. and one of you says to them, 'Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,' but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? 17. Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." Abraham and Rahab are examples whose works showed their righteousness. James emphasizes that one should not just say he or she has faith and then not follow through with good works. He strongly exhorts: do good works.

The one who is faithful does good works. Abraham and Rahab's works are seen as a completion of their faith. Faith without works is dead and doesn't save. The eschatological hope is salvation. Therefore, James exhorts not to deceive oneself into thinking that God will bless and save the one who merely hears without being faithful in doing the word or speaks of having faith without being faithful in carrying through with good works.

4. <u>Bridle the tongue</u> is another important arena of exhortation in the Epistle of James. Exhortation regarding bridling the tongue arises a number of times in the epistle (1:26, 2:12, 3:1-12, 4:11, 5:9, 5:12). In 1:26 it says, "If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless." (NKJ) Then, 3:1-12 is one of the most striking essays in the epistle. It speaks of the great difficulty in bridling the tongue. James 3:2 starts the discussion: "For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body." (NKJ) Verses three through fourteen use a number of analogies from nature to show that the tongue is small but boasts great things (like a horse's bit, ship's rudder and spark that starts a forest fire). James writes (3:6-10 NKJ):

> 6. And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. 7. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. 8. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. 9. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. 10. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.

A few more analogies from nature indicate the disjunction of this problem in bridling the tongue (3:11-12 NKJ): "11. Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? 12. Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh."

The tongue can be a major problem, yet not to the point of abandoning the effort. James 4:11 exhorts, "Do not speak evil of one another, brethren." (NKJ) In 5:9 it says, "Do not grumble against one another, brethren . . . ." (NKJ) While the severe problem of the tongue is recognized, strong exhortation appears throughout the epistle to teach: bridle the tongue. The effort to bridle the tongue represents faithfulness while waiting

upon God's judgment. They are urged not to grumble against one another, "lest you be condemned. Behold the Judge is standing at the door!" (NKJ)

5. Be wise is an exhortation that only surfaces explicitly in two places in James (1:5, 3:13-18), but the character qualities of wisdom (3:17) are related to the other arenas of exhortation. After encouraging joy and patience in the midst of trials, 1:5 says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him." (NKJ) It seems that wisdom is a key feature in enduring trials and temptations. Wisdom is an important part of faithfulness to God in the midst of trials and temptations.

Chapter three links this wisdom to good conduct and works (3:13 NKJ): "Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom." It then warns against a bad kind of wisdom (3:14-16 NKJ): "14. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. 15. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. 16. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there." Finally, the character qualities of wisdom from above are noted (3:17-18 NKJ): "17. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. 18. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace." Thus, the wisdom exhorted by James is linked to doing good works, enduring trials, loving others, and being patient.

6. Be patient is an arena of exhortation that appears at the beginning (1:2-4) and end (5:7-11) of the epistle. The reason the brethren are to consider it all joy when they

fall into various trials (1:2) is because the testing of their faith produces patience (1:3). They are exhorted to "let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing." (1:4 NKJ) Finally, chapter five exhorts: "Be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord." (5:7) Examples are given to encourage patience: a farmer waits patiently for the early and latter rains (5:7), the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord patiently suffered many things (5:10), and Job saw a merciful outcome after much suffering (5:11).

The focus in chapter one of the epistle is trials, being patient in the midst of trials. The focus in chapter five is the coming of the Lord, being patient until He comes. This patience is related to the core virtue, eschatological faithfulness. James 5:8 exhorts: "You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand." (NKJ) The Lord is expected to come soon, but in the meantime, patience is exhorted. This touches upon a dynamic aspect of James' moral vision: eschatological expectation of the Lord's imminent coming and patience until He comes.

Throughout the Epistle of James, the arenas of exhortation radiate out from the core virtue of eschatological faithfulness. The practical exhortations of James are connected to this larger framework that unifies his thought, namely, Christian eschatology. The next section will explore this understanding: James' metanarrative is Christian eschatology.

James' Metanarrative As Christian Eschatology

The metanarrative in which James' moral exhortations are grounded is that of Christian eschatology. Christian eschatology is founded upon the beliefs that God created all things good in the beginning, human sin brought death and corruption into the

world, but God initiated a plan of salvation which is focused in Jesus Christ and will ultimately culminate when Jesus returns as judge. Until the day that Jesus returns, His followers on the earth live by faith in His promises, being watchful with anxious anticipation for His return. His promise to return soon provides moral motivation to be diligent in doing good so that He may return to find faithful servants.

The following presentation will first explore the roots of James' metanarrative in the Old Testament and Jesus. Then the expression given to this metanarrative in the Epistle of James will be explored.

The Roots of Christian Eschatology

Jürgen Moltmann wrote: "From first to last, and not merely in the epilogue, Christianity is eschatology, is hope, forward looking and forward moving, and therefore also revolutionizing and transforming the present. The eschatological is not one element of Christianity, but it is the medium of Christian faith as such, the key in which everything in it is set, the glow that suffuses everything here in the dawn of an expected new day."[140] Grenz and Franke observe, "The teaching about the promising God at work bringing creation to its *telos*, Christian theology is inherently eschatological. . . . eschatological theology leads through the biblical narrative, the story of God's action in history, which cradles the Christian community."[141] Christian eschatology looks back to God's purposes before creation, through creation and God's special saving actions in

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[140] Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope,* trans. James Leitch (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 16; quoted in Stanley J. Grenz and John R. Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism: Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 239.

history, to the future consummation. This is the biblical narrative, which begins in Genesis with creation.

Genesis Through The Prophets

The first chapter of the Bible begins with creation: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1). God's original creation was good (Genesis 1:31). Genesis chapter three records the sinful rebellion against God by the first humans. Death, destruction and suffering are the results of human sin. In faithfulness to His creation, God initiated a plan of salvation, to redeem people and deliver nature from sin, suffering and death (Romans 8:19-23). His plan of salvation was prepared with foresight before the beginning of creation (1 Corinthians 2:7, Titus 1:2). This plan is universal and focused upon "the divinely intended *telos* of creation."[142] As recorded in Scripture, "It is the account of God bringing creation from inception to consummation."[143] Some of the historical high points of this plan of salvation include calling of Abraham, the Exodus, the Israelite monarchy and God's message through the prophets.

Abraham was called by God to leave the land of Ur and move to a land that God would show him, ultimately the land of Canaan. God promised to bless Abraham and make a great nation from him, and all the families of the earth would be blessed through Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). Abraham became the father of the nation of Israel, God's chosen people. He became the father of their faith. Consequently, he was often used as

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[141] Grenz, 259.

[142] Ibid., 252.

[143] Ibid., 258.

an example of faith, as in James 2. Abraham's descendants grew in the land of Canaan until a famine forced them to seek food in Egypt (Genesis 42-46). While in Egypt, the Israelites multiplied greatly (Exodus 1:7). Being viewed as a threat by the king of Egypt, the Israelites were forced into slavery and oppressed by the Egyptians (Exodus 1:8-14). The Israelites cried out to God for help. God had mercy and sent Moses to be their deliverer (Exodus 3).

The Exodus was the deliverance from slavery that God provided by means of miracles that were performed through Moses (Exodus 7-13). The Israelites were led out of Egypt toward the promised land of Canaan. The Exodus was to be remembered as God's greatest act of deliverance until the time of Jesus. In the wake of the Exodus, while traveling to the Promised Land, God revealed His Law through Moses (Exodus 20). Moses mediated a covenant between God and the people: Yahweh, who delivered them, would be their God and they would be His people; Yahweh would be faithful to them and they were to be faithful to Him. As the Israelites were about to enter the Promised Land Moses preached a sermon to them. In his preaching, recorded in Deuteronomy, Moses emphasized the 'two ways' within the context of the covenant Moses had mediated between God and the people. The 'two ways' include the way to blessing and the way to curses. If the people remain faithful to God and obey His Law, they would be blessed with peace and prosperity. If they turned away from Him and disobeyed His Law, they would be cursed with various kinds of trouble, including the wrath of their enemies. Upon repentance, God would save His people and restore His blessings to them.

Regarding the 'two ways' tradition, Todd Penner writes the following: "In the deuteronomistic scheme, when the people sin they are punished, but upon repentance

God restores his elect to the land and previous prosperity (cf. Deut. 4.25-31; 28.45-68; 30.1-10; 2 Kgs 17.7-20)."[144] This deuteronomistic framework "essentially gave birth to what scholars call the 'two ways' tradition as a literary motif and form . . . ."[145] Penner explains that this 'two ways' tradition "frames its ethics within an overall eschatological framework. . . . ethical exhortation is grounded in an eschatological horizon, and the aim of that horizon is both to provide motivation for action and to define the purpose and structure of that action."[146] This eschatological dynamic is rooted in the promise that God will be faithful and restore those who repent, and "restoration in this setting is no longer the return to this-worldly material prosperity, but the hope of a new life and world in the coming kingdom of God."[147]

In James, "The blessing is the 'crown of eternal life' and the curse is also clearly spelled out: judgment by God. . . . The conceptual world and the specific motifs of the 'two ways' tradition inform the writer of this community instruction. The writer conceives of a path to life and one to death, and urges the readers to choose the one which leads to blessing."[148] Throughout Israel's history in the Promised Land, these 'two ways' continually confront the chosen people. The cycle of blessing, curses, repentance and salvation reoccur again and again (Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, etc.).

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[144] Penner, 225.

[145] Ibid.

[146] Ibid., 230.

[147] Ibid.

[148] Ibid., 232.

The monarchy, especially king David, became a part of God's salvation. Israel rose to her greatest worldly glory under king David (reigned ca. 1000-961 B.C.) and his son, king Solomon (reigned ca. 961-922 B.C.). Yet bad kings arose and the people were unfaithful to God despite the warnings of the prophets who continually called the people to repentance. Israel was finally broken by her enemies and led into captivity in Babylon.[149] The Babylonian captivity was interpreted as God's judgment upon Israel for their sin against God, for their unfaithfulness to Him. God did deliver them, allow them to return to the Promised Land and rebuild the temple and their cities.[150] But Israel was not able to restore the monarchy and her earthly glory never again approached that of the monarchy.

The monarchy of earthly kings faded, but the 'enthronement' Psalms reveal a "God who visits his people to accomplish his royal purposes . . . ."[151] Psalm 96 says to worship Him and rejoice, "For He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with His truth." (Psalm 96:13 NKJ) Ladd observes that the reason for rejoicing here is not that God sits up in the heavens and judges, "But that God will come and visit the earth to judge men and to establish his rule effectively among men who do not now acknowledge it."[152] The earthly monarchy faded, but the eschatological message is that God Himself will come as king to judge and deliver.

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[149] Samaria and the Northern part of Israel fell in 722 B.C. Jerusalem and the South fell in 586/7 B.C.

[150] The Second Temple was completed in 515 B.C.

[151] George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence Of The Future*, revised ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), 47.

[152] Ibid., 48.

The biblical wisdom literature also builds upon eschatological theology, especially in its strong emphasis upon the 'two ways' theme. Throughout Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job, the wisdom Psalms and other portions of wisdom literature the 'two ways' are strongly and clearly emphasized. The righteous will receive blessings, but the wicked will be punished. An example of this is Proverbs 10 through 14 where the 'two ways' are continually contrasted in the same sentence. Proverbs 11:8 says, "The righteous is delivered from trouble, and it comes to the wicked instead." (NKJ)

The prophets, as messengers of God's Word, were sent by God to preach His words of judgment and hope. The goal was to lead people to repentance, faith and faithfulness to God so that they would be saved in the coming judgment. Ladd writes: "Characteristic of the prophetic promise is its ethical emphasis. Israel always stands in an ethical tension between the present and the future. The future is a day of hope and promise only for those who are faithful to God; and therefore a constant ethical demand is laid upon Israel to turn from her sins and to submit to God. . . . When the future is portrayed, whether in terms of judgment or redemption, it is to enable God's people to repent and so avoid the threatening judgment and to be encouraged by the divine promise of blessing for righteous conduct."[153]

The prophets spoke of the "Day of the Lord", which was often seen as being the events of judgment and salvation that Israel was experiencing (e.g. captivity, deliverance, etc.). Yet these events were connected to something much larger:

> **Behind this "Day of the Lord," however, stood for the prophets the** ultimate **visitation, the ultimate Day of the Lord, when God would arise and** judge all wickedness everywhere**, and finally** put all things right for his—and for all—people completely. **This time is often called "that day" or the "last day/latter**

[153] Ibid., 70.

> **days"** (אַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים/αἱ ἐσχάται ἡμέραι[hence, "eschatological"]) (Is. 2:2; Micah 4:1) or "afterward" (אַחַר/μετὰ ταῦτα) (Hos. 3:5 [cf. Joel 2:28]) in the prophets. . . . This final "Day of the Lord" would, again, comprise judgment and grace, but now in the fuller and more universal sense.[154]

Writing in a similar vein, Ladd identifies the central concern of this prophetic perspective: "The Day of the Lord for the prophets was *both* the immediate act of God expected in history and the ultimate eschatological visitation. . . . The two events are viewed as though they were one. . . . the warning of the nearness of the Day of the Lord is more a note of ethical exhortation . . . This tension between the immediate and the ultimate future, between history and eschatology, stands at the heart of the ethical concern of the prophetic perspective."[155]

From the time Abraham was called to be the father of the chosen people, the Israelites had witnessed God's special acts of salvation for them. Yet the prophets increasingly "came to see that the eschatological narrative must be *universal* in scope. The universality of Israel's eschatological expectation arose in part out of the anticipation of a final display of divine justice. Central to the prophetic message was the belief in a God who was just and therefore who desired justice."[156] The prophets declared that God would send "a righteous king who would come in the name and power of Yahweh."[157] But this time His justice and salvation would "not be an isolated, national event. As early as the call of Abraham, God had promised that this nation would be the means of blessing

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[154] James W. Voelz, *What Does This Mean?: Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Post-Modern World*, 2d ed. (St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1995), 247. The bold print in this quote is Voelz' own emphasis.

[155] Ladd, 74-75.

[156] Grenz, 256.

to the entire world (Gen. 12:1-3). . . . the demonstration of the divine glory must be universal in scope; it must occur in the presence of all nations."[158] As the age of the prophets ended, Israel and the world stood on the brink of the arrival of Jesus who was proclaimed universal king, judge and savior.

Jesus' Role

Entering the New Testament, one finds a continuity with Old Testament eschatological theology, with the addition of an important feature—the role of Jesus:

> With hope born out of faith in the God of the future, the New Testament writers handed on to the church and to Christian theology the Old Testament vision of God's grand action in bringing history—and hence all creation—to its purposeful end. The New Testament added one important feature to this story, however. The apostles declared that the event that will mark the climax of human history is the return of the crucified and risen Jesus. For the first Christians, this vision of a consummation centered in the return of Christ did not remain merely a set of beliefs about the future but functioned as a central aspect of their faith in the living, active God, a faith that led to hopeful engagement in the world.[159]

Eschatological theology was primary in Jesus' teaching and preaching. Jesus' first words in the Gospel of Mark are eschatological: "After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 'The time has come,' he said. 'The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!'" (Mark 1:14-15 NIV). Jesus' parables of the kingdom of God, His apocalyptic teachings (Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21), and His final commission to His disciples are eschatological.

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[157] Ibid., 257.

[158] Ibid.

[159] Ibid., 258.

Besides fulfilling the role of eschatological teacher, proclaiming that eschatological fulfillment was taking place in His day and would soon be completely culminated, Jesus Himself plays the central role in eschatological fulfillment. Karl Löwith observes:

> According to the New Testament view, the advent of Christ is not a particular, though outstanding, fact within the continuity of secular history but the unique event that shattered once and for all the whole frame of history by breaking into its natural course, which is a course of sin and death. . . . God's revelation in a historical man is his self-disclosure in the 'Son of Man,' and the supreme test of his being the Son of God or a God-man is the Resurrection, by which he transcends the life and death of every conceivable historical man.[160]

Jesus' role in eschatological fulfillment has both a completed aspect and a future aspect.[161] The completed aspect is that when He died on the cross, Jesus suffered the justice of a righteous God against the sin of humanity. He suffered the full punishment for all the sins of the world so that "whoever believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). He conquered death by His resurrection and sent the Holy Spirit to fill those who believe in Him. Through faith in Jesus, people enjoy the present reality of forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God, eternal life, and God's presence. The

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[160] Karl Löwith, *Meaning in History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1949), 192-193. See also Penner, who states: "The central confession of early Christianity, the death and resurrection of Jesus, is interpreted within an eschatological framework as the eschatological event *sine qua non*." Penner, 111. In addition, Voelz writes, "This is the message of the New Testament: in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, and Pentecost (='the Christ-event') the vision of the prophets of the 'last days' is fulfilled." Voelz, 248. Voelz goes on to remark that Jesus claimed this directly (Matthew 12:28, Luke 19:44), the people knew it (Luke 7:16; 1:68-69), and Paul claimed it (1 Corinthians 10:11).

[161] See Ladd, 3-42, for a good survey of the development of eschatological theology in the last hundred years since Weiss and Schweitzer crafted the Consistent Eschatology view. Ladd concludes the survey thus: "A synthesis of present and future in the understanding of the Kingdom of God is found in the works of a host of other scholars dealing with other subjects. So extensively is this synthesis to be found that we must recognize it as an emerging consensus." (page 38) And he includes a long footnote of well-known scholars who share this view. Finally, he summarizes in this manner: "If however, the Kingdom is the reign of God, not merely in the human heart but dynamically active in the person of Jesus and in human history, then it becomes possible to understand how the Kingdom of God can be present and future, inward

future aspect is that Jesus will return in glory, judge all who have lived on the earth, and establish a new heaven and earth where believers will live with God eternally in righteousness and peace without suffering and death (Revelation 21:1-4). This makes the 'Christ-event' more than just unique. It is eschatological in that it both inaugurates the last days (eschaton) and looks forward to their completion when He comes again.

Jesus promised to return soon (Revelation 22:20), but it is impossible for one to know exactly when that will be (Acts 1:7, Matthew 24:36ff.): "This is where the Gospels leave us: anticipating an imminent event and yet unable to date its coming. Logically this may appear contradictory, but it is a tension with an ethical purpose—to make date-setting impossible and therefore to demand constant readiness."[162]

Those who believe in Jesus live now as a community of faith, anticipating the final culmination: "As participants in the community of Christ, our identity is bound up with a particular vision, the eschatological horizon of the biblical narrative, which speaks about our joining Christ in his resurrection and participating in God's eternal community in the new creation."[163] The Epistle of James is written to such a community. Its moral vision is infused with the dynamic eschatological tension of patience and readiness for Jesus' imminent return.[164] The community is called to be merciful to those in need and

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and outward, spiritual and apocalyptic. For the redemptive royal activity of God could act decisively more than once and manifest itself powerfully in more than one way in accomplishing the divine end." (page 42)

[162] Ibid., 328.

[163] Grenz, 270.

[164] Ladd says that every generation of believers should benefit from this tension: "A consciousness of this tension between history and eschatology would give to every generation of believers a powerful motivation and dynamic. The realization that they may well be the last generation before the final victory of the Kingdom, and yet the necessity to plan and work with the sanity of a long perspective for the future is a biblical tension." (page 339)

do what will build an edifying community of faith, yet they are also called to be ready in faithfulness for His imminent return. What follows is an account of the eschatological metanarrative as expressed in James.

