

**Meaning of Remembrance of Me in 1 Corinthians 11:23-27
in Light of *Bakgolnanmang*; A Korean Concept of Honor**

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Introduction

One of the most important events in Korea is *Hyeonchung-il*—the Korean Memorial Day. The government of South Korea has designated June 6 as a national Memorial Day in order to honor those soldiers and civilians who sacrificed their lives for the country during the Korean War, as well as those who bravely carried out the independence movement during Japanese colonization.

The meaning of *hyeonchung* (顯忠) can only be properly understood when read based on its Chinese letters. *Hyeon* (顯) indicates a broach that is placed on a head, like a crown of the king in the ancient times. *Chung* (忠) consists of two letters—one (中) is “center” or “bull’s eye” and the other (心) is “heart,” which refers to one’s life and the place where blood is produced. When it’s read, it means loyalty derived from the heart. Like an archer who focuses on the bull’s eye when he bends his bow, it denotes a person who pledges his loyalty to his master only. Putting these two letters together, *hyeonchung* means placing a crown on the head of one who gave his fealty to his master or country. Thus, *hyeonchung-il* is the day of remembering those who showed their sincere loyalties by sacrificing their lives, and putting crowns on their heads, even after their death.

As a remembrance of them, a ceremony is held every year at *Hyeonchung-sa*, the National Cemetery. On this day, the president of Korea, along with other officials, pray and lay flowers on the graves of those who sacrificed. Furthermore, all Koreans voluntarily display the national flag on their front doors to commemorate these heroes. It shows how Koreans deeply honor those who sacrificed their lives for others.

Just as honor is a predominant value in Korean society, so honor (and dishonor) was among the most significant values for persons to be

taught from their childhood in the first century Mediterranean World.¹ Bruce Malin, in his *New Testament World*, presents honor and shame as "the pivotal values" of the world in which early Christianity began and flourished.² David deSilva, in his book *Hope of Glory*, insists that the role of honor in the Mediterranean World provided the readers of the New Testament with wider and deeper perspectives for understanding the contexts.³ Many social traditions regarding honor were developed to gain and maintain one's honor, and exercised in order to show his social rank publicly. However, unlike the worldly perspective of honor during His time, Jesus inverted its value to the society and taught new lessons. He was even obedient to death on the cross, which was considered the most dishonorable way to die, in order to redefine it for believers.

Having said that, I find similarities between Korean culture and the New Testament in terms of honor relative to "remembrance." In this paper, I will present a short overview of the predominant value of honor in the Mediterranean World, which had shaped the cultural background of the New Testament. Through the studies of Jesus' parable of table fellowship, and His death on the cross, I will also attempt to address how Jesus redefined its value in society. In addition, the meaning of remembrance in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 will be surveyed to highlight the death of Jesus as a climax of His honor. Lastly, *bakgolnanmang* (the Korean concept of honor) will be introduced to underscore the meaning of remembrance in that I Corinthians passage in the Korean context.

Honor as a Pivotal Value in the Mediterranean World

It is evident that we human beings attempt to find our identity in relation to others in our society. Being socialized accordingly from our childhood must be a crucial issue. How virtuous we are in terms of social norms, or values, is recognized by other members of the society. One of the most dominant societal values might be honor. For many, gaining, or losing, honor in a community is of great importance. Malina defines honor as follows: "Honor is the positive value of a person in his or her own eyes plus the positive appreciation of that person in the eyes of his or her social group."⁴ In other words, public testimony about individuals is important for an honor rating in our world.

¹David A. deSilva, *Hope of Glory: Honor Discourse and New Testament Interpretation* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 2.

²Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1981), 12.

³deSilva, xiii.

⁴*Ibid.*, 25.

In light of this social phenomenon, honor was also an extremely important societal value in the Mediterranean World during the time of Christ. This is strongly supported by a wide range of ancient literature.

Ancient Literature

It seems that the concept of honor is critical for understanding the motivation of the heroes depicted in Homer's *Iliad*. The *Iliad* showed that honor made it reasonable, and acceptable, to go to war, to fight with friends, and to be away from family for many decades. Homer's characters were able to gain honor through heroism in battle, the belief being that it was "disgraceful to wait long and at the end go home empty-handed."⁵ Honor was the utmost motivation to continue the battle, despite its extreme difficulties