The Metanarrative as Expressed in James

The most widely recognized reflection of the eschatological metanarrative in the Epistle of James is the framework, made up of an opening and a closing. While the detailed parameters of the opening and closing vary among the commentators, the opening always includes 1:2ff. and the closing includes at least 5:7-11. In each case, eschatology is apparent. The most obvious references are 1:12 and 5:7-9.[165]

James 1:12 seems to be a climax or conclusion to the opening words (1:2ff.) about trials/temptations. It reads, "Blessed is the man who endures trial/temptation, because having been approved (by test) he will receive the crown of life which He promised to those who love Him." In the New Testament, "crown" is a reference to the final, eternal reward given to faithful believers.[166] James 5:7-9 reads (NKJV), "7. Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See *how* the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain.
8. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

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[165] James 3:5, included by some as part of the closing, has the words ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις ("In the latter days") from whence comes the English word, "eschatology".

[166] Cf. 1 Corinthians 9:25, 2 Timothy 4:8, 1 Peter 5:4, Revelation 2:10 and 3:11. It is interesting to note that James 1:12 is singular in reference to the one who endures and receives the crown of life, but the discussion of encountering trials began with plural exhortations (1:2-4). An eschatological interpretation is suggested in this difference: the eschatological community of faith works together to support one another in trials and temptations, but ultimately each person is judged individually.

9. Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!" Each verse mentions the Lord's return, with a growing sense of imminence. These three verses convey the characteristic eschatological tension between patient waiting and imminent judgment/deliverance.

Todd Penner has crafted one of the most detailed and persuasive arguments for James' eschatological frameworks and its role in controlling how the main body should be read in *The Epistle of James and Eschatology.*[167] Penner's thesis is, "the community instruction of the main body is deliberately framed within the eschatological horizon of inclusio . . . ."[168] He says:

> The eschatological focus of the framework pushes the community instruction in a particular direction: the community instruction is for the people living in the 'last days', awaiting the imminent return of the Judge, and desiring to be found perfect and complete at the time of judgment. The main body of the letter is exactly that: the working out of what the writer understands as one remaining faithful in order to be judged righteous.[169]

Andrew Chester observes, "The fact that explicit eschatological themes are found primarily in the outer framework of the letter, does not (*pace* Popkes) necessarily diminish their significance. This argument can obviously be turned round; that is, the

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[167] See also Andrew Chester and Ralph P. Martin, *The Theology Of The Letters of James, Peter, and Jude* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 16 fn. 2: "Baasland 1982, 122, 124 argues that James sees everything from the perspective of judgement (cf. also ch. I, note 13); so also Blondel 1979, 144, Bieder 1949, 108-110, Burchard 1980a, 28-31, 1980b, 317, 325, Obermüller 1972, 235, 238, 241, 243 all stress the central importance of eschatology for the letter and its theology as a whole." Scaer, 126-127, says, "James does not let go of understanding eschatology as the primary motivation in Christian life." Wall, 273, comments on James 5:7-20 as follows: "James now concludes as it opens, with a pair of integral statements. By recalling important catchwords and phrases from opening statements, the author forms an *inclusio* with his thesis that frames the commentary on wisdom found in between. More than a retrospective on the way of wisdom according to James, this conclusion also supplies the principal motivation for following its advice: the coming of the Lord is near. The testing of the community's faith in God has certain eschatological implications which are brought to focus here."

[168] Penner, 216-217.

substantial 'introductory' section can be seen as outlining the main, important themes for the central section of the book, where they are taken up both implicitly and explicitly, and are resumed in the concluding section."[170] These explicit and implicit references are woven throughout the moral exhortations of the epistle. They show up in the 'two ways' theme of blessings and curses, salvation and judgment. Often present is the idea of reversal in the time of judgment (the low being raised up and the high being put down). These eschatological references will be detailed below in a chapter by chapter survey.

The first chapter of James refers to God's lifting up and putting down (reversal), the crown of life, death, salvation and blessing. Verses 9-11 state that the lowly brother will be exalted and the rich will be humbled (perish and fade away). These verses convey the eschatological reversal brought about by God's judgment. Verse 12 makes reference to the "crown of life" that will be granted to the one who endures trial. Verse 12 is a climax in the discussion of trials that begins in verse 2. Verses 14-15 note that when one is drawn away by temptation, the result is death. In verse 21, "the implanted word" is able to save souls. Verse 25 conveys a promise that the one who continues in God's saving word and is a "doer of the work" will be "blessed in what he does" (reminiscent of the 'two ways' tradition).

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[169] Ibid., 212.

[170] Chester, 16-17. See also Penner, 217: "The theme of eschatology, however, although it stands out most clearly in the opening and closing sections of the main body, is not limited to the framework alone for it both undergirds and influences the actual community instruction. This means, in essence, that if one analyzes James in light of its form, content, and function, the designation of James as a 'letter of eschatological community instruction' properly mediates the various elements of genre categorization, resulting in a fairly specific designation of the text in regards to form (paraenesis within a controlling framework), content (community instruction within an eschatological context), and function (sustains and defines the community in relation to its religio-eschatological belief system)."

The second chapter includes an exhortation against partiality (verses 1-13) and a discussion of faith and works (verses 14-26). The exhortation against partiality is framed with eschatological reference: Jesus is called "the Lord of glory" in verse 1, verse 5 says God has chosen the poor to be rich in faith and "heirs of the kingdom," verse 8 mentions the "royal law" (possibly alluding to God's kingdom), and in verse 13 "mercy" appears in regard to judgment. The discussion of faith and works (verses 14-26) begins with talk of faith, implying that faith without works cannot save a person. Verses 21-25 discuss being shown to be righteous or justified.

Most of chapter three deals with stumbling in word. It begins by warning that teachers will "receive a stricter judgment" (verse 1). Verses 13-18 focus upon two kinds of wisdom ('two ways'): earthly wisdom and wisdom from above. Wisdom is accompanied by "confusion and every evil thing" (verse 16). But peace and good fruits (verses 17-18) are present with wisdom from above.

Chapter four has talk of grace (verse 6) and the "one Lawgiver and Judge, who is able to save and destroy" (verse 12). In verses 8-10 eschatological repentance is urged by use of the words, "cleanse," "purify," "lament," "mourn," "weep," "gloom," and "humble yourselves." Verse 10 says that He will lift up those who humble themselves before Him.

Finally, chapter five begins in verse 1 with a call to repentance. The rich are urged to "weep and howl" for the "miseries" that are coming upon them. In verse 3 the gold and silver of the rich will be a "witness" against them and eat their flesh "like fire" (allusions to judgment). The next verse proclaims that the cries of the laborers have reached the ears of the "Lord of Sabaoth" (an impending judgment allusion). Verses 7-9 each have a reference to the coming of the Lord, climaxing with His imminent coming:

"Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!" Verses 10-11 exhort by means of the examples of the prophets (examples of suffering and patience) and Job (an example of perseverance) with the note that the "end" intended by the Lord can be seen (with reference to His compassion and mercy). Verse 12 talks of falling into judgment. The last two verses of the epistle (19-20) state that turning an erring sinner back will "save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins."

Thus, the eschatological themes of judgment, death as a result of sin, grace and salvation are woven throughout the Epistle of James. This eschatological theology expresses the metanarrative in which James' moral exhortations are grounded. The Epistle of James is connected to the larger biblical narrative (which itself is eschatological in orientation) by the mention of five biblical personalities (Abraham, Isaac, and Rahab in 2:21-25, Job in 5:11, and Elijah in 5:17) along with "the prophets" (5:10). The eschatological metanarrative of James and biblical narrative as a whole is grounded in the historical development of God's plan of salvation (the experience of God's creating and saving deeds and the saving work of Jesus) along with the promise of future imminent culmination. Salvation history and promise are the basis of James' metanarrative. The eschatological community of those who believe in Jesus looks backward through the original creation, the fall of humanity into sin and the divine work of salvation that has already been accomplished. Living in the present reality of salvation, that community also looks forward to the final divine work of culmination when Jesus returns to judge and deliver according to the promises.

Summary

This chapter has presented the moral vision of the Epistle of James. The moral exhortations and the metanarrative in which they are grounded were presented.

First, the three criticisms of Luther against the epistle were given a response since they have been influential in establishing the framework in which James has been studied. The three are: 1. It contradicts Paul, 2. It doesn't preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and 3. It is thrown together chaotically. An answer for the first was found in perspectival diversity, polyvalence was the response to the second, and paraenesis was the resolution to the third. This section not only presented isagogical material, but in that presentation noted the importance of finding a dependable framework within which the Epistle of James can be interpreted. The eschatological theology of James was recommended as that framework.

Next, the moral exhortations of James were presented by means of its core virtue and six arenas of exhortation. The core virtue was identified as eschatological faithfulness. The core virtue links the arenas of exhortation to the metanarrative. Six arenas were presented as follows: 1. revere God, 2. love others, 3. do good works, 4. bridle the tongue, 5. be wise, 6. be patient.

Finally, the metanarrative of the epistle was presented as Christian eschatology. The biblical roots of eschatology were first presented, then the eschatology woven through the Epistle of James was presented.

The moral vision of James in terms of its exhortations and metanarrative was presented with a view towards comparison with the moral vision of *Zhongyong*. The moral vision of *Zhongyong* is the topic of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

ZHONGYONG (中庸)

Introduction

Chapter 2 presented the moral vision of the Epistle of James, with a view toward comparison with the moral vision of *Zhongyong*. The purpose of this chapter is to present the moral vision of *Zhongyong*. Similar to chapter 2, the moral exhortations and metanarrative will be presented after a brief introduction to *Zhongyong*.

In the moral exhortations discussion, the core virtue of *Zhongyong* and five arenas of exhortation will be identified. Integrity (誠) will be identified as the core virtue of *Zhongyong*. It radiates through the five arenas of exhortation and gives a basic unity to them. In addition, integrity provides one of the clearest links between the practical moral maxims and the metanarrative in which they are grounded. The five arenas of exhortation that will be identified in *Zhongyong* are the following: be reverent, be benevolent, cultivate morality, be moderate, and be wise. As in the previous chapter, the goal of this method is to achieve a clear and unified overview of *Zhongyong*'s moral exhortations in order to facilitate a comparison with the moral exhortations of James.

Presentation of *Zhongyong*'s metanarrative will follow the moral exhortations. *Zhongyong*'s metanarrative will be presented as Confucian cosmology and ultimate goals. It will be unfolded with a view towards comparison with the Christian eschatology of the Epistle of James. The goal of such presentation is to enhance holistic cross-textual interaction between *Zhongyong* and the Epistle of James.

The following introductory issues are intended to set the stage for and lead into the moral vision of *Zhongyong* by giving a brief overview of *Zhongyong*. This overview

leads into the moral vision by showing that morality is the main emphasis of *Zhongyong*. A brief introduction will be given to *Zhongyong*'s author, Zhu Xi's introduction to *Zhongyong*, *Zhongyong*'s chapter I as summary of the book, *Zhongyong*'s outline, and *Zhongyong*'s main point.

Author

Zhongyong was written by Confucius' grandson, Zisi (子思 492-431 B.C.), according to tradition. Ancient Chinese books suffer the common fate of being assigned one author while their final form represents the work of many hands. The opinion of Wu Yi accounts for centuries of discussion regarding this mystery: 中庸一書的基本是子思寫的 ("The foundation of the book, *Zhongyong*, was written by Zisi").[171] Further, 全書的真精神還是作者所賦予的，後人只是加以修飾，補充，和整理成書而已。("The whole book's real spirit is still credited to the author [Zisi]; the ones who followed merely modified, supplemented and organized it into a book.")[172]

Zisi was apparently about thirteen years old when Confucius died in 479 B. C. Confucius was evidently disappointed in his own son who did not have a strong interest in his teachings. The grandson, Zisi, became the family member who passed the baton. James Legge records the following story about Confucius and his grandson:

> During the years of his boyhood, then, Tsze-sze [Zisi] must have been with his grandfather, and received his instructions. It is related that one day, when he was alone with the sage, and heard him sighing, he went up to him, and bowing twice, inquired the reason of his grief. 'Is it,' said he, 'because you think that your

[171] WU Yi, 10. See his whole discussion, including history of the opinions about and development of the research of *Zhongyong*'s author in WU Yi, 1-10. For a similar discussion, see WANG Congming, 29-85.

[172] Ibid., 6.

descendants, through not cultivating themselves, will be unworthy of you? Or is it that, in your admiration of the ways of Yao and Shun, you are vexed that you fall short of them?' 'Child,' replied Confucius, 'how is it that you know my thoughts?' 'I have often,' said Tsze-sze, 'heard from you the lesson, that when the father has gathered and prepared the firewood, if the son cannot carry the bundle, he is to be pronounced degenerate and unworthy. The remark comes frequently into my thoughts, and fills me with great apprehensions.' The sage was delighted. He smiled and said, 'Now, indeed, shall I be without anxiety! My undertakings will not come to nought. They will be carried on and flourish.'[173]

Zhu Xi's Introduction

Zhu Xi established what became the official text, the text that is most commonly used to the present day. He introduces *Zhongyong* with the words of Cheng I (程頤 1033-1107), whom Tu refers to as "one of the most perceptive thinkers in the Sung dynasty"[174]:

> 子程子曰，不偏之謂中，不易之謂庸，中者，天下之正道，庸者，天下定理，此篇乃孔門傳授心法，子思恐其久而差也，故筆之於書，以授孟子，其書始言一理，中散為萬事，末復合為一理，放之，則彌六合，卷之，則退藏於密，其味無窮，皆實學也，善讀者，玩索而有得焉，則終身用之，有不能盡者矣。My master, the philosopher Ch'ang [Cheng I], says:--'Being without inclination to either side is called CHUNG [中]; admitting of no change is called YUNG [庸]. By CHUNG is denoted the correct course to be pursued by all under heaven; by YUNG is denoted the fixed principle regulating all under heaven. This work contains the law of the mind, which was handed down from one to another, in the Confucian school, till Tsze-sze, fearing lest in the course of time errors should arise about it, committed it to writing, and delivered it to Mencius. The Book first speaks of one principle; it next spreads this out, and embraces all things; finally, it returns and gathers them all up under the one principle. Unroll it, and it fills the universe; roll it up, and it retires and lies hid in mysteriousness. The relish of it is inexhaustible. The whole of it is solid learning. When the skilful reader has explored it with delight till he has apprehended it, he may carry it into practice all his life, and will find that it cannot be exhausted.'[175]

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[173] Legge, *Confucius*, 37-38.

[174] TU, *Centrality*, 16.

The idea here expressed gave comfort and strength to the Confucian school of thought since it maintained that an unbroken line of transmission linked the two greatest Confucian teachers: Confucius (551-479 B.C.) and Mencius (371-289 B.C.). This well-known introduction to the *Zhongyong* conveys the conviction that a core understanding of the Confucian school is contained in *Zhongyong*. It speaks of "one principle" (一理) which "embraces all things" (六合). Lin Yutang writes the following about *Zhongyong*: "In this book, we see the philosophic basis for Confucianism." He continues, "In this short book, I find the most complete statement of Confucian philosophy."[176] As a work of the generations following Confucius, *Zhongyong* is probably the best systematic expression of the heart of Confucian thought among the ancient books.

Chapter I As Summary

Zhongyong's first chapter operates as a summary of the whole work:

> 天命之謂性；率性之謂道；修道之謂教。道也者，不可須臾離也；可離，非道也。是故君子戒慎乎其所不睹，恐懼乎其所不聞。莫見乎隱，莫顯乎微。故君子慎其獨也。喜怒哀樂之未發，謂之中。發而皆中節，謂之和。中也者，天下之大本也。和也者，天下之達道也。致中和，天地位焉，萬物育焉。What Heaven mandated is called human nature; acting in accordance with this nature is called the Way; cultivating the Way is called education. This Way cannot be separated from us for a moment. What can be separated from us is not the Way. Therefore the superior person is cautious about what is not seen and apprehensive about what is not heard. Nothing is more viewed than what is hidden and nothing is more revealed than what is small. Therefore the superior person is vigilant when alone. When joy, anger, grief and pleasure are not expressed, it is called centrality. When each of them are expressed appropriately,

[175] Legge, *Confucius*, 382-383.

[176] LIN, *Pagan*, 81.

> it is called harmony. Centrality is the great foundation of the world. Harmony is the universal path of the world. Extend centrality and harmony; heaven and earth are then situated wholesomely in continuity, all things are then nourished, flourishing in continuity.

Zhu Xi wrote the following conclusion to this first chapter of *Zhongyong*:

> In the first chapter which is given above, Tsze-sze [Zisi] states the views which had been handed down to him, as the basis of his discourse. First, it shows clearly how the path of duty is to be traced to its origin in Heaven, and is unchangeable, while the substance of it is provided in ourselves, and may not be departed from. Next, it speaks of the importance of preserving and nourishing this, and of exercising a watchful self-scrutiny with reference to it. Finally, it speaks of the meritorious achievements and transforming influence of sage and spiritual men in their highest extent. The wish of Tsze-sze was that hereby the learner should direct his thoughts inwards, and by searching in himself, there find these truths, so that he might put aside all outward temptations appealing to his selfishness, and fill up the measure of the goodness which is natural to him. This chapter is what the writer Yang [楊龜山 1053-1135] called it,--'The sum of the whole work.' In the ten chapters which follow, Tsze-sze quotes the words of the Master to complete the meaning of this.[177]

The first chapter, as "the sum of the whole work," is most significant. It merits a brief discussion here as an overview of the whole book.

In a broad way, Confucianism is contained in the first sentence: 天命之謂性；率性之謂道；修道之謂教。("What Heaven mandated is called human nature; acting in accordance with this nature is called the Way; cultivating the Way is called education.") This sentence touches upon core features of Confucianism. First, the moral nature of humanity comes from a high source, called Heaven.[178] There is a strong sense of authority in the first two characters (天命) which can also be translated, "Heaven's

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[177] Legge, *Confucius*, 385-386.

[178] As noted in the dissertation Introduction (page 32), "heaven" (*tian* 天) is written with a capital "h" in cases where it carries a connotation of more than just the physical sky and universe.

Decree" or "Mandate of Heaven."[179] The second point is that the Way is following what that Heaven-mandated nature would lead one to do. Third, to cultivate oneself or to mature in this Way, one needs education. Broadly, one can say that the Confucian way of life is following one's conscience with the help of education. The right and universal Way is contained within the nature or conscience of each person, which was originally given by Heaven. It is founded upon the high authority of Heaven. But the Way cannot be discovered by looking inside of oneself alone. It requires education. One must study the good moral examples from the past in order to cultivate oneself or to mature in following the Way of the conscience or nature which has been decreed by Heaven: "Traditional standards of conduct are the very essence of Confucianism . . . seven names, Yao, Shun, Yu, Tang, Wen, Wu, and Duke Chou, are repeated again and again as paragons, whose deeds are models of virtuous conduct."[180] In a word, to find the Way determined by Heaven, Confucianism looks both inward and to the past.

After the first sentence proclaims the core understanding, the rest of the first chapter continues with an expansion of its meaning. It says that the Way that is according to Heaven-mandated human nature cannot be separated from us for even a moment. Indeed, it seems reasonable that we cannot be separated from our own nature. *Zhongyong* then goes on to say that what can be separated from us is not the Way and because of this one should be cautious, apprehensive and vigilant about what appears to

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[179] "Mandate of Heaven" (天命) is a term that conveys special authority, the highest order or command. While sometimes not capitalized (Ames, 72 and 89; Graham, 1), generally the phrase is capitalized to convey the nuance of special authority (CHAN, 22; FUNG, 30 and 441; CHING, 123; The Council of Chinese Cultural Renaissance, 15; TU, *Centrality*, 30 and 160). The discussion of *Zhongyong*'s metanarrative will express the importance of the Mandate of Heaven in the Confucian world-view.

[180] Starr, 108-109.

be insignificant or hidden. The nature endowed by Heaven is ever present, so even the small and hidden things are important. The smallest things and the most hidden things are noticed in the biggest ways. For example, a wrong deed done secretly can be published widely. Caution, apprehension and vigilance imply that effort is needed to avoid being diverted from acting according to the Heaven-mandated nature. Zhu Xi's conclusion to the first chapter notes that "the substance of it [the Way] is provided in ourselves [our Heaven-mandated nature]," yet acting according to it doesn't occur spontaneously. Zhu Xi felt that Zisi wanted the learner to "put aside all outward temptations appealing to his selfishness, and fill up the measure of the goodness which is natural to him." (以去夫外誘之私，而充其本然之善。)[181] The outward threat of temptation and the inward threat of selfishness are challenges that require caution, apprehension and vigilance if one wants to act according to the Way. Effort is required. Watchfulness, cultivation and education are required. The results of these efforts are far-reaching.

A major emphasis in the latter part of *Zhongyong* is the influence a cultivated person can exert upon other people and things. According to Zhu Xi, the final topic of the first chapter is "the meritorious achievements and transforming influence of sage and spiritual men in their highest extent." A key phrase is "extend centrality and harmony" (致中和). "Extend" means that one's influence spreads out broadly and has wide-reaching effects. The well-developed person is able to extend influence in a way that has good transforming effects on other people and things. That influence is referred to with

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[181] Legge, *Confucius*, 386.

the words, "centrality and harmony" (中和). "Centrality" (中) is the foundation that is present before the emotions ("joy, anger, grief and pleasure") are expressed. "Centrality" is balance or equilibrium. Besides extending balance, the sage also extends "harmony" (和). "Harmony" is defined as the situation in which the emotions are expressed appropriately. "Harmony" is the condition of everything working together well, as it is supposed to work together in a mutually nourishing way. When centrality and harmony are extended, the result is a wholesome situation in which all things mutually nourish each other in continuity. Thus, the influence of those who are able to cultivate themselves well has far-reaching, wholesome, and nourishing results.

The first chapter summarizes both the book, *Zhongyong*, and Confucianism in a nutshell. *Zhongyong*'s first chapter says that human conscience is mandated by the high authority of Heaven. Acting according to conscience is the Way, which is cultivated by education. One must put diligent effort into this cultivation. The result of good cultivation is that centrality and harmony can be extended in a way that has a wholesome and nourishing effect in Heaven and earth and all things.

Zhongyong's Outline

The first chapter of *Zhongyong* is an introductory summary. The following chapters (II-XXXIII) can be divided roughly into three sections. Tu writes:

> Although the preceding chapters, "Profound Person," "Fiduciary Community" and "Moral Metaphysics" have been intended to elicit what the Confucian classicist might call the "subtle message and the great meaning" of *Chung-yung*, they have also adhered to both its sequence and its structure. My personal understanding of the text has been clear in my rendering of *chun-tzu* as the profound person; in my suggestion that the concept of *cheng* (often translated as "politics") in Chapter 20 (*Chung-yung* XX) may best be seen as a vision of the benevolent government fostering a community of trust; and in my interpretation

> of the last part of the text, centering on the idea of *ch'eng* (sincerity, reality, truth, or authenticity), as a statement about moral metaphysics.[182]

So Tu divides the book into three major topics that he interprets as the main meaning of *Zhongyong*: 1) Profound Person, 2) Fiduciary Community, and 3) Moral Metaphysics. In *Zhongyong*, the division of these is fairly rough since one topic flows into the next. Each of these major topics surface throughout the book. The book can be divided according to emphasis.

A simple outline is the following:

1. Introduction (Chapter I)
2. The Individual (Chapters II-XII)
3. The Community (Chapters XIII-XX.17)
4. Extension (Chapters XX.18-XXXIII)

According to the summary in chapter I (outline part 1), *Zhongyong* begins with individual (part 2) cultivation according to the Way. The individual influences family, relatives, friends, and society (part 3). Finally, the sage's influence is extended to all things (part 4). As Tu notes, the latter part of the book (part 4) centers on the idea of *cheng* (誠)[183], an important concept in regard to extending one's influence in far-reaching ways.

***Zhongyong's* Main Point**

The title, *Zhongyong* (中庸), comes from the sayings of Confucius and contains the basic idea of the book. There is some dissatisfaction with many of the attempts to

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[182] Tu, *Centrality*, 93.

translate the title into English.[184] The commonly accepted English translation is "The Doctrine of the Mean," or simply, "The Mean." This title is defective for a few reasons.[185] One deficiency is that it apparently comes from the "mean" (μεσότης) of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (Book II). Aristotle's "mean" refers to the middle between excess and deficiency (μέσον τι ὑπερβολῆς καὶ ἐλλείψεως).[186] It is an important part of Aristotle's moral theory, included within one of his definitions of a moral virtue (ἡ ἀρετὴ).[187] Aristotle's idea of "mean" does overlap with *Zhongyong*'s understanding.[188]

One of the best examples of this overlap is Chapter VI of *Zhongyong*: "The Master said, 'There was Shun:--He indeed was greatly wise! Shun loved to question *others*, and to study their words, though they might be shallow. He concealed what was bad *in them*, and displayed what was good. He took hold of their two extremes, *determined* the Mean, and employed it in *his government of* the people. It was by this that he was Shun!'"[189] The following words are pertinent: 執其兩端，用其中於民。 ("He took hold of their two extremes, *determined* the Mean, and employed it in *his*

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[183] *Cheng* (誠) is a central concept in *Zhongyong* and will be taken up in the discussion of *Zhongyong*'s core virtue (page 14).

[184] Legge notes various attempts to translate the title into English. Legge, *Confucius*, 382-383.

[185] See Appendix 2.2 "*Why* Zhongyong *is not a 'Doctrine of the Mean'*" in Ames, 150-152.

[186] Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, Revised ed., trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1934), 91.

[187] Ibid., 95.

[188] Aristotle overlaps in major ways, most of all in what MacIntyre calls 'practical rationality' (which he favors over Enlightenment-born 'instrumental rationality'). The idea being that there is a common morality among people. However, *Zhongyong*'s thought is broader than Aristotle's limited biological determinism by which he limited the good development of morality to males who are not slaves. *Zhongyong* allows that good moral development is possible for all people.

[189] Legge, *Confucius*, 388.

government of the people.") The overlap with Aristotle is evident, but both words of the title (*Zhongyong*, 中庸) are not used together here. Only the first word of the title (*zhong*, 中) is used.

Another example of overlap with Aristotle's "mean" is found in Chapter X: "'Therefore, the superior man cultivates *a friendly* harmony, without being weak.—How firm is he in his energy! He stands erect in the middle, without inclining to either side.—How firm is he in his energy! When good principles prevail in the government of his country, he does not change from what he was in retirement.—How firm is he in his energy! When bad principles prevail in the country, he maintains his course to death without changing.—How firm is he in his energy!'"[190] The key phrase in this quote is, 中立而不倚。("He stands erect in the middle, without inclining to either side.") Again, it is evident that only the first word of the title (Zhong, 中) is present.

Chapter IV provides a third example in which overlap with Aristotle's "mean" is evident: 子曰，道之不行也，我知之矣，知者，過之，愚者，不及也，道之不明也，我知之矣，賢者，過之，不肖者，不及也。("The Master said, 'I know how it is that the path *of the Mean* is not walked in:--The knowing go beyond it, and the stupid do not come up to it. I know how it is that the path of the Mean is not understood:--The men of talents and virtue go beyond it, and the worthless do not come up to it.")[191] The Chinese word Legge translates with the English word, "mean," is 道 (Dao). Neither of the characters of the title, *Zhongyong* (中庸), appear in this chapter.

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[190] Ibid., 390.

What can be said for using the word, "mean," as an English translation for *Zhongyong* is that it partially accounts for the first character (中). This is evident from the first two examples above (Chapters VI and X). It only partially accounts for the character, 中, because 中 has more than a two-dimensional meaning (as in the middle point between two extremes) in *Zhongyong*. In fact, Legge sometimes translates the character with the English word, "equilibrium."[192] The meaning of 中 in *Zhongyong* is multidimensional and coveys something akin to the English word, "balance."[193] When the full title (*Zhongyong*, 中庸) appears in the book, it doesn't convey the idea of a mean between two extremes.[194]

Tu Weiming is able to account for both characters (中庸) without subordinating one to the other in his translation: "centrality and commonality." *Zhongyong* is about what is central and what is common.[195] This especially applies to morality: "*Chung-yung* [中庸] can be characterized as approaching man and politics from a moral point of view."[196]

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[191] Ibid., 387.

[192] Ibid., 383-385.

[193] Unfortunately, relying upon the concept of "mean" and "middle way," a common feeling about *Zhongyong* is that its main message is that of walking the middle way. This is certainly part of the message, as can be seen from the above examples. However, it fails in its shortsightedness. 中, by itself, is used twelve times in the book with various meanings (chapters I, II, VI, VII, X, XX, XXXI).

[194] 中庸 occurs ten times in the book (four times in chapter II, and one time each in chapters III, VII, VIII, IX, XI, XXVII).

[195] Legge even translates the two independent uses of the character, 庸, with the word, 'ordinary' (chapter 13).

[196] Tu, *Centrality*, 67.

The main idea of *Zhongyong* is that there is a central path (道) of morality (德) common to all people. It is common to all because Heaven (天) has mandated it as human nature (性). The veering off of this central path is seen as an aberration from this moral nature or not acting according to it. Since that is a constant possibility, much watchfulness and effort is to be placed in being careful and rectifying oneself to walk according to the central and common morality of the universal human nature that was originally mandated by Heaven.

Zhongyong's Moral Exhortations

Although the various moral exhortations of *Zhongyong* appear sporadically throughout the book, a certain unity is present. This unity is apparent first in the core virtue, which radiates through the other exhortations. Secondly, the various exhortations can be organized into arenas. The following sections will describe the core virtue of *Zhongyong* and then identify and describe five arenas of exhortation in *Zhongyong*.

Integrity (誠) as Core Virtue

Integrity is identified here as the core virtue of *Zhongyong*. The Chinese character, 誠 (*cheng*), is variously translated as "integrity," "sincerity," "reality," "truthfulness," "authenticity," "genuineness." Although 誠 is most often rendered "sincerity," "integrity" is chosen here because it has a more substantial connotation and deeper meaning, more in line with the depth of meaning expressed in *Zhongyong*. The character itself gives some indication of its meaning. The character, 誠, is composed of two radicals: 言 ("speak") and 成 ("fulfill"). When the two radicals are united into one

character, the resulting character has a meaning like the idea of fulfilling what one speaks. It contains the thought of singleness and wholeness in a person. The character, 誠, in *Zhongyong* means being truthful with oneself. Consequently, "integrity," is used here as the translation.

A significant passage for 誠 in *Zhongyong* is the following (XX.18): "Integrity is the way of Heaven. The attainment of integrity is the way of men. He who possesses integrity, is he who, without an effort, hits what is right, and apprehends, without the exercise of thought;—he is the sage who naturally and easily embodies the *right* way. He who attains to integrity, is he who chooses what is good, and firmly holds it fast."[197] This passage hearkens back to the first verse of *Zhongyong*, which proclaims that Heaven has given humans their moral nature. Integrity is the way of Heaven. At its root or core, the moral nature of humans is traced back to integrity (in that integrity is identified as the way of Heaven). Integrity is faithfully cultivating what is according to the original moral nature given by Heaven. It is an inner oneness. The opposite is duplicity or disunity within oneself. The passage notes that the one who possess integrity is a sage who naturally, easily and without an effort understands and does what is right and good. In *Zhongyong* and all Confucian thought, being a sage is the highest human accomplishment. Integrity is identified here as the character quality according to which one is identified as a sage.

Another significant passage is XX.8. In this passage, five universal relationships are noted. The relationships are those between sovereign and minister, father and son, husband and wife, elder brother and younger brother, and friends. Then, the passage says:

知、仁、勇、三者，天下之達德也，所以行之者一也。("Knowledge, benevolence and courage, these three are the universal virtues. They are put into practice through integrity.") My English translation here is based upon Zhu Xi's interpretation of the character, 一. Regarding this 一, Zhu Xi writes: 一，則誠而已矣。[198] ("一 here merely means integrity.") The understanding is that there are three universal (天下之達…) levels or aspects dynamically operative in morality: the five relationships, the three virtues that are at work in the relationships, and the core quality of integrity by which the three virtues are put into practice. The core virtue is integrity.

Another passage that walks through a few levels to the core virtue of integrity is XX.17: "When those in inferior situations do not obtain the confidence of the sovereign, they cannot succeed in governing the people. There is a way to obtain the confidence of the sovereign;—if one is not trusted by his friends, he will not get the confidence of his sovereign. There is a way to being trusted by one's friends;—if one is not obedient to his parents, he will not be true to friends. There is a way to being obedient to one's parents;—if one, on turning his thoughts in upon himself, finds a want of integrity, he will not be obedient to his parents."[199]

The important effect of integrity on the individual, integrity's all important place and value, and integrity's effect on others are noted in XXV: "1. Integrity is that whereby self-completion is effected, and *its* way is that by which man must direct himself.

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[197] Adaptation of Legge, *Confucius*, 413.

[198] QIAN Mu 錢穆, *Si Shu Shiyi, Lunyu Wenjie* 四書釋義、論語文解 (Explanation of the Four Books and Literary Explanation of The Analects) in *Qian Bin Si Xiansheng Quanji* 錢賓四先生全集 (Complete Works of Mr. Qian), No. 2 (台北 Taipei: Lian Ren Publishers 聯經, 1998), 372.

[199] Adaptation of Legge, *Confucius*, 412-413.

2. Integrity is the end and beginning of things; without integrity there would be nothing. On this account, the superior man regards the attainment of integrity as the most excellent thing. 3. The possessor of integrity does not merely accomplish the self-completion of himself. With this quality he completes *other men and* things *also*."[200] Integrity is important as a core virtue in *Zhongyong* in the way that it first completes the individual, then through that individual of integrity other people and things are influenced.

Zhongyong finally exalts this virtue of integrity since its influence upon other people and things is an ever expanding and fruitful dynamic (XXII):

> It is only he who is possessed of the most complete integrity that can exist under heaven, who can give its full development to his nature. Able to give its full development to his own nature, he can do the same to the nature of other men. Able to give its full development to the nature of other men, he can give their full development to the natures of animals and things. Able to give their full development to the natures of creatures and things, he can assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth. Able to assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth, he may with Heaven and Earth form a ternion.[201]

Chapter XXXII finally praises integrity most highly: "1. It is only the individual possessed of the most entire integrity that can exist under heaven, who can adjust the great invariable relations of mankind, establish the great fundamental virtues of humanity, and know the transforming and nurturing operations of Heaven and Earth;—shall this individual have any being or anything beyond himself on which he depends? 2. Call him man in his ideal, how earnest is he! Call him an abyss, how deep is he! Call him Heaven, how vast is he!"[202]

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[200] Adaptation, Ibid., 418.

[201] Adaptation, Ibid., 415-416. See also chapter XXVI on page 419.

This core virtue, integrity, is present at the beginning in the source of human moral nature since it is the way of Heaven and the source of human morality is Heaven. Integrity is that core virtue by which one completes oneself and in turn influences other people and things. Integrity sees its highest fulfillment in enabling one to form a union with Heaven and Earth so as to bring about harmonious and continuous mutual nourishment of all things. In this way, integrity is integrally linked with the ultimate goal of *Zhongyong* and Confucian cosmology (to be discussed in the section entitled, '*Zhongyong*'s Metanarrative is Confucian Cosmology and Ultimate Goals'). Integrity is the core virtue which was originally received from Heaven by humanity and which radiates through the other virtues, which are encouraged through five arenas of exhortation.

Arenas of Exhortation

In *Zhongyong*, five arenas of exhortation can be identified:

1. Be reverent
2. Be benevolent
3. Cultivate morality
4. Be moderate
5. Be wise

1. <u>Be reverent</u> is an arena of exhortation in *Zhongyong* that includes honor, humility, worship and filial piety. This arena can be summed up with the Chinese character, 敬 (*jing*), which is often translated with the English words, "respect" or "honor." In the last chapter of *Zhongyong*, this disposition is summed up (XXXIII.3): 故君子，不動而敬… ("Therefore, the superior man, even when he is not moving, has

[202] Ibid., 429-430.

reverence . . . .") A few lines down, in one of the concluding statements of *Zhongyong*, reverence is seen as a means by which the ultimate goal of tranquillity is achieved (XXXIII.5): 是故君子，篤恭而天下平。("Therefore, the superior man being sincere and reverential, the whole world is conducted to a state of happy tranquillity.")[203] This reverence applies to worship, self-respect, filial piety and a general disposition of humility.

In regard to worship, chapter XVI speaks of how spiritual beings (鬼神) display their powers and "cause all the people in the kingdom to fast and purify themselves, and array themselves in their richest dresses, in order to attend at their sacrifices."[204] In chapter XIX, Confucius is quoted. He admires the filial piety of King Wu and Prince Zhou and says (XIX.6), 郊社之禮，所以事上帝也，宗廟之禮，所以祀乎其先也… ("By the ceremonies of the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth they served God, and by the ceremonies of the ancestral temple they sacrificed to their ancestors.")[205] In *Zhongyong*, religious reverence is usually linked with filial piety. In XX.7 it says that knowledge of Heaven is indispensable in regard to serving parents and cultivating oneself: "Hence the sovereign may not neglect the cultivation of his own character. Wishing to cultivate his character, he may not neglect to serve his parents. In order to serve his parents, he may not neglect to acquire a knowledge of men. In order to know men, he may not dispense

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[203] Ibid., 433.

[204] Ibid., 397-398.

[205] Ibid., 404. Chapters XVII and XVIII have similar words about sacrifices in ancestral temples in the context of filial piety.

with a knowledge of Heaven."[206] In *Zhongyong*, a progression is evident. One respects and cultivates the good in oneself, then parents are honored, and from these basic foundations others are honored. Finally, knowledge of Heaven is indispensable to these. Heaven is the beginning in that one's own moral nature is from Heaven (I.1), and Heaven is also at the end of the progression in that a knowledge of Heaven is indispensable to serving others (XX.7).

Reverence includes self-respect (XXVII.6): "Therefore, the superior man honours his virtuous nature, and maintains constant inquiry and study, seeking to carry it out to its breadth and greatness, so as to omit none of the more exquisite and minute points which it embraces, and to raise it to its greatest height and brilliancy, so as to pursue the course of the Mean. He cherishes his old knowledge, and is continually acquiring new."[207] Also (XXIX.3), "The institutions of the Ruler are rooted in his own character and conduct . . . ."[208] Self-respect can also be seen in the principle of reciprocity (忠恕) in XIII.3: "When one cultivates to the utmost the principles of his nature, and exercises them on the principle of reciprocity, he is not far from the path. What you do not like when done to yourself, do not do to others."[209]

An important part of cultivating oneself is honoring parents (XX.7, 17). Filial piety is reverence for one's parents. Chapters XVII-XX emphasize filial piety. Each of these chapters begins by mentioning examples from history. For example, "How greatly

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[206] Ibid., 406.

[207] Ibid., 422-423.

[208] Ibid., 425.

filial was Shun!" (XVII)[210], and "How far-extending was the filial piety of king Wu and the duke of Chau!" (XIX)[211]. Filial piety is defined by Confucius in XIX.2 as follows: "Now filial piety is seen in the skilful carrying out of the wishes of our forefathers, and the skilful carrying forward of their undertakings."[212] Filial piety continues long after they have departed (XIX.5): "They occupied the places of their forefathers, practiced their ceremonies, and performed their music. They reverenced those whom they honoured, and loved those whom they regarded with affection. Thus they served the dead as they would have served them alive; they served the departed as they would have served them had they been continued among them."[213] Honoring, serving and obeying parents while they are living, carrying forward their wishes and reverencing the departed forebears are all part of the reverence of filial piety in *Zhongyong*.

Being reverent also involves a general disposition of humility (XXVII.7): "Thus, when occupying a high situation he is not proud, and in a low situation he is not insubordinate."[214] In XXXIII.1, it says, "It is the way of the superior man to prefer the concealment *of his virtue*, while it daily becomes more illustrious, and it is the way of the mean man to seek notoriety, while he daily goes more and more to ruin."[215]

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[209] Ibid., 394. This version of the Golden Rule states the principle of reciprocity negatively. However, XIII.4 states it positively (cf., Matthew 7:12).

[210] Ibid., 398-399.

[211] Ibid., 402.

[212] Ibid.

[213] Ibid., 403.

[214] Ibid., 423. See also XIV.

[215] Ibid., 431. See also XI.3.

2. <u>Be benevolent</u> is an arena of exhortation in *Zhongyong* that relates to reverence, especially in regard to the principles of one's own nature and reciprocity (as noted above). The basic understanding is to serve others as one would like to be served (XIII.3-4): "What you do not like when done to yourself, do not do to others. In the way of the superior man there are four things, to not one of which have I as yet attained.—To serve my father, as I would require my son to serve me: to this I have not attained; to serve my prince, as I would require my minister to serve me: to this I have not attained; to serve my elder brother, as I would require my younger brother to serve me: to this I have not attained; to set the example in behaving to a friend, as I would require him to behave to me: to this I have not attained."[216] It involves not treating inferiors with contempt (XIV.3): "In a high situation, he does not treat with contempt his inferiors."[217] Rather, inferiors should be treated with kindness and consideration (XX.12-14). Yao Xinzhong writes that this benevolence "enables one to treat others as oneself and to be harmoniously integrated with the whole universe, so that the Confucian transcendental goal [harmony] can be attained."[218]

Zhongyong X.3 records the following words of Confucius regarding how to treat others: "To show forbearance and gentleness in teaching others; and not to revenge unreasonable conduct . . . the good man makes it his study."[219] Further, benevolence is a key dynamic in governing (XX.4): "Therefore the administration of government lies in

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[216] Ibid., 394.

[217] Ibid., 395.

[218] YAO Xinzhong, *Confucianism and Christianity: A Comparative Study of* Jen *and* Agape (Brighton, United Kingdom: Sussex Academic Press, 1996), 189.

getting proper men. Such men are to be got by means of the ruler's own character. That character is to be cultivated by his treading in the ways of duty. And the treading those ways of duty is to be cultivated by the cherishing of benevolence."[220]

Finally, benevolence is a key part of reaching one's highest potential. These words are spoken of the one who can reach the highest level of integrity (XXXII.2-3): "2. Call him benevolent, how earnest is he! Call him an abyss, how deep is he! Call him Heaven, how vast is he! 3. Who can know him, but he who is indeed quick in apprehension, clear in discernment, of far-reaching intelligence, and all-embracing knowledge, possessing all of Heaven's virtue?"[221]

3. <u>Cultivate morality</u> is an arena of exhortation that is emphasized throughout the whole book. A key aspect is practice. One cultivates morality by knowing and doing according to the good moral nature given by Heaven (I.1): "What Heaven has given is called moral human nature; following this nature is called the good moral way; cultivating this way is called education." Confucius exhorts (XIII.4), "Earnest in practicing the ordinary virtues, and careful in speaking about them, if, in his practice, he has anything defective, the superior man dares not exert himself; and if, in his words, he has any excess, he dares not allow himself such license."[222] *Zhongyong* XXII.2 says: "Common men and women, however much below the ordinary standard of character, can carry it into practice . . . ."[223] Cultivation of morality begins with what is near and low,

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[219] Legge, *Confucius*, 390.

[220] Ibid., 405.

[221] Adapted, Ibid., 430.

[222] Ibid., 394-395.

and progresses from such (XV.1): "The way of the superior man may be compared to what takes place in traveling, when to go to a distance we must first traverse the space that is near, and in ascending a height, when we must begin from the lower ground."[224]

Cultivating morality is important for government. *Zhongyong* XX.4 states that getting the right people is important for governing, the ruler's character is what gets these people, and the ruler's character is cultivated by following the Way. Therefore (XX.7), "The sovereign may not neglect the cultivation of his own character."[225] *Zhongyong* XX.11 records Confucius' words: "Knowing how to cultivate his own character, he knows how to govern other men. Knowing how to govern other men, he knows how to govern the kingdom with all its States and families."[226]

Speaking of moral virtues, *Zhongyong* XX.9 says, "Some practise them with a natural ease; some from a desire for their advantages; and some by strenuous effort. But the achievement being made, it comes to the same thing."[227] Such cultivation is praised and encouraged because it has far reaching influence (XXIII): "Next to the above is he who cultivates to the utmost the shoots *of goodness* in him. From those he can attain to the possession of sincerity. This sincerity becomes apparent. From being apparent, it becomes manifest. From being manifest it becomes brilliant. Brilliant, it affects others. Affecting others, they are changed by it. Changed by it, they are transformed."[228] Since

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[223] Ibid., 392.

[224] Ibid., 396.

[225] Ibid., 406. See also XX.9,15,17,19-21.

[226] Ibid., 408.

[227] Ibid., 407. See also, XXII and XXV.

the cultivation of morality has such great effects, "The superior man honours his virtuous nature, and maintains constant inquiry and study, seeking to carry it out to its breadth and greatness, so as to omit none of the more exquisite and minute points which it embraces, and to raise it to its greatest height and brilliancy, . . . He cherishes his old knowledge, and is continually acquiring new. He exerts an honest, generous earnestness, in the esteem and practice of all propriety."[229]

4. Be moderate is an arena of exhortation in *Zhongyong* that speaks of not falling short or going beyond what is right. In IV.1, Confucius is quoted as saying, "I know why it is that the Way is not practiced: the knowing go beyond it, while the ignorant do not come up to it. I know why it is that the Way is not understood: the worthy go beyond it, while the unworthy do not come up to it."[230] In this sense, being moderate means not exceeding or falling short of doing what is morally right. One can exceed by being too good or fall short by not being good enough. There is an appropriate moral balance.

Confucius admires Shun, who "was perhaps what may be considered a truly great intellect. Shun had a natural curiosity of mind and he loved to inquire into ordinary conversation. He ignored the bad (words?) and broadcast the good. Taking two extreme counsels, he took the mean between them and applied them in dealings with his people."[231] Thus Shun showed moderation in that he could choose the mean between two extremes. This related to "ordinary conversation." In other words, in the ordinary things of life, Shun showed moderation by not dealing with people according to counsel that

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[228] Ibid., 417.

[229] Ibid., 422-423.

[230] de Bary, *Sources*, 334.

was extreme. He had a sense of moderation in ordinary affairs. He didn't deal with them by falling towards an extreme. In similar manner, Confucius also said that the noble person "stands erect in the middle, without inclining to either side." (X.5)[232] The noble person isn't swayed toward an extreme on one side or the other.

A person is exhorted to avoid extremes, whether falling too short or going too far. In this regard Confucius said (XIII.1), "The Way is not something far from the actuality of human life. When men take what is far from the actuality of human life as the Way, that cannot be the Way."[233] The desired practice is to do what is appropriate to the situation (XIV). This ties in with the key emphasis of *Zhongyong*, "centrality and commonality." In other words, common life is a good guide to keep one from being unbalanced, from falling into an extreme. If one strays away from what is common and ordinary life among people, one is in danger of being unbalanced. The danger is that a person will act in ways that are far from appropriate to the situation.

5. Be wise is an arena of exhortation in *Zhongyong* related to knowing what is balanced and appropriate to the situation. Chapter XX emphasizes the importance of wisdom, especially in regard to knowledge of character or virtue (XX.8). It says (XX.9), "For some, wisdom is acquired through natural propensity, for others, through study, and for others in response to difficulties encountered. And yet in attaining wisdom, they are one and the same."[234] The effect of this wisdom about the virtues is that one knows "how

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[231] LIN, *Wisdom*, 112.

[232] Legge, *Confucius*, 390.

[233] The Council of Chinese Cultural Renaissance, 20.

[234] Ames, 102.

to cultivate their persons [i.e. one's own character]; those who realize how to cultivate their persons realize how to bring order to others; those who realize how to order others properly realize how to bring order to the world, the state, and the family."[235] Wisdom of how to cultivate oneself in *Zhongyong* always moves toward being an influence upon others. This is often expressed in terms of governing others well (especially in chapters XVIII-XXXII).

The sage (聖人) represents the peak of wisdom and moral development. The sage is first mentioned in chapter XI in regard to humility: "Though he may be all unknown, unregarded by the world, he feels no regret.—It is only the sage who is able for this."[236] The next mention of the sage occurs in chapter XX where it notes that the one "who possesses sincerity, is he who, without an effort, hits what is right, and apprehends, without the exercise of thought;—he is the sage who naturally and easily embodies the *right* way."[237] The final chapters of *Zhongyong* praise the sage, whose influence upon others is vast (especially chapters XXVII, XXIX, and XXXI). The sage is one whose way accords with balance (XI.3) and who follows the way of Heaven, which is integrity (XX.18).

As the core virtue, integrity is the way of Heaven. Heaven has given humans their moral nature. The core virtue radiates through the other arenas of exhortation (reverence, benevolence, the cultivation of morality, balance and wisdom). Integrity characterizes the one who has reached the peak of moral development, the sage. This

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[235] Ibid.

[236] Legge, *Confucius*, 391.

sage, then, has such vast influence upon others as to bring order to their lives and the whole world. Thus, moral cultivation fulfills the goal of *Zhongyong*'s ultimate desire for a world of tranquillity and harmony. The core virtue and the arenas of exhortation are in this way grounded in the metanarrative of *Zhongyong*, which is the cosmology and ultimate goals of Confucianism. The next section explores this metanarrative.

Zhongyong's Metanarrative As Confucian Cosmology and Ultimate Goals

The metanarrative in which the practical moral exhortations of *Zhongyong* are grounded is that of Confucian cosmology and ultimate goals. Confucian cosmology recognizes a supreme power, most often called "Heaven" (天). The three major cosmological entities are Heaven (天), Earth (地), and Humanity (人). Heaven has given people their moral nature. Thus humans have special significance. The ultimate Confucian goal is to realize or accomplish a condition in which Heaven, Earth and Humanity are living in united harmony and all things and people are mutually and continuously nurturing one another. This is accomplished by human moral cultivation, which results in people becoming partners with Heaven and Earth for the purpose of harmonious, continuous, mutual nourishment and growth.

Zhongyong's metanarrative is rooted in the history of ancient China, especially in the time period which saw a transfer of power from the Shang dynasty to the Zhou dynasty. What follows is a historical explanation of the roots of *Zhongyong's* metanarrative, then a description of it as expressed in *Zhongyong* itself.

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[237] Ibid., 413.

The Roots of *Zhongyong's* Metanarrative

1111 B.C. is a significant year in the development of Confucian cosmology. This year marks the beginning of the Zhou dynasty.[238] The early part of the Zhou dynasty "was to have peculiar symbolic importance. Here we find the period to which China's unique sage Confucius looked from the turmoils of his own era, seeking his image of the good society."[239] The founders of the Zhou dynasty led China through a major political and cultural transformation into one of China's most peaceful and harmonious periods. Religious conceptions were at the heart of the transformation.

The ancient Chinese conception of God does not include creation. Tu writes, "*Chung-yung* never contemplates the possibility of an almighty creator . . . In fact, the lack of a creation myth is not only a prominent feature of Confucian symbolism but also a defining characteristic of Chinese cosmology."[240] Zhu Xi's approach to creation is characteristic of ancient and modern Confucian scholars: 如此則宇宙萬物究從何來，此處朱子把來截斷了("From where and how the universe and all things came about, Zhu Xi cuts off discussion here").[241] The attitude is that of accepting the existence of things without inquiring about their ultimate origins.

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[238] S. J. Marshall records, "The last time I counted, no fewer than 22 candidate years had been proposed [for the beginning of the Zhou dynasty], ranging from 1127 BC to 1018 BC." S. J. Marshall, *The Mandate of Heaven: Hidden History in the Book of Changes* (Richmond, Surrey, UK: Curzon Press, 2001), 50. 1111 BC is used here since it is the most commonly accepted date.

[239] Benjamin I. Schwartz, *The World of Thought in Ancient China* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985), 40.

[240] TU, *Centrality and Commonality*, 69.

[241] QIAN Mu, *Zhuzi*, 45.

Although creation was not a focus, bronze and bone artifacts reveal that Shang dynasty (1751-1122 B.C.) people sacrificed to various gods and spirits (including ancestors). In the latter part of the Shang dynasty, a supreme God (上帝) was worshipped. Zhu Tianshun (朱天順) says this "was the stage in which ancient China's religion went from worshipping many gods towards worshipping one God as the main God . . . ."[242] This God was anthropomorphic and ruled everything.[243] The concept of Heaven's Mandate (天命) as an expression of God's will was budding at the end of the Shang dynasty. The last Shang king (紂王) proclaimed that he could continue his tyranny no matter how the hearts of the people changed since he had received Heaven's Mandate to rule.[244] This created a religious crisis among the people of ancient China. They pleaded that God not punish the innocent. They complained about God's cruel tyrannical oppression and the hardships that God allowed them to suffer.[245] People despaired and began to feel that if this God who rules all is not just, their actions make no difference. The resolution of this crisis by the Zhou dynasty (1111-249 B.C.) founders provided the foundation for *Zhongyong*'s metanarrative.

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[242] ZHU Tianshun 朱天順, *Zhongguo Gudai Zongjiao Chutan* 中國古代宗教初探 (An Investigation of the Beginnings of Ancient China's Religion) (中和市 Zhonghe City: 容風出版社 Rongfeng Publishers, 1986), 246.

[243] Ibid., 253. See also ZHANG Jian 張踐, *Zongfa Zongjiaode Gaodu Fazhan Ji Qi Zhuanhua* 宗法宗教的高度發展及其轉化 (Religious Method's Highest Level of Development and Its Transformation) in *Zhongguo Wenmingshi Di Erjuan Xian Qin Shiqi* 中國文明史 第二卷 先秦時期 (China's Cultural History, Volume Two: The Pre-Qin Period), ed. Lü Tao 呂濤 (台北 Taipei: 地球出版社 Diqiu Publishers, 1991), 925-926.

[244] ZHU, 253.

[245] ZHANG, 937.

The Zhou dynasty preferred to refer to the supreme power as Heaven (天).[246] Compared with Shang's God (上帝), Heaven was more powerful[247] and the anthropomorphic aspect was still present,[248] but reduced.[249] In addition, the challenge of the religious crisis was resolved by successfully characterizing Heaven as morally good (德).

The burden of the religious crisis fell upon the shoulders of King Wen (文王) and his son, Prince Zhou (周公).[250] These initial leaders of the Zhou dynasty gave careful attention to this cultural crisis and solved it in a way that deeply influenced Chinese thought and culture.[251] Their challenge was to dispel the fatalistic feeling of futility and motivate people to have a positive attitude about virtuous behavior. They solved the crisis through a careful historical study, which enabled them to sift out and discard the

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[246] ZHU, 245: 郭沫若主張，殷末雖有"天"字，但不是神，到了周朝，"天"才具有至上神的神格。陳夢家也持有相似的看法，他說："殷代的帝是上帝，和上下之'上'不同。卜辭的'天'沒有作'上天'之義的。'天'之觀念是周人提出來的。"(陳夢家著：《殷墟卜辭綜述》，第 581 頁).

[247] Ibid., 255: 周代以後，上帝在神性方面也有很大的發展，其權威被提高了很多。

[248] The Committee on Chinese Thought 中國思想研究委員會, *Zhonguo Sixiang Yu Zhidu Lunji* 中國思想與制度論集 (A Discussion of Chinese Thought and Institutions), 修訂版 revised edition, 段昌國等譯 trans. DUAN Changguo, et. al. (台北 Taipei: 聯經出版社 Lianjing Publishers, 1979), 326: "Scholars generally agree that before Confucius, Heaven was seen as an anthropomorphic supreme power, directing the events and things of the worlds of humanity and nature, exercising a great authority of reward and punishment." See also, C. K. YANG, *Religion in Chinese Society* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1961), 248: "There has been controversy over Confucius' conception of the nature of Heaven. In the welter of polemics on this point during the 1920's and 1930's, there seemed to be one common agreement: in the pre-Confucian period, Heaven was considered a supreme personalized force, dictating the events of nature and men, wielding the power of reward and punishment."

[249] ZHANG, 926.

[250] Ibid., 920: "The religious transformation between the Shang and Zhou dynasties was not produced from the single will of Prince Zhou, nor was it completed in one time period, but in the final analysis he is this transformation's initiator."

bad thinking, and reinforce the good that they had inherited. In addition, they added a new emphasis on morality. In brief, they effectively disseminated the idea that people may have to suffer much hardship, but should continue to act virtuously since Heaven is morally good and will ultimately decree in favor of those who are morally good.

Thus King Wen and Prince Zhou became the leaders of a significant cultural movement. Keightley remarks: "We see a shift from a magical, religious culture to a moral one . . . ."[252] Xu Fuguan (徐復觀) comments on this new movement: 因為有了這種新精神的躍動，才使傳統的宗教有了新地轉向，也即是使古代整個文化，有了新地發展… ("Because of this new spirited leaping forward movement, which sent the traditional religion in a new direction, the whole ancient culture also had a new development . . . .")[253] From the idea of suffering, King Wen and Prince Zhou developed the concept of revering morality (敬德觀念). The basic message of King Wen and Prince Zhou's influential cultural movement was the following: focus upon cultivating virtue and tolerate suffering since Heaven's decree ultimately falls in favor of those who do good. Regarding the impact of the revering morality concept, Mou Zongsan (牟宗三) said, "In Chinese thought, the Mandate of Heaven and Heaven's Way meet through the revering morality conception to which the suffering ideology gave birth . . . ."[254]

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[251] King Wen (文王) was the founder of the Zhou dynasty. His sons were King Wu (武王) and Prince Zhou (周公).

[252] David Keightley, "Late Shang Divination," in *Explorations in Early Chinese Cosmology,* ed. Henry Rosemont, Jr. (Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1984), 26.

[253] Quoted in OU Xue-Zhen 歐雪貞, *Xian Qin Rujia Tian Ren Sixiang Chutan* 先秦儒家天人思想初探 "A Beginning Discussion of Pre-Qin Confucian Heaven and Man Thought" (台灣 Taiwan: Dong Hai Daxue Shuoshi Lunwen 東海大學碩士論文 Donghai University Master's Thesis, 1970), 20.

Political Interpretation Applied With Conviction

An essential aspect of King Wen and Prince Zhou's revering morality concept was their historical explanation. Archie Lee explains:

> Mandate of Heaven (天命 *tien ming*) was used in ancient China by the Chou people to interpret history for and to justify the legitimacy and authority of the Chou king in defeating and ruling over the Shang people. . . . though a powerful hermeneutical principle in the possession of the kings, the Mandate of Heaven, its being conferred or taken away, depends on the performance of the ruler. . . . To the mind of Chou people, the mandate is not granted nor withdrawn irrationally or arbitrarily. Heaven's mandate is bestowed upon virtuous kings.[255]

Chan observes: "The idea that the destiny of man or the future of a dynasty depended upon virtue rather than upon the pleasure of some mysterious, spiritual power marked a radical development from the Shang to the Chou. (Significantly, the term *te* [virtue] is not found in the oracle bones on which Shang ideas and events are recorded, but it is a key word in early Chou documents.)"[256] An important part of what enabled this radical development was the way in which King Wen and Prince Zhou studied and then explained the political history of China.

Confucius admired their survey of China's political history: "Chou had the advantage of surveying the two preceding dynasties. How replete was its culture! I follow Chou."[257] The two dynasties King Wen and Prince Zhou had studied were the Xia and Shang dynasties. Previous to the Xia dynasty, legend holds that a number of semi-divine being ruled (e.g. the Divine Farmer, the Yellow Emperor, etc.). Then, "These

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[254] 中國思想中，天命，天道乃通過憂患意識所生的敬德觀念… Quoted in Ibid., 21.

[255] Archie LEE, 175.

[256] CHAN, 3. See also ZHU, 256-257: 德與上帝信仰的結合是周代宗教突出的特徵。殷代卜辭沒有出現德字。朱沫若考證說："…..在卜辭和殷人的彝銘中沒有德字，而在周代的彝銘中如成王的"班簋"和康王時的"大盂鼎"都明白地有德字表現著。"(郭沫若：《青銅時代》，第 21 頁).

semi-divine beings were followed, according to tradition, by Yao, the first really human ruler (supposed to have reigned 2357-2256 B.C.). Yao was succeeded upon his death, not by his son, who was considered 'unworthy' to receive the empire, but by Shun (2255-2206), who had already been Yao's minister."[258] Yao and Shun became the early examples of good virtue: "Two Sages, Yao and Shun, set an example by choosing their successor on merit, not birth; Shun choosing the great Yu, who controlled floods and founded the Xia dynasty . . . ."[259] The sons of Yao and Shun were not regarded as virtuous enough to rule. Yu did choose his son to succeed him, starting hereditary succession. Yu has been criticized for choosing his son, but the Confucian explanation was that Yu's son had shown his worthiness by his good deeds and was confirmed by Heaven.[260]

Although Yao, Shun and Yu became permanent examples for Confucianism, more to the point for Prince Zhou was the interpretation of dynastic change. Prince Zhou praised the good morality of Kings Tang and Wen. He also proclaimed that Kings Jie and Zhou lost the Mandate of Heaven to rule because of their corrupt morality. Tang and Wen were the founders of the Shang and Zhou dynasties. Jie and Zhou were the notoriously corrupt, final rulers of the Xia and Shang dynasties. This corrupt Zhou (紂) is not to be confused with the leaders of the Zhou (周) dynasty.

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[257] FUNG, 55 (from *Analects* III, 14).

[258] Derk Bodde, "Historical Introduction," in FUNG, xv.

[259] Paludan, 8.

[260] FUNG, 115-117.

Zhou (周) was a principality of the corrupt Zhou (紂), which was ruled by King Wen (文王). Wen's sons, King Wu (武王) and Prince Zhou (周公) honored their father with the title, 'King,' after he died. Wen suffered much from Zhou (紂), yet he maintained a conciliatory attitude. Wen was imprisoned by the corrupt Shang ruler, but Wen's moral example had won most of the other principalities. When Wen died, Wu conquered the Shang dynasty. After King Wu died, Prince Zhou held the reigns of power as regent of the heir, a child king. Old Shang leaders immediately enlisted some of Prince Zhou's brothers to rebel. Prince Zhou led successful campaigns against the rebellion, firmly consolidated the empire, and stepped aside when the young king grew old enough to reign without a regent.[261]

With the death of Prince Zhou, the seven important Confucian moral examples were written into history. These include Yao (堯), Shun (舜), Yu (禹), Tang (湯), Wen (文), Wu (武) and Prince Zhou (周公). They represent more than one thousand years of China's history, a line that spans three ancient dynasties. Prince Zhou seems to have been the favorite of Confucius. Confucius said, "Extreme is my decay. For a long time, I have not dreamed, as I was wont to do, that I saw the duke of Chau."[262] Prince Zhou emerged as a key example because of the challenge he faced and the way he handled it.

Faced with the challenge of consolidating Zhou dynasty power, Prince Zhou was forced to articulate an understanding of the Mandate of Heaven like never before:

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[261] TU, *Centrality & Commonality*, 43-44; Schwartz, 46-47.

[262] Legge, *Confucius*, 196.

> Having overthrown the Shang, founders of the Chou had to justify their right to rule. Consequently, they developed the doctrine of the Mandate of Heaven, a self-existent moral law whose constant, reliable factor was virtue. According to this doctrine, man's destiny—both mortal and immortal—depended, not upon the existence of a soul before birth or after death nor upon the whim of a spiritual force, but upon his own good words and good deeds. The Chou asserted, therefore, that the Shang, though they had received the mandate to rule, had forfeited it because they failed in their duties. The mandate then passed on to the founders of Chou, who deserved it because of their virtue. Obviously, the future of the house of Chou depended upon whether future rulers were virtuous.[263]

Schwartz observes, "All of this can be treated quite transparently as a rationalization of the seizure of power, and it is certainly that among other things. Yet there is no reason to think that the Chou founders did not have intrinsic faith in the religious base of their rationalization."[264] This "intrinsic faith" in his understanding of the Mandate of Heaven must have been a powerful motivation in Prince Zhou's actions and an influential force in convincing others. It was "a concept which was to be used to justify later changes of dynasty for the rest of Imperial history."[265] Pu Yi (溥儀), the last emperor of China, made reference to the concept in his edict of abdication (February 12, 1912): "'From the preference of the people's hearts,' the edict said, 'the Will of Heaven [天命] can be discerned.'"[266]

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[263] CHAN, 3.

[264] Schwartz, 47.

[265] Graham, 1.

[266] Arnold C. Brackman, *The Last Emperor* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc., 1975), 64.

Confucius' Ideal

Lin Yutang observes: "This period of Choukung [Prince Zhou] was Confucius' 'Golden Age,' the dream of a social order in which society was stabilized and everybody knew his rights and responsibilities. It was this social order that he wished to see restored as against the terrible social disintegration of his days."[267] Huston Smith says Confucius wanted to "funnel into the present behavior patterns that had been perfected during a golden age in China's past, the Age of the Grand Harmony. . . . Confucius may have idealized, even romanticized, this period when China was passing from the second millennium into the first and the Chou Dynasty was at its zenith. Unquestionably, he envied it and wished to replicate it as faithfully as he could."[268]

Confucius felt that the early Zhou dynasty had achieved the best:

> Confucius, however, does not look back to a vague primordial golden age. Although living several centuries after the early Chou, through sources available to him he believes that he has access to tangible, empirical knowledge of a society in which the *tao* had actually been realized. Beyond this, he is willing to accept the word of his texts that the *tao* had also been realized in the two previous dynasties—Hsia and Shang—although he admits that he does not know as much about the concrete prescriptions and institutions of these two dynasties. He even suggests that the Chou represented a "higher" realization of the Way than its two predecessors.[269]

The idealized time period is often called 'Western Zhou' since the capital of the dynasty was located at Chang'an (near present day Xian). In 771 B.C. the capital was invaded and the ruler killed by barbarians from the West. The Zhou dynasty capital was then moved to Luoyang in the East, where it is then called 'Eastern Zhou.' After the

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[267] LIN, *Pagan*, 92.

[268] Huston Smith, *The World's Religions: Our Great Wisdom Traditions* (San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991), 168.

invasion of Changan, the Zhou dynasty never regained its former glory.[270] The first two to three centuries of the Zhou dynasty are the ideal period for Confucius.

There are skeptics who doubt that such a long period of harmony existed, in which political tranquility and a happy rural life were realized. Nevertheless, "In the words of Herrlee Creel, 'The tradition that Western Chou was a period of relative tranquility and even goodwill is so general and so persistent and agrees with so much of the evidence that it cannot be wholly false.'"[271] Schwartz discusses the skepticism and gives good reasons for the existence of a prolonged "pax Chou-ica,"[272] but concludes: "None of this, of course, is meant to suggest the actual existence of Confucius' 'ideal' society, although one can readily imagine how the existence of a long period of 'relative tranquility' might have encouraged later idealizations."[273]

The Mandate of Heaven and revering morality concepts of King Wen and Prince Zhou were influential in creating this period of relative harmony. Consequently, as Confucius studied the period, he was influenced by Prince Zhou's emphasis upon morality.

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[269] Schwartz, 64.

[270] FUNG, xvii.

[271] Schwartz, 41.

[272] Ibid., 41-45.

[273] Ibid., 45.

Confucius' Interpretation

The cultural crisis faced by King Wen and Price Zhou ended in the solution of revering morality (敬德). According to the understanding they proclaimed, Heaven has a character of stable morality and the Mandate of Heaven will ultimately favor those who act in moral virtue. However, the greatest force of their understanding was given to justifying Zhou leadership of China. They were very successful. Not only did they create one of the most harmonious periods in Chinese history, but the Zhou dynasty became the longest ruling dynasty in Chinese history.[274]

Confucius grasped their understanding and interpreted it more universally. The same concept was present in Confucius' interpretation, that of revering morality. But Confucius' application or emphasis was not directed toward a particular family or dynasty. Confucius' own lineage includes Shang and Zhou dynasty nobility.[275] Yet he broadened the term 'nobility' (君子) to refer to the one who acts in moral virtue:

> He radically modified a traditional concept, that of the *chün-tzu* [君子], or superior man. Literally "son of the ruler," it came to acquire the meaning of "superior man," on the theory that nobility was a quality determined by status, more particularly a hereditary position. The term appears 107 times in the *Analects*. In some cases it refers to the ruler. In most cases, however, Confucius used it to denote a morally superior man. In other words, to him nobility was no longer a matter of blood, but of character—a concept that amounted to social revolution. Perhaps it is more correct to say that it was an evolution, but certainly it was Confucius who firmly established the new concept.[276]

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[274] The Zhou dynasty lasted 800 years. The Shang dynasty had endured 600-700 years. The other major dynasties lasted only 100-400 years.

[275] Legge, *Confucius*, 56-58.

[276] CHAN, 15. See also ZHU, 259-260: 從早期儒家的這些有關天命的言論可以看出，他們所強調的不是天帝下命給誰，而是強調知命者是誰，誰知天命誰就是社會言行的表率，所以應由知天命者治天下。

The early Zhou leaders laid the foundation for Confucian thought by solving the cultural crisis and by justifying their conquest of Shang. King Wen and Prince Zhou completed a thorough study of Chinese history and finally settled upon the concept of revering morality (敬德觀念). By establishing that Heaven has a stable character of good morality and the Mandate of Heaven (天命) falls in favor of those who live by moral virtue, they were taking a step in the direction of universality. Their understanding was a departure from the idea of God or spirits mysteriously choosing a particular ruler or family of rulers. Their concept highlighted the moral virtue of individuals. The common person could understand that the Mandate of Heaven fell in favor of the early Zhou rulers because of their moral virtue (contrasted with the debauchery of the last Shang ruler). The universality of their case was substantiated by reference to previous virtuous rulers: the exemplary morality of Kings Yao, Shun, Yu and Tang were contrasted with others who lost the mandate to rule because of their corruption. Though their understanding moved in the direction of universality, the early Zhou rulers largely applied their energy to justifying Zhou rule. Even so, Prince Zhou did understand the vast universal implications of their concept: "The Duke of Chou, it would appear, even had a perfectly clear understanding of the potentially dangerous future implications of the doctrine. In an address to his fellow regent, the Duke of Shao, he declares, 'Implacable Heaven sent down ruin on Yin [the Shang dynasty]. Yin has lost the mandate and Chou has received it. Yet I do not dare to say whether our foundations will always abide in prosperity . . . or whether it will end in misfortune . . . Heaven's mandate is not easily preserved.'"[277]

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[277] Schwartz, 47.

Schwartz comments on this recognition: "This particular aspect of the idea which was to touch all imperial dynasties with the taint of mortality made it throughout Chinese history a far more problematic doctrine for both emperors and officials than any of the textbooks would lead us to believe."[278]

Prince Zhou thus opened the door and laid the foundation for Confucius' understanding by the way in which he justified and consolidated Zhou rule over China. Confucius grasped the concept of revering morality, developed and extended it universally. Confucius emphasized the potential for anyone to be a noble person (君子) by means of cultivating moral virtue.[279]

Confucius' interpretation then reached an epitome in *Zhongyong*'s articulation: 天命之謂性… ("The Mandate of Heaven is called human moral nature . . ."). With the backdrop of Prince Zhou's justification of Zhou rule and Confucius' universalizing interpretation, *Zhongyong* represents a mature articulation of a metanarrative reaching in historical experience back to Yao. This historical grounding of the Confucian metanarrative in China's own historical experience has given it substantial validity and influence in the Chinese mind. As previously noted, "The book, *Zhongyong*, can be said to be pre-Qin dynasty moral metaphysic's fullest development."[280] As the conceptual understanding was initially developing (by King Wen and Prince Zhou), the emphasis was upon *whom* Heaven mandated to rule. With *Zhongyong*'s mature development and

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[278] Ibid.

[279] It is interesting to note that the first ruler of the great Han dynasty (206 B.C. – 220 A.D.) was a common man (without noble blood). And it was the Han dynasty that revived and firmly established the Confucian school as the official orthodoxy of China.

articulation of Confucian thought, the emphasis is universal: Heaven's mandate is that every person has been given a moral nature (with potential for cultivation in the direction of moral virtue). Rooted in China's ancient history (especially that of its seven model rulers, Yao, Shun, Yu, Tang, Wen, Wu and Prince Zhou), refined and universalized by Confucius, the Confucian metanarrative reaches its fullest articulation in *Zhongyong*. What follows is the description of that metanarrative as expressed in *Zhongyong* itself.

The Metanarrative As Expressed In *Zhongyong*

Zhongyong's metanarrative can be summarized as follows: The ultimate goal is harmony,[281] which is achieved when people cultivate their Heaven-given moral nature. In further explanation, the metanarrative begins with the decree of Heaven (Heaven decreed a moral nature for people). The middle part or development of the metanarrative is the diligent human exertion of cultivating the moral nature. The completion or end of the metanarrative is accomplished when a state of harmony exists among Heaven, earth, people and all things. This harmony is characterized by all of these mutually and perpetually nourishing one another (without harm) to be transformed according to the development that is natural to each person or thing.

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[280] HUANG, 57.

[281] Regarding harmony, Thome Fang writes: "Chinese mentality is best characterized by what I call the cultivated sense of comprehensive harmony, in unison with which man and life in the world can enter into a fellowship in sympathetic unity so that a bliss of peace and well-being may be enjoyed by all." FANG, Thome H., *The Chinese View of Life; The Philosophy of Comprehensive Harmony* (Hong Kong: The Union Press, 1957), ii. Regarding *Zhongyong*'s harmony theme, Cua writes: "*Chung Yung* presents us an elaborate root-metaphor in terms of a vision rooted perhaps in some elementary experiences of man's harmony with the world." Cua, A. S. *Moral Vision and Tradition: Essays in Chinese Ethics.* Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1998., 26.

The first phrase of *Zhongyong* identifies the source of human moral nature: 天命之謂性… ("What Heaven decreed is called human moral nature . . ."). Heaven is again mentioned as a source in chapter XVII.3: "Thus it is that Heaven, in the production of things, is sure to be bountiful to them, according to their qualities."[282] Next, Heaven is highlighted at the beginning of an important discussion of *Zhongyong*'s core virtue (XX.18): 誠者，天之道也，誠之者，人之道也 ("Integrity is the way of Heaven. To be one of[283] integrity is the way of humans.") The chapters following this one highlight the priority of integrity (誠) as the core virtue, by means of which people can achieve the ultimate goal of harmony. The reference to Heaven at the beginning of the discussion is significant. Heaven's way is clearly proclaimed as that of integrity. This hearkens back to the cultural crisis solved by King Wen and Prince Zhou as they convinced people that Heaven's character was one of stable virtue. Then, to note that the way of humans is to be like Heaven in character is to emphasize a correlation between Heaven's character and human character. In addition, chapter XXVI says, "Utmost integrity . . . matches Heaven . . . ." And chapter XXXI proclaims the utmost sage to be "like (如) Heaven," and "complementary (配) with Heaven."[284]

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[282] Legge, *Confucius*, 399.

[283] Where my translation here has "To be one of," Legge has "The attainment of" (Legge, *Confucius*, 413); Lin has "To try to be" (LIN, *Wisdom*, 122); Bahm has "to become" (Bahm, 102); Hughes has "coming-to-be" (Hughes, 39); Bloom has "achieving" (de Bary & Bloom, *Sources*, 338).

[284] In their translation of 配 ("complementary"), Bahm, Lin, the Council of Chinese Cultural Renaissance, and Legge have "equal"; Ames & Hall have "complement"; Zhu Xi has "like": 配天，言其德之所及，與大如天也。QIAN Mu, *Si Shu*, 392.

Finally, the last sentence of *Zhongyong* completes the book with a word about Heaven (XXXIII):

> It is said in the Book of Poetry, 'Over her embroidered robe she puts a plain, single garment,' intimating a dislike to the display of the elegance of the former. Just so, it is the way of the superior man to prefer the concealment *of his virtue*, while it daily becomes more illustrious, and it is the way of the mean man to seek notoriety, while he daily goes more and more to ruin. . . .
>
> It is said in the Book of Poetry, 'What needs no display is virtue. All the princes imitate it.' Therefore, the superior man being sincere and reverential, the whole world is conducted to a state of happy tranquility.
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> It is said in the Book of Poetry, 'I regard with pleasure your brilliant virtue, making no great display of itself in sounds and appearances.' The Master said, 'Among the appliances to transform the people, sounds and appearances are but trivial influences. It is said in another ode, "His virtue is light as a hair." Still, a hair will admit of comparison *as to its size*. "The doings of the supreme Heaven have neither sound nor smell."—That is perfect virtue.'[285]

As can be seen from the context, the meaning of *Zhongyong*'s last sentence is that Heaven doesn't make a great display of its good deeds. Yet, ironically, this concealed virtue is most brilliant and influential. This perfect virtue of Heaven is the pattern or standard for human virtue. Again, a correlation between Heaven's character and human character is emphasized.

The first sentence of *Zhongyong* says that Heaven is the source of human moral nature. The last sentence of *Zhongyong* brings the book to a conclusion with a statement about the perfection of Heaven's virtue (implying that this is how people should be). The virtuous character of Heaven correlates with the moral nature of humanity. Heaven's character is portrayed in *Zhongyong* as stable, just as King Wen and Prince Zhou had proclaimed as they solved the cultural crisis of their time and established the Zhou dynasty. While Heaven's moral character is consistently virtuous in *Zhongyong*, humans

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[285] Legge, *Confucius*, 430-433.

are not so consistent. The superior man (君子) and the mean man (小人) are contrasted throughout *Zhongyong*. This contrast relates to the whole purpose of *Zhongyong* and all Confucian teaching. That purpose is to bring about moral development in people. Moral development in people is the key to achieving the ultimate goal of harmony.

The goal of *Zhongyong's* metanarrative is fulfilled when a state of harmony among all things has been achieved. The goal of harmony is established in the first chapter:

> 4. While there are no stirrings of pleasure, anger, sorrow, or joy, the mind may be said to be in the state of EQUILIBRIUM. When those feelings have been stirred, and they act in their due degree, there ensues what may be called the state of HARMONY. This EQUILIBRIUM is the great root *from which grow all the human actings* in the world, and this HARMONY is the universal path *which they all should pursue.*
>
> 5. Let the states of equilibrium and harmony exist in perfection, and a happy order will prevail throughout heaven and earth, and all things will be nourished and flourish.[286]

Following the first chapter is part 2 of *Zhongyong* (chapters II-XI) which focuses upon the virtue of *zhongyong*. The virtue of *zhongyong* can be described here simply as a central (*zhong*) and common (*yong*), or balanced (*zhong*) and down-to-earth (*yong*) disposition. All but one chapter in part 2 comment on *zhongyong* (中庸). Part 2 is the beginning of developing what was introduced in part 1 (chapter I): that the ultimate goal is harmony, which is achieved through developing the Heaven-given moral nature. Part 2 begins to describe the means by which harmony is achieved. The focus is upon the individual's (君子) *zhongyong* disposition. Part 3 extends the individual's influence to others.

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[286] Ibid., 384-385.

Part 3 (chapters XII-XX) expands the discussion by noting that the way to achieve expansive goals (i.e. the harmony of all things) is to first tread the ground that is near. First accomplish what is closest to home, common, down-to-earth. Through accomplishing what is central (*zhong*) to life and common (*yong*) in life, one will gradually have more and more influence, such that expansive harmony will be accomplished: "The Way of the noble person originates among ordinary men and women, and, at its furthest reaches, is displayed brightly in Heaven and Earth."[287]

Part 3 then gradually moves toward the ultimate goal of universal harmony by beginning with the accomplishment of intermediate goals of harmony. It starts with the individual and home, then expands outward. Chapter XIII says: "The Master said, 'The path is not far from man. When men try to pursue a course, which is far from the common indications of consciousness, this course cannot be considered THE PATH. . . . When one cultivates to the utmost the principles of his nature, and exercises them on the principle of reciprocity, he is not far from the path. What you do not like when done to yourself, do not do to others.'"[288] Chapter XIV states: "The superior man does what is proper to the station in which he is; he does not desire to go beyond this. . . . The superior man can find himself in no situation in which he is not himself. . . . He rectifies himself, and seeks for nothing from others, so that he has no dissatisfactions. He does not murmur against Heaven, nor grumble against men. . . . Thus it is that the superior man is quiet and calm, waiting for the appointments *of Heaven* . . . ."[289] The harmony, then, starts with the

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[287] de Bary & Bloom, *Sources*, 334. This is the last sentence of chapter XII as translated by Bloom.

[288] Legge, *Confucius*, 393-394.

individual. The individual first achieves the right behavior and finds contentment in whatever situation he finds himself. Chapter XIV concludes with a word about personal examination: "The Master said, 'In archery we have something like the way of the superior man. When the archer misses the centre of the target, he turns round and seeks for the cause of his failure in himself.'"[290]

Chapter XV expands from the goal of individual harmony to harmony in the home. The first sentence of chapter XV makes the transition (from the individual of the previous chapter to the family of chapter XV, implying a principle which extends beyond the family): "The way of the superior man may be compared to what takes place in traveling, when to go to a distance we must first traverse the space that is near, and in ascending a height, when we must begin from the lower ground."[291] Then, family harmony is proclaimed: "It is said in the Book of Poetry, 'Happy union with wife and children, is like the music of lutes and harps. When there is concord among brethren, the harmony is delightful and enduring. *Thus* may you regulate your family, and enjoy the pleasure of your wife and children. . . . The Master said, 'In such a state of things, parents have entire complacence!'"[292]

Chapters XVII-XX expand another step, from family to government and widespread influence: "The Master said, 'How greatly filial was Shun! His virtue was that of a sage; his dignity was the throne; his riches were all within the four seas. . . . Therefore having such great virtue, it could not but be that he should obtain the throne,

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[289] Ibid., 395-396.

[290] Ibid., 396.

[291] Ibid.

that he should obtain those riches, that he should obtain his fame, that he should attain to his long life.'"[293] Chapters XVIII-XX speak in a similar vein, referring to King Wen, King Wu and Prince Zhou. A definite progression is emphasized (XX.11): "He who knows these three things, knows how to cultivate his own character. Knowing how to cultivate his own character, he knows how to govern other men. Knowing how to govern other men, he knows how to govern the kingdom with all its States and families."[294] Further:

> When those in inferior situations do not obtain the confidence of the sovereign, they cannot succeed in governing the people. There is a way to obtain the confidence of the sovereign;—if one is not trusted by his friends, he will not get the confidence of his sovereign. There is a way to being trusted by one's friends;—if one is not obedient to his parents, he will not be true to friends. There is a way to being obedient to one's parents;—if one, on turning his thoughts in upon himself, finds a want of sincerity, he will not be obedient to his parents. There is a way to the attainment of sincerity in one's self;—if a man do not understand what is good, he will not attain sincerity in himself.[295]

Part 2 concludes by expressing the diligent effort required:

> 19. 'To this attainment there are requisite the extensive study of what is good, accurate inquiry about it, careful reflection on it, the clear discrimination of it, and the earnest practice of it.
> 20. 'The superior man, while there is anything he has not studied, or while in what he has studied there is anything he cannot understand, will not intermit his labour. While there is anything he has not inquired about, or anything in what he has inquired about which he does not know, he will not intermit his labour. While there is anything which he has not reflected on, or anything in what he has reflected on which he does not apprehend, he will not intermit his labour. While there is anything which he has not discriminated, or his discrimination is not clear, he will not intermit his labour. If there be anything which he has not practiced, or his practice fails in earnestness, he will not intermit his labour. If another man

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[292] Ibid., 396-397.

[293] Ibid., 398-399.

[294] Ibid., 408.

[295] Ibid., 412-413.

> succeed by one effort, he will use a hundred efforts. If another man succeed by ten efforts, he will use a thousand.'[296]

The result is one of widespread harmony among family, relatives and all the people of the kingdom (XX.13):

> By the ruler's cultivation of his own character, the duties *of universal obligation* are set forth. By honouring men of virtue and talents, he is preserved from errors of judgment. By showing affection to his relatives, there is no grumbling nor resentment among his uncles and brethren. By respecting the great ministers, he is kept from errors in the practice of government. By kind and considerate treatment of the whole body of officers, they are led to make the most grateful return for his courtesies. By dealing with the mass of the people as his children, they are led to exhort one another to what is good. By encouraging the resort of all classes of artisans, his resources for expenditure are rendered ample. By indulgent treatment of men from a distance, they are brought to resort to him from all quarters. And by kindly cherishing the princes of the States, the whole kingdom is brought to revere him.[297]

Part 4 (chapters XXI-XXXIII) takes it to the highest level: harmony among Heaven, Earth, all people and all things. Part 4 focuses upon the highest level of morality, which affects the highest level of harmony. The highest level of moral development is ultimate integrity (至誠), by which one becomes an ultimate sage (至聖).

Part 4 begins with some words which allude to the first sentence of *Zhongyong* (XXI): 自誠明，謂之性；自明誠，謂之教。誠則明矣；明則誠矣。("Understanding that comes from integrity is called moral human nature; Integrity that comes from understanding is called education. Integrity results in understanding; understanding results in integrity.") The words, 謂 and 之 allude to the first sentence of *Zhongyong*, but more important in content and allusion are the words 性 ("moral human nature") and 教

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[296] Ibid., 413-414.

[297] Ibid., 409.

("education"). These are key elements of Confucianism: developing one's moral nature and learning the teachings of the sages. Chapter XXVII.6 observes, "Therefore, the superior man honours his virtuous nature, and maintains constant inquiry and study, seeking to carry it out to its breadth and greatness, so as to omit none of the more exquisite and minute points which it embraces, and to raise it to its greatest height and brilliancy, so as to pursue the course of the Mean [中庸]. He cherishes his old knowledge, and is continually acquiring new."[298] Part 4, the final development of *Zhongyong*, begins with a connection to the first chapter.

Again, the progression is noted, beginning with the development of one's own nature. Chapter XXII emphasizes the increasing broadness of the objects that are influenced:

> It is only he who is possessed of the most complete sincerity that can exist under heaven, who can give its full development to his nature. Able to give its full development to his own nature, he can do the same to the nature of other men. Able to give its full development to the nature of other men, he can give their full development to the natures of animals and things. Able to give their full development to the natures of creatures and things, he can assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth. Able to assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth, he may with Heaven and Earth form a ternion.[299]

Chapter XXIII emphasizes this development from another angle, that of the increasing affect of one's influence: "Next to the above is he who cultivates to the utmost the shoots *of goodness* in him. From those he can attain to the possession of sincerity. This sincerity becomes apparent. From being apparent, it becomes manifest. From being manifest, it becomes brilliant. Brilliant, it affects others. Affecting others, they are

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[298] Ibid., 422-423.

[299] Ibid., 415-416.

changed by it. Changed by it, they are transformed. It is only he who is possessed of the most complete sincerity that can exist under heaven, who can transform."[300]

Part 4 goes on to emphasize the immense expanse of influence possible for the virtue of utmost integrity (XXVI):

> Therefore perfect sincerity is unceasing. Being unceasing, it is long-lasting; lasting long, it becomes manifest. Being manifest, it is far-reaching; reaching far, it becomes broad and deep. Being broad and deep, it becomes lofty and bright. Because it is broad and deep, it is able to contain living things; because it is lofty and bright, it is able to embrace living things. Far-reaching and long-lasting, it is able to complete living things. Broad and deep, it is the counterpart of Earth; lofty and bright, it is the counterpart of Heaven. Far-reaching and long-lasting, it is limitless. In that it is like this, it is manifest even when it is invisible; it transforms even when it is unmoving; it brings to completion without action.[301]

Additionally, government is an important topic in part 4. The government emphasis in part 4 is that the outstanding ruler will have ever expanding influence (e.g. XXIX.5): "Such being the case, the movements of such a ruler, *illustrating his institutions*, constitute an example to the world for ages. His acts are for ages a law to the kingdom. His words are for ages a lesson to the kingdom. Those who are far from him, look longingly for him; and those who are near him, are never wearied with him."[302]

In accord with such influence, the Ways of Confucius and the ancient sages are praised in part 4 for correlating with the harmony of the universe (XXX):

> 1. Confucius taught the truth originally handed down by Yao and Shun, and he adopted and perfected the Ways of King Wen and King Wu. He showed that they harmonize with the celestial order which governs the revolutions of the seasons and that they fit in with the design which is to be seen in physical nature upon the Earth below.

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[300] Ibid., 417.

[301] de Bary, *Sources*, 339.

[302] Legge, *Confucius*, 426.

> 2. These Ways form one system with the laws by which Heaven and Earth support and contain, overshadow and canopy all things. These Ways form the same system with the laws by which the seasons succeed each other and the sun and moon appear with the alternations of day and night. It is these same Ways by which all created things are produced and develop themselves each in its order and system without injuring one another, by which the operations of nature take their course without conflict or confusion, the lesser forces flowing everywhere like river currents while the all-embracing Creative Force harmonizes and transforms them.[303]

Chapter XXI proclaims that it is the utmost sage (至聖) whose "fame and name will spread and fill all the civilized world (literally "China"), extending even to savage countries, wherever ships and carriages reach, wherever the labor and enterprise of man penetrate, wherever the heavens overshadow and the earth sustain, wherever the sun and moon shine, wherever frost and dew fall. All who have life and breath will honor and love him."[304] He is "the complement of *tian* 天."[305]

In final praise of the sage, only the one of utmost integrity "is able to harmonize the opposing strands of human society, to establish and maintain moral order in the country, and to understand the developing and maturing processes of Nature."[306] Or, as Hughes translates the same passage from chapter XXXII, it is only the one of utmost integrity "who can make the warp and woof of the great web of civilized life, who can establish the great foundations of civilized society, and who can understand the nourishing processes of heaven and earth."[307] Finally, the second to the last verse of

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[303] The Council of Chinese Cultural Renaissance, 34-35.

[304] LIN, *Wisdom*, 131.

[305] Ames & Hall, 113.

[306] Bahm, 123-124.

[307] Hughes, 42.

Zhongyong concludes, "Therefore, the superior man being sincere and reverential, the whole world is conducted to a state of happy tranquility."[308]

As *Zhongyong* ends with an important word about Heaven, which relates to the first chapter, so it ends with an important word about tranquility, which relates to harmony in the first chapter. Based upon the tranquility Confucius perceived in the early Zhou dynasty, the metanarrative of *Zhongyong* articulates an ultimate goal of harmony. The harmony of the Zhou dynasty is directly related to the moral virtue of the sages, King Wen, King Wu and Prince Zhou, who are mentioned throughout *Zhongyong*. The sages, Yao and Shun, are held up as similar examples in *Zhongyong*.[309] Thus, the metanarrative of *Zhongyong* has great strength, being grounded in the history of China. Its strength is such that it became the mainstream thought of China and has continued to survive strongly to this day.

Summary

This chapter presented the moral vision of *Zhongyong*. It began with a brief introduction to *Zhongyong*, which showed that morality is the main emphasis of *Zhongyong*. Then the moral exhortations and metanarrative of *Zhongyong* were presented.

The core virtue of *Zhongyong* was identified as integrity. The following five arenas of exhortation were then presented: be reverent, be benevolent, cultivate morality,

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[308] Legge, *Confucius*, 433.

[309] Only two of the standard seven ancient sages of Confucianism are not mentioned in *Zhongyong*: Yu (founder of the Xia dynasty) and Tang (founder of the Shang dynasty).

be moderate, and be wise. *Zhongyong*'s metanarrative was identified as Confucian cosmology and ultimate goals. This metanarrative was presented as the mature product of a line of thought that respects morality and runs from Prince Zhou through Confucius. The goal is the achievement of harmony among all things through human moral efforts.

The moral vision of *Zhongyong* was presented with a view towards comparison with the moral vision of the Epistle of James. The next chapter engages in that comparison.

CHAPTER 4

COMPARISON

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to compare the moral visions of the Epistle of James and *Zhongyong* in order to identify their similarities and differences. The basic thesis of this study is that James and *Zhongyong* are similar in regard to their practical moral exhortations, but different in regard to their metanarratives. Their practical moral exhortations include faithfulness and integrity, love and benevolence, reverence and honor, practicing goodness and cultivating morality, bridling the tongue, patience, moderation and wisdom. The overlap in their exhortations is strong. On the other hand, the metanarratives in which the exhortations are grounded are different. While there is some overlap in the metanarratives, the differences are significant. The metanarrative of James is that of Christian eschatology, which includes the redemptive work of Christ and looks forward to God's coming as Judge to punish the evil and deliver the faithful. *Zhongyong*'s metanarrative is that of Confucian cosmology and ultimate goals, which looks forward to human moral effort to bring about harmony between Heaven, humans and all things.

The core virtues of the Epistle of James and *Zhongyong* are identified as faithfulness and integrity respectively. In James, the emphasis in faithfulness is being faithful to God while awaiting His deliverance. This faithfulness does include an important internal dynamic: faithfulness to God entails being faithful within oneself so that there is no double-mindedness and doubt. In *Zhongyong*, the emphasis in integrity is being faithful to one's moral nature, which is from Heaven. This knowledge that the

moral nature of humanity is from Heaven entails a faithfulness to Heaven. Yet the main emphasis is upon integrity within oneself. Thus, the core virtues of each book have similarities.

The arenas of exhortation are identified as follows:

James	*Zhongyong*
1. Revere God	1. Be reverent
2. Love others	2. Be benevolent
3. Practice goodness	3. Cultivate morality
4. Bridle the tongue	4. Be moderate
5. Be wise	5. Be wise
6. Be patient	

An initial look at the arenas reveals overlap and similarities. These will be discussed below.

The exhortations of the texts are similar. However, the real meaning behind these exhortations in respective expressions is substantially different. The respective metanarratives differ in significant aspects. These aspects will be discussed below according to the following headings: God/Heaven, sin/failure, revelation, grace, government and contiguity. James mentions God often and conveys the idea of being a friend of God. In *Zhongyong*, Heaven is not seen as a friend, but rather an impersonal entity. Yet Heaven is moral and responsive to people. Sin is a stark reality in James. *Zhongyong* tends to emphasize goodness and does not convey a strong sense of the presence of evil. Verbal revelation from God to people (especially through scripture and the prophets) is a reality in the Epistle of James. Significant in this regard is promise, a foundation of the message of James. *Zhongyong* does not convey an understanding of revelation in this sense. Beyond what people may know of Heaven from their own human nature, Heaven is silent in *Zhongyong*. The idea of verbal revelation from God

leads into the understanding of God's grace in the Epistle of James. There is a progression from understanding God as perfectly righteous to seeing the sin in a humanity that falls far short of God's righteousness. Then, the revelation of promise communicates God's grace.

In James, God is revealed as a God of grace who forgives. In *Zhongyong*, Heaven is just and Heaven's way is integrity, but grace and forgiveness are not a part of the description. Human government on earth is a major emphasis in *Zhongyong*. It is through government that people and things can be perfected and everything brought into harmony. However, earthly government is absent in James' metanarrative. Although patience is encouraged in the epistle, the expectation of God's imminent coming to judge is strong. In this light, this world's government seems insignificant. James speaks of a different kind of government: the rule of God over all, especially expressed in the Lord's coming to judge. Finally, contiguity is a dominant aspect of *Zhongyong*'s metanarrative. Heaven, Earth and Humanity correlate in many ways. An encompassing holistic contiguity is evident. In James, the contrasts are strong between friendship with God and friendship with the world, earthly wisdom and wisdom from above, God and the devil, etc. James conveys a categorical or analytical view. These ideas will be discussed, first according to the practical exhortations, then according to the metanarratives. It is to further illuminate the fact that in the expressions and practical goals of these virtues, there seems to be significant similarities between James and *Zhongyong*, but differences in the fundamental intention and meanings.

Practical Exhortations

The arenas of exhortation in James and *Zhongyong* are similar in various ways. The first arena identified in the Epistle of James is the call to revere God. This coincides with *Zhongyong*'s exhortations to be reverent. James' exhortations regarding revering God emphasize honoring God first. Then, out of reverence for God, others are honored and loved. *Zhongyong* starts with a reverence for Heaven. Then, because it is from Heaven, a person is to revere one's own moral nature. Parents, leaders and others are then honored.

The next arena of exhortation is love in James and benevolence in *Zhongyong*. In both cases, people are exhorted to treat others as they themselves would want to be treated. Yao explains the similarities and differences between Christian love and Confucian benevolence. The ways in which they are different relate to "the divergence between a humanistic [Confucian] and a theistic [Christian] tradition."[310] Yet they are similar in that they both begin "with concern for and sincere service of others, however small this service may be."[311]

The exhortations to practice goodness in James and to cultivate morality in Zhongyong constitute the third arena of exhortation. In each, the emphasis is upon actually practicing or doing what is good, rather than just knowing without following through with the action.

Another arena of exhortation that overlaps is the call to wisdom in each. In James and *Zhongyong*, it is an exhortation both to seek wisdom and to live by wisdom.

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[310] YAO Xinzhong, *Confucianism and Christianity: A Comparative Study of* Jen *and* Agape (Brighton, United Kingdom: Sussex Academic Press, 1996), 213.

Finally, bridling the tongue and patience were identified as major arenas of exhortation in the Epistle of James. Although these are not major emphases in *Zhongyong*, they are present. In like manner, *Zhongyong*'s exhortation to be moderate can be seen in James' exhortation to live by wisdom.

Thus, the practical exhortations of James and *Zhongyong* are similar.[312] Their overlap is significant. In contrast, the metanarratives have significant differences. The following discussion is focused upon the major differences between the metanarratives of James and *Zhongyong*.

Metanarratives

If one looks at the surface of the two moral visions, they may appear to have few significant differences. The practical exhortations are the down-to-earth places where people live their daily lives. Many people cannot describe the larger worldview or metanarrative in which the practical moral exhortations are grounded, but they can discuss the exhortations that guide their daily lives. Consequently, many may draw the

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[311] Ibid., 229.

[312] A question for further study is why the exhortations of the two moral visions are so similar if their metanarratives are so different. In short, both traditions have a universal answer. From Confucianism, the answer is expressed in the first phrase of *Zhongyong*: "Heaven mandated what is called moral human nature." Since Heaven has mandated that all people have a moral nature, it makes sense that people would have agreement in the realm of moral exhortation. This agreement is based upon their common moral nature. In Christianity, the answer is given in Romans 2:14-15: "Yes, when Gentiles—who do not have the Law—do by nature what the Law says, they are a law to themselves even though they do not have the Law. They show that what the Law requires them to do is written in their hearts. Their conscience tells the same truth, and their thoughts accuse them on one occasion or defend them on another." (NET) Since God has written His moral law on every heart, it makes sense that people would have some agreement in regard to moral exhortations. In accord with this, Gottfried Leibniz commented that Confucianism "renews the natural law inscribed in our hearts . . . ." Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Discourse On The Natural Theology Of The Chinese*, trans. with an introduction, notes and commentary by Henry Rosemount, Jr. and Daniel J. Cook, Monograph No. 4 of the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy (Honolulu: The University press of Hawaii, 1977), 107.

conclusion that the moral visions of the Epistle of James and *Zhongyong* are substantially the same.

However, a closer look at the respective moral visions reveals significant differences. The metanarratives are the larger context in which the down-to-earth exhortations ultimately make sense. Without the metanarratives, the exhortations dangle in isolation without meaning, without integration. For example, one might exhort people not to be double-minded but to be faithful and have integrity. If this exhortation dangles by itself without being grounded in a larger picture of life, it loses its force and meaning. Someone might wonder to whom or what should one be faithful, and for what purpose. When grounded in the larger metanarrative, the individual exhortations have integrated meaning. When considering moral visions, the practical exhortations that present themselves on the surface need to be considered, but so do the metanarratives that lie in the larger background. Upon taking a closer look, the moral visions of James and *Zhongyong* reveal significant differences.[313]

The largest difference between the two metanarratives is the means by which the ultimate goal is accomplished in each. If one were to sketch a picture of each metanarrative broadly, they could be made to appear almost the same except for the very significant aspect of the way in which the desired end is accomplished. The sketch would

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[313] Jacques Gernet writes: "The analogy between Chinese and Christian precepts can be no more than a deceptive appearance, for in Chinese morality there is no such thing as aspiration towards a God external to this world." Gernet, 163. In contrast to those who emphasize similarities between Chinese thought and Christianity, Gernet emphasizes the conflict between them. In this quote regarding precepts (moral exhortations), he emphasizes direct linkage between exhortations and metanarrative. Since the metanarratives differ, Gernet feels that similarities between the exhortations of both are "no more than a deceptive appearance." On the one hand, his emphasis on the direct linkage between precept and metanarrative is valuable and should not be ignored by those who are pleased to find similarities between

look like this: in each case Heaven or God is the author of human nature in its best sense, the ultimate goal is a place of comprehensive harmony, and the threat to participation in this end goal is being diverted from the good moral way. The manner in which this final goal is accomplished differs in each. In *Zhongyong*, human effort is key. In James, God's action is key. According to *Zhongyong*, human moral cultivation is what eventually brings all things to a condition of ultimate harmony. According to James, God achieves the ultimate goal when the Lord comes to judge. In addition, God grace is actively at work in the faithful to help them do good works. Those who have been faithful to the end will receive the crown of life, but the emphasis is upon God's action.

This fundamental difference in the metanarratives constitutes the basic difference between the two moral visions. *Zhongyong* emphasizes human action to accomplish the ultimate goals. While faith inspired human action plays an important role in the Epistle of James, James emphasizes divine action to accomplish the ultimate goals. The emphasis upon God in the Epistle of James leads to other differences in the metanarratives: sin, revelation, grace, government and contiguity. The discussion of God will begin a more detailed comparison of these key differences in the metanarratives. The other issues will follow in the order listed.

God/Heaven

James frequently mentions God. Faithfulness to God is the core virtue in the epistle. He is a God of mercy and grace as well as righteous judgment in the Epistle of James. People can even be a friend with God, as was Abraham (2:23).

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the moral visions of Christianity and Confucianism. On the other hand, both Christianity and

On the other hand, Heaven of *Zhongyong* is more distant in terms of grace, mercy and friendship. In one sense, Heaven is imminent in that the moral nature of humans is given by Heaven. If people cultivate this moral nature, they will be like Heaven (XXVI.5, XXXI.3-4, XXXII.2). The one who cultivates the moral nature to the full can participate with Heaven in nurturing all things (XXII).

This more distant, less personal, idea of Heaven led to what Matteo Ricci perceived as his major challenge in bringing the Christian Gospel to China. As noted in chapter 3, the cultural-religious crisis at the beginning of the Zhou dynasty led to the conception of respecting morality (敬德). A major part of this development was stabilizing the population's attitude toward Heaven's character. Rather than being capricious and arbitrarily punishing the righteous, Heaven is just. Those who do good will receive good from Heaven, just as the early rulers of the Zhou dynasty (and the dynasties before them) had received the Mandate of Heaven to rule because of their good morality. Confucius picked up on this same theme of respecting morality a half century later. As the understanding of respecting morality developed, Heaven became less personal. In Confucian thought, this depersonalizing of Heaven reached a peak with Zhu Xi and Neo-Confucianism. Zhu Xi said that Heaven is Principle (理). Since that was the form of Confucianism that existed when Ricci went to China, Ricci made it his major goal to discredit this impersonal idea of Heaven and return to what he perceived was the original Confucian concept of Heaven. Ricci felt that the ancient Confucian Heaven was more personal, and that the Neo-Confucian impersonal Heaven was a result of the

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Confucianism have similar universal explanations for such parallels (see the previous footnote).

Buddhist influence in Neo-Confucian thought.[314] His goal was to oppose Buddhist thought and revive ancient Confucian thought. However, it seems that the trend toward an impersonal Heaven was already present in ancient Confucianism. The respecting morality conception led toward an impersonal Heaven since the emphasis in this conception shifted away from a God figure to human morality.[315]

James Legge wrote this criticism of *Zhongyong*: "When Christianity has prevailed in China, men will refer to it as a striking proof how their fathers by their wisdom knew neither God nor themselves."[316] Legge felt the sage is exalted above God in *Zhongyong*. Thus, God is not exalted high enough and human sages are exalted too

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[314] Gernet writes of the Jesuit who was an outspoken critic of Ricci: "Father Niccolo Lombardo was one of the first to become alarmed at the fact that the Chinese did not see their Sovereign on High as a personal, unique, all-powerful and creator God, but instead, and in conformity with traditional interpretations of the Classics, regarded him as an anonymous power of order and animation in the universe." Gernet, 30. Others observe that Heaven was regarded as an anthropomorphic supreme power before Confucius, as a non-anthropomorphic power of nature after Confucius, but that the scholar (Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒) who was responsible for the establishment of Confucianism as mainstream thought in the Han dynasty revived Heaven's identity as an anthropomorphic supreme God. Further, Confucian scholars up to modern times have supported the Heaven worship ceremony, which includes the perception that Heaven is a high supernatural power. The Committee on Chinese Thought, 326. Qian Mu also discusses the uncertainty in Confucianism regarding whether Heaven is a personal almighty master or merely a natural force. QIAN Mu, *Zhuzi*, 420-427. Zhu Xi represents the peak in Neo-Confucianism as the spokesman for the concept of Heaven being principle (理), yet Qian Mu comments: 抑朱子直至晚年，其心中似不認為此宇宙此自然界可以全憑一理字而更無主宰。("Up to his later years, it seems that Zhu Xi did not think in this heart that this universe and nature could completely depend upon one word, "principle," and even be without a Master.") Ibid., 423.

[315] Lancashire and Hu observe: "The slogan *Ch'in ju p'ai fo* [近儒排佛], 'Draw close to Confucianism and repudiate Buddhism,' served as a compass bearing for Ricci in his work of disseminating the Christian faith, and in his writing of *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven*." Matteo Ricci, *The True Meaning of The Lord of Heaven (T'ien-chu Shih-I)* trans. with introduction and notes by Douglas Lancashire and Peter HU Kuo-chen, A Chinese-English edition, edited by Edward J. Malatesta (St. Louis, Missouri: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985), 22. See also Young, 25-39. Lancashire and Hu observe that Ricci did not fully grasp the richness of the Chinese thought of his day, and that if he would have had more time, he would have found in that Neo-Confucian thought more concepts that were not so alien to the Christian concept of God. They say that Ricci should not be judged too harshly: "When he composed *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven*, Ricci had not yet completed fifteen years of life in China. It was impossible for him in such a short time to experience and appreciate the richness and beauty of the profoundest insights of Chinese thought." Ricci, 50.

[316] Legge, *Confucius*, 55.

high in Legge's opinion. Aside from the fact that others differ from Legge in the translation of various passages (making the sage "like" Heaven rather than "equal" to Heaven as does Legge), this quote from Legge is worth considering briefly since it mentions Christianity and God in specific reference to *Zhongyong*. The word, "knew," in the quote can be understood in two ways: know about and know personally. In regard to knowing God personally, a gap does appear when comparing *Zhongyong* and James. James speaks of Abraham being a friend of God (2:23). The closest *Zhongyong* comes to a personal knowing is being in touch with one's moral nature, which is from Heaven, and developing this nature to the highest degree so that one can participate with Heaven in nourishing all things. In regard to knowing about God, the difference between James and *Zhongyong* is wide in some ways and not wide in others. For example, the justice, good morality and integrity of Heaven in *Zhongyong* are similar to the just judgment, good morality and oneness of God in the Epistle of James. However, James differs from *Zhongyong* in understanding that God is a God of mercy and grace who forgives sins.

The knowledge of God's righteousness leads to the knowledge that humanity has fallen short in regard to morality. Yet this fallen-ness or sin can be faced with the knowledge of a God of forgiveness.

Sin/Failure

Weber observed that in Confucianism, "There was no radical evil."[317] In James, however, sin is prominent from the beginning to the end of the epistle. The second verse of chapter one begins the discussion of trials and temptations. This discussion has one of

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[317] Weber, 153.

the most striking explanations of sin's progression toward death: "Each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death." (James 1:14-15 NAS) The discussion of the tongue's evil in James 3:1-12 is also striking. James 3:10 grieves the conflict in people that is caused by sin: "From the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way." (NAS) Sin and evil in humanity are prominent throughout the whole epistle. In 4:6-10, there is a strong call to repentance: "6 But he gives more grace; therefore it says, 'God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.' 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you men of double mind. 9 Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to dejection. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you." (RSV) Finally, the last two verses of the epistle (5:19-20) speak of sin: "My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth, and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death, and will cover a multitude of sins." (NAS)

On the other hand, *Zhongyong* does not discuss the evil in humanity. *Zhongyong* XX.7 quotes the following words of Confucius: "Hence the sovereign may not neglect the cultivation of his own character. Wishing to cultivate his character, he may not neglect to serve his parents. In order to serve his parents, he may not neglect to acquire a knowledge of men. In order to know men, he may not dispense with a knowledge of

Heaven."[318] In this passage, a knowledge of men and of Heaven is seen to be necessary. However, the closest *Zhongyong* comes to recognizing evil in humanity is its few words about the morally small person (小人) in II.1: "The noble person embodies zhongyong; the morally small person opposes zhongyong." Aside from this, the greatest fault in people is the failure to know and consistently do what is right (III-V, VII), which means failing to cultivate their moral nature. There is recognition that bad principles can prevail in a country, or that a country can be devoid of the way of good morality (X.5, XXVIII.1).

Spirits (鬼神) are mentioned a few times in *Zhongyong* (XVI, XXIV, XXIX), but there is no mention of demons or evil spirits as there is in James (2:19). *Zhongyong* often mentions Heaven, but there is no mention of the devil as in James (4:7).

The strong recognition of evil in the Epistle of James and the lack of recognition in *Zhongyong* represent a major difference between the two. *Zhongyong*'s failure to acknowledge evil and its effects on humanity caused Peter K. H. Lee to observe that *Zhongyong* is very beautiful, but quite naïve.[319]

Recognition of evil is related both to a knowledge of God's righteousness and His forgiveness. When God's righteousness is compared to humans, there is a sense that humans have fallen short. God's forgiveness, then, enables people to face their sin.[320]

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[318] Legge, *Confucius*, 406.

[319] Peter K. H. Lee of Hong Kong, interviewed by author, March 2002, Hong Kong, hand-written notes.

[320] The Bible records the worst sins of its most prominent examples (e.g., Abraham, Judah, Moses, David, Peter, Paul). Because of the strong sense of God's grace and forgiveness, even the evil of the best examples can be faced or directly acknowledged without destroying their example as people of faith and good works. In some ways their example is enhanced by mentioning their sin since by God's grace they are able to confess their sin, receive God's forgiveness, put their sin behind them, and be motivated by God's grace to do good. Chapter two of James uses two people whose sins are recorded (Abraham and Rahab) as examples of people of faith who were exemplary in good works. If they can be tempted to do

The knowledge of God's righteousness and forgiveness are both communicated to people most clearly through verbal revelation.

Revelation

The Epistle of James conveys the understanding that God has made promises (1:12, 2:5) and speaks through the prophets and scripture (1:21-25, 2:8-11, 2:23, 4:5-6, 4:11-12, 5:10). In regard to revelation, Paul Rule writes: "The Christian God, then, speaks from Heaven. But does the Chinese Heaven speak?"[321] Rule notes that the Confucian sage draws his inspiration from Heaven, but not through words that Heaven speaks. Rule quotes Mencius on the question of whether or not Heaven speaks: "No! Heaven does not speak but reveals its will through actions and deeds."[322] Rule explains, "The developed Confucian understanding of these issues that leads from Mencius via the *Zhong Yong* 中庸 to Zhu Xi 朱熹 and Wang Yangming 王陽明 emphasizes the moral nature of humanity as the prime source of contact with transcendence."[323] In *Zhongyong*, the moral nature, which Heaven has given to people, is that by which people know

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evil by the devil, they can overcome the guilt of their sin and temptation by the supernatural power of God who forgives and helps them do good works. In contrast, the sins of the Confucian examples are not mentioned in the classical Confucian books. The evil in all humanity is not directly acknowledged. Confucian scholars did note that superior persons (君子) are few and morally small persons (小人) are many. QIAN Mu, *Zhuzi*, 419. The remedy to this fault of moral deficiency is to learn more and put effort into moral cultivation. Although Confucius, Zisi and Mencius were surrounded by the evil of their age, perhaps their books do not give strong acknowledgement to evil because they wanted to provide positive examples. Additionally, without a God of grace, it would be harder to directly acknowledge sinful evil and still have a positive attitude about cultivating morality.

[321] Paul Rule, *Does Heaven Speak? Revelation In The Confucian And Christian Traditions*, paper presented as part of the international Ricci conference "China And Christianity: Burdened Past, Hopeful Future," The Ricci Institute for Chinese-Western Cultural History and The Center for the Pacific Rim, University of San Francisco, 14-16 October 1999, 27.

[322] From Mencius 5A:5, quoted in Ibid., 29.

Heaven. *Zhongyong*'s Heaven does not speak in the way that James' God speaks through the prophets and scripture.

When Matteo Ricci and his fellow Jesuits began to present Christianity to the Confucian scholars in the 17th century China, some responded with acceptance and others with admiration and toleration. But a strong anti-Christian reaction also developed, along with its anti-Christian literature. Regarding this literature, Rule concludes: "The objections to Christianity in the anti-Christian literature may be summed up under a number of heads but, in the end, can mostly be reduced to a rejection of the Christian concept of revelation."[324]

In the Epistle of James, God's revelation reveals sin in humanity, and offers promise of life. God's grace and forgiveness are revealed. These contrast with the understandings conveyed in *Zhongyong*. Rule observes: "The central issues here are the doctrines of sin as an offence against God, original sin, and redemption, which are for Christians revealed doctrines but all absent from rather than contrary to Confucian values."[325] The promise of God's grace and forgiveness of sins in James is a major area of contrast with *Zhongyong*.

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[323] Ibid.

[324] Ibid., 17.

[325] Ibid., 20.

Grace

The promise of God's forgiveness, grace and mercy are revealed in the Epistle of James (1:12, 1:18, 1:21, 2:5, 2:13, 4:6-10, 5:11, 5:15-16). Peter K. H. Lee says that *Zhongyong* does not have a conception of grace.[326]

James recognizes sin in humanity and has a strong call to repentance (4:8-10). God gives grace to the humble (4:6). He forgives (5:15-16). A sinner can be turned from error and his soul saved from death (5:20). However, in *Zhongyong* it is hard to see how a morally small person (小人) can be converted. It appears that unless a sage influences a transformation, the morally small person is entrenched[327] in bad behavior (II.2): "The superior man's embodying the course of the Mean is because he is a superior man, and so always maintains the Mean. The mean man's [小人] acting contrary to the course of the Mean is because he is a mean man, and has no caution."[328] However, *Zhongyong* does convey that doing what is morally good comes from the moral human nature (性), which is given by Heaven. This moral nature is operative in people as the source of their good moral behavior.

A revelation of God's righteous will leads to the knowledge of sin in humanity. This sin is dealt with directly in James because there is also a revelation of God's grace. There is a promise of salvation and life. In these respects, the metanarrative of James

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[326] Peter K. H. Lee interview.

[327] The idea of a morally small person being entrenched in bad behavior comes close to the Christian view of sin as a condition from which bad actions flow, rather than merely an action or series of actions. The Christian view is that this condition applies to all. *Zhongyong* differs from the Christian view in differentiating between the morally small person (小人) who is entrenched in bad behavior and the superior person (君子) who embodies good behavior.

differs from that of *Zhongyong*. Two other ways in which they differ are seen in *Zhongyong*'s emphasis on government and its emphasis upon a contiguous understanding of all things.

Earthly Government

In *Zhongyong*, this world's government is a major emphasis. The main moral examples admired by Confucius in *Zhongyong* were involved in government (Yao, Shun, Wen, Wu, and Prince Zhou). These ancient sage-kings, which are held up as the supreme examples in *Zhongyong*, became the foundational examples for Confucian scholars. Government is a prominent emphasis in *Zhongyong*, beginning in chapter VI where Shun is first mentioned. Shun is mentioned again in chapter XVII where the emphasis on government then becomes stronger in *Zhongyong*. An important aspect of the noble person and sage in *Zhongyong* (often related to government) is influencing and affecting others (XXII-XXXII) to produce moral transformations in them, leading to harmony among all. *Zhongyong* doesn't indicate that it is necessary to be a government leader in order to affect this transformation, but the sense is that it is preferable to hold such an office through which one's influence can be spread far and wide. The goal is to spread one's influence beyond China "to all barbarous tribes. Wherever ships and carriages reach; wherever the strength of man penetrates; wherever the heavens overshadow and the earth sustains; wherever the sun and moon shine; wherever frosts and dews fall . . . ." (XXXI.4)[329] Finally, one's influence can spread far and wide enough to "assist the

[328] Legge, *Confucius*, 386.

[329] Ibid., 429.

transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth. Able to assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth, he may with Heaven and Earth form a ternion." (XXII)[330]

However, earthly government is not even mentioned in the Epistle of James. According to 5:9, "The Judge is standing right at the door." (NAS) God is expected to come soon to judge the world. There will be a great reversal of fortune, especially between the rich and the poor, and those who are humbly and patiently enduring trials (1:9-12, 2:5-13, 4:6-10, 5:1-12). Therefore, the things of the present world are seen as transient and are not emphasized in the epistle. Those who have riches, power and influence in this world will soon fade away. James emphasizes patient endurance and faith while looking forward to God's judgment. According to 4:13-15, "13 Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit'; 14 whereas you do not know what *will* happen tomorrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. 15 Instead you *ought* to say, 'If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.'" (NKJ) Life in the present world is "a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away." Therefore, James emphasizes the relationship with God, the relationship among fellow believers, and God's judgment and salvation. Government in James is of a different kind: the rule of God over all, especially as expressed in the Lord's coming to judge.

Jesus said to give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's (Luke 20:25). Paul and Peter also write within an eschatological framework of expecting God's

coming judgment, but they exhort respect for government (Romans 13:1-7, 1 Peter 2:12-17). Although James exhorts patience, the epistle shows no interest in this world's government.

This lack of interest in earthly government in James versus the strong emphasis upon this world's government in *Zhongyong* constitutes a major difference between the two. *Zhongyong* does not convey an eschatological sense of God's coming judgment, as does James. Therefore, the efforts of this world are important in *Zhongyong*. In addition, the efforts of this world are ultimately broad in scope. In *Zhongyong*, the best efforts of the sage eventually become transcendent in that the sage participates with Heaven and Earth in bringing harmony to all things (cosmic and earthly). In a similar vein *Zhongyong* emphasizes the contiguity of all things rather than a sharp break (God's coming judgment) and stark contrasts (sin, the devil, etc.).

Contiguity

As already noted, *Zhongyong* does not have sharp contrasts between evil and good, sin and righteousness, the devil and God as does the Epistle of James. There is no differentiation in *Zhongyong* between good and evil spirits. The emphasis in *Zhongyong* is upon the unity of all things. Probably the strongest contrast in *Zhongyong* is that between the morally small person (小人) and the noble person (君子) in chapter II. But this contrast is not dwelt upon in *Zhongyong*. The greater emphasis of *Zhongyong* is encouraging people to cultivate good morality by means of positive examples and descriptions of good moral behavior. In addition, throughout *Zhongyong* there is an

[330] Ibid., 416.

emphasis upon the correlation and unity of Heaven, Earth and Humanity. The ultimate goal is the unity of these in a mutually nourishing harmony. There is no clear idea of judgment as in James. The emphasis is holistic rather than that of making sharp contrasts and recognizing fragmentation. On the other hand, sharp contrasts are evident throughout the Epistle of James.

In *Zhongyong,* the cultivation of morality by humanity is what will ultimately bring about the harmony of all things. It seems that the opposite is also true, that the failure to cultivate morality is the cause of disharmony among all things. But this is not clearly stated in *Zhongyong*. Rather, harmony and the positive push toward harmony are stated. While James envisions a final judgment in which there will be a division, the final goal in *Zhongyong* is directly related to its sense of contiguity in that the aspiration is to bring all things together in a comprehensive harmony.

Summary

This chapter has brought together in comparison the key results of chapters 2 and 3, which presented the moral visions of James and *Zhongyong* respectively. The moral exhortations of both works were found to be similar. Their moral exhortations include a core virtue: faithfulness in James and integrity in *Zhongyong*. Expanding out of the core virtue into the various arenas of exhortation, similarities were discovered between James' exhortations to revere God, love others, practice goodness, bridle the tongue, be wise, be patient and *Zhongyong*'s exhortations to be reverent, be benevolent, cultivate morality, be modest and be wise. Confucianism has a universal explanation for these similarities in *Zhongyong*'s understanding that Heaven has mandated a moral nature for all people.

Christianity has a universal explanation for these similarities in the understanding that God's moral law has been written on every heart.

While similar in moral exhortation, the Epistle of James and *Zhongyong* were found to be different in metanarrative. Each metanarrative has the ultimate goal of harmony, yet the way to achieve that harmony is basically different in each. In *Zhongyong*, achievement of the ultimate goal is effected by human moral effort. In James, while human moral effort plays an important role, achievement of the ultimate goal is effected primarily by God. The points of difference are most prominent in regard to God, sin, revelation, grace, earthly government and the concept of contiguity. The God of James is gracious and personal, but the Heaven of *Zhongyong* is impersonal. In James, sin is acknowledged as evil in humanity. *Zhongyong* does not convey a strong sense of evil in humanity. The Epistle of James holds that God communicates by means of verbal revelation. In *Zhongyong*, Heaven does not communicate verbally. Grace is revealed as the remedy to the problem of human evil in the metanarrative of James. Grace is absent in *Zhongyong*. Earthly government is emphasized and exalted in *Zhongyong*. James doesn't even mention earthly government. *Zhongyong* conveys an understanding that all things are connected (contiguity). The Epistle of James emphasizes sharp contrasts.

Thus, the practical moral exhortations of James and *Zhongyong* are similar. These exhortations are where most people live their daily lives. On that level, the moral visions of James and *Zhongyong* are similar. However, upon entering the metanarratives or world-views in which the exhortations are ultimately grounded, the clear difference between the moral visions is revealed.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Summary

This inquiry began with the question of the Chinese relationship to Christianity. From the 7th to the 14th centuries, Christianity spread into China two or three times. It then disappeared, leaving barely a trace. When Christianity was at a peak and the Reformation in full bloom in Europe during the middle of the 16th century, Christianity was virtually unknown in China. During the next four hundred years, Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries put forth strong efforts to spread the Christian Gospel in China. Compared with the effort put forth, their results were often very small. However, these last two and a half decades have witnessed a phenomenal growth of Christianity in the Chinese world. How is this question of the Chinese relationship with Christianity (both previous and present) to be understood?

This inquiry led first to a study of Chinese culture. Through a study of Chinese culture, it quickly becomes apparent that Confucian thought is central to Chinese culture. It is true that Chinese culture is a complex interblending of various influences, including Daoism, Buddhism and folk religion. However, Confucian thought has again and again asserted its centrality in the Chinese spirit. As it has done so, it has managed to skillfully assimilate significant aspects of other viewpoints. The prime example of this is Neo-Confucian assimilation of Buddhist and Daoist influence. While Confucian thought has maintained a certain flexibility, it has also asserted its primary understandings and principles in criticism of other views. This is especially true in regard to its positive, socially oriented morality. The writings of Zhu Xi and Qian Mu give witness to this

dynamic. Thus, Neo-Confucianism is not called Neo-Buddhism or Neo-Daoism. Confucian thought maintains its central position in the Chinese mind.

Confucian thought is predominantly moral thought. It attempts to answer the question: how should we live? Therefore, the approach taken in this study is that of morality. Since many general and broad comparisons between Confucian thought and Christianity have already been accomplished, the decision was made to pick an ancient authoritative text from each for comparison.

Zhongyong was chosen as the Confucian representative because it represents a mature development of the ancient authoritative Confucian texts, and it expresses the Confucian metanarrative better than others. Metanarrative is an important part of a moral vision since it is the larger theory or worldview in which the practical moral exhortations are grounded.

The Epistle of James was chosen as the Christian representative since it has been viewed again and again as the most thoroughly moral writing among the Christian scriptures. Therefore, it seems a very likely candidate for cross-textual interaction with a thoroughly moral Confucian text.

A key feature of both Christian and Confucian moral visions is the dynamic of positive social moral exhortation. In each case, they do not merely include restraining exhortations, but they also emphasize positive practice, the actual cultivation of positive moral behavior. Social relationships are also central to each moral vision. This positive and social character of their moral visions differentiates them from the rival moral schemes that have historically challenged them and that continue to challenge them.

As this inquiry proceeded, a convenient division was established: practical moral exhortations were distinguished from the metanarratives in which the exhortations are grounded. Moral vision, then, includes both exhortations and metanarrative. Both are important. The exhortations are what common people interact with on a daily basis. Metanarratives are the larger intellectual worldview in which the practical exhortations find ultimate meaning. Thus, without the exhortations, there is no connection with daily life. Without the metanarratives, there is no larger unified meaning (only fragmented exhortations).

Alongside this division, the discovery was made that led to the articulation of the dissertation thesis: the moral visions of the Epistle of James and *Zhongyong* are similar in respect to their practical moral exhortations, but different in respect to their metanarratives. They both exhort reverence, faithfulness and integrity, wisdom, and cultivation of the practice of good moral behavior. However, the metanarratives differ in basic ways.

The metanarratives differ at the most fundamental level in how the ultimate goal of each is achieved. The ultimate goal of *Zhongyong* is a state of harmony among Heaven, earth and all things. According to *Zhongyong*, it is accomplished by vigorous human moral effort. The ultimate goal of James is God's judgment in a saving way. In the Epistle of James, it is accomplished by divine action. Thus, *Zhongyong* has a humanistic worldview and James has a theistic worldview.

Along with this fundamental difference in the metanarratives, other differences were discovered. *Zhongyong* has an impersonal view of Heaven. James' God is personal, even such that He can be a friend to people. Sin is a major issue throughout the Epistle of

James, but evil is not a topic of discussion in *Zhongyong*. God in James is a God of grace, mercy and forgiveness, as well as justice and righteousness. In *Zhongyong*, Heaven is just and righteous, but grace is not part of the description. *Zhongyong* does not convey a sense of verbal revelation from Heaven. James holds that the scripture and the prophets express verbal revelation from God. *Zhongyong* emphasizes government, a topic absent in James. Finally, *Zhongyong* has an overall sense of contiguity, but the Epistle of James analytically draws sharp contrasts.

These conclusions bring the present inquiry to a close. The overall understanding achieved is that strong convergence is present in the daily moral exhortations of James and *Zhongyong*, yet divergence is present in the metanarratives. The hope is that this understanding will contribute to answering the broad question: how is the Chinese relationship with Christianity to be understood? In a broad way, the traditional rejection of Christianity by many Chinese can be understood in terms of the fundamental difference between the two worldviews or metanarratives. On the other hand, congeniality is present in regards to the practical moral exhortations of each.

This study did not deal with some of the other key issues that should be involved in the broad inquiry of the Chinese relationship with Christianity. The scope is necessarily limited by the texts chosen. For example, the Epistle of James does not mention the Holy Spirit and does not discuss conversion from a worldview that differs with the Christian worldview. This study does open the door to further research in a number of directions.

Future Research

The following are some related areas of inquiry for possible future research. Methodology is an ongoing question. This study made the distinction between practical moral exhortations and metanarratives, between behavior and underlying theology. Is this methodological distinction the most holistic or comprehensive, or should other levels or dynamics be added for further refinement? Are there places where this comparison methodology breaks down and becomes unhelpful or even misleading? Can or should the methodology used here be carried over into comparisons with other religious and ideological traditions?

More research into the ancient roots of the Chinese worldview would help to provide a continual refinement of understanding. The texts we have (e.g. *Book of History, Book of Poetry,* etc.) are written and edited by the victors, as is most ancient history. However, continued archeological discoveries help put pieces of the overall puzzle together. An accurate understanding of the ancient Chinese concepts and how they changed over time is invaluable.

Following from this is inquiry into the way in which ancient and traditional Chinese concepts, sentiments and feelings interact with the twentieth and twenty-first century world. How much of an influence do traditional concepts and sentiments really have in the lives of Chinese today? How have traditional concepts helped and hindered Chinese in the past century? How is the alternating rejection and revival of traditional sentiments to be understood? Do Chinese people today have a unified identity in terms of concepts and sentiments, or have other (originally non-Chinese) concepts and

sentiments entered a blending of cultures that makes it hard to identify a Chinese identity in terms of inner sentiments and conceptual thinking?

As Chinese culture experiences blending with Western culture, the question of the roots of Western culture also arises. In this light, a close comparison between Aristotle and Confucius would be helpful. One interesting question here is why both Aristotle and Confucius avoid delving into evil and its effects upon humanity. Also, does either offer any hints toward the origin(s) of evil in humanity? Building on this in the Christian realm, a study of scholastic assimilation of Aristotle (and also Plato) compared with Chinese Christian assimilation of Confucius would be interesting. The scholastic assimilation of Aristotle (or the excessive assimilation of Aristotle by the Christian scholastics) was a major factor in the rise of the Reformation. Is it possible that as Christianity grows in East Asia, Christian scholars will also dig into their cultural roots and perform a similar assimilation of Confucian thought? Will they exceed an edifying assimilation, as did the Western scholastics? In other words, will the assimilation of Confucian concepts into Christian theology end up blurring the central truth(s) of the Gospel such that Grace is once again eclipsed by works righteousness? If so, how will that look? How would a possible Far East Reformation look? On the other hand, if lessons can be learned from the Reformation, how might Confucian thought enrich the development of Christianity in East Asia? Does Ji's comparison between Luther's theology and Eastern thought offer hope here?[331] Are there some aspects of the Christian Gospel that have been blurred or eclipsed in the West that Confucian wisdom can highlight, unfold, sharpen and articulate in ways that have not been conceived in the

framework of Western philosophy? Can there be such a thing as Christian Confucianism or Confucian Christianity? How would such differ from European Christianity, African Christianity, Latin American Christianity, and other expressions of Christianity?

Alasdair MacIntyre has offered a penetrating analysis of Western moral philosophy and the way in which it has become morally impoverished through modernity. What clues does he offer to an understanding of what has happened and what is happening in the Chinese world as modernity has been accepted by Chinese in various forms?

Regarding the Chinese relationship to Christianity within this last century, has Christianity grown so quickly in recent PRC history because Confucianism was repressed? Has Christianity risen because Confucian thought does not deal adequately with the reality of evil and the effort to overcome evil in oneself and society? Why has Christianity grown so slow in the traditional Chinese society of Taiwan? What is the situation in other societies in which Confucian influence is strong (Japan, Korea, Viet Nam, Singapore, etc.)? What about Chinese communities throughout the world?

Such questions have potential for continuing the discussion of Chinese and interaction with Christianity. As Christianity grows in China and all of East Asia, it will certainly go through many different phases. As this development meets various junctures, these various inquiries will take on greater relevance.

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[331] JI Won Yong, "Luther's 'Theology of the Cross' and Eastern Thought," *Concordia Journal* 24 (April 1998): 130-137.

APPENDIX I

Chronology of Chinese Dynasties and Significant Confucian Scholars

Xia Dynasty	2183-1752 B.C.?
Shang Dynasty	1751-1112 B.C.
Zhou Dynasty	1111-249 B.C.

Confucius (551-479 B.C.) Founder of Confucianism. Inherited the content of the Five Classics (*Book of Poetry, Book of History, Book of Changes, Book of Rites, Spring and Autumn Annals*) and edited some or all of them. The first of the Four Books, *Analects of Confucius*, is a collection of his sayings, compiled by one or more generations of Confucius' students.

Zhengzi (4th Cent. B.C.) Student of Confucius. Said to be author of *Great Learning*, one of the Four Books. According to tradition, he taught Zisi and passed the orthodox Confucian teaching down to him.

Zisi (492-431 B.C.) Grandson of Confucius. Said to be author of *Zhongyong*, one of the Four Books. According to tradition, he received the orthodox Confucian teachings and passed them down to Mencius. Thus, a secure and direct line of teaching from Confucius to Mencius was transmitted.

Mencius (371-289 B.C.) Considered the second greatest Confucian scholar and teacher, second only to Confucius himself. The largest of the Four Books, *Mencius*, is a compilation of Mencius' teachings. He stands out among world philosophers in his discussion of human nature, holding that human nature is essentially good.

Xunzi (c.298-c.238) Opposed Mencius in that he said human nature is basically evil and must be checked and trained by government and education. Many blame Xunzi for the rise of the harsh Qin dynasty. His view failed to gain ground in the Confucian school of thought. Mencius' view of human nature became the dominant Confucian position.

Qin Dynasty	221-206 B.C.
Han Dynasty	206 B.C. – A.D. 220

Dong Zhongshu (179?-104? B.C.) Responsible for the hegemony of Confucian thought in the Han dynasty because he convinced Han emperor, Wudi, to make Confucianism the official ideology of China in 136 B.C. Thus, the state exams based on the Confucian texts began in 135 B.C. and lasted until A.D. 1905.

Three Kingdoms	220-280
Chin Dynasty	280-420

North & South Dynasties 420-589
Sui Dynasty 581-618
Tang Dynasty 618-907
Five Dynasties 907-960
Song Dynasty 960-1279

Zhu Xi (1130-1200) Premier spokesman for Neo-Confucianism. He lifted the Four Books into their subsequent prominent position. He especially chose *Zhongyong* as one of the Four Books because he felt it contained the orthodox Confucian teachings and was able to oppose Daoism and Buddhism, though aspects of Buddhism and Daoism were assimilated into his Neo-Confucianism.

Yuan Dynasty 1271-1368
Ming Dynasty 1368-1644

Wang Yangming (1472-1529) Premier spokesman for Ming Idealism. He emphasized depending on one's conscience, the inner good moral nature that is Heaven-given. He also emphasized the unity of knowledge and behavior.

Qing Dynasty 1644-1912

Kang Youwei (1858-1927) Political reformer. He wanted to revive ancient Confucianism in conjunction with new political reforms for China, including self-rule, independence, parliamentary rule and constitutional rule. He is the premier spokesman for the New Text school, which viewed Confucius primarily as a political reformer and the Classics as containing esoteric language and principles to support political reform.

Republic 1912-present
People's Republic 1949-present

Qian Mu (1895-1990) Founder of Chinese University in Hong Kong. At a time when Confucianism was suffering heavy criticism in China's twentieth century struggle with Western Modernity, he revived an interest in and value for Confucian thought.

Tu Weiming (1940-present) Regarded by many as the leading Confucian scholar of the present day. He has been a major influence in what is considered a new wave of Confucianism, including a global interest in Confucian thought such as has not been experienced before.

APPENDIX II

Chinese Characters With Various Romanizations

Chinese Characters	Hanyu Pinyin	Other Romanizations
道	Dao	Tao
君子	Junzi	Chun-tzu
孔子	Kongzi	Confucius
老子	Laozi	Lao Tzu
孟子	Mengzi	Mencius
錢穆	Qian Mu	Ch'ien Mu
秦	Qin	Ch'in
宋	Song	Sung
天	Tian	T'ien
夏	Xia	Hsia
中庸	Zhongyong	Chung-yung
周	Zhou	Chou, Chau
朱熹	Zhu Xi	Chu-Hsi
莊子	Zhuangzi	Chuang Tzu
子思	Zisi	Tsze-sze, Tzu Ssu

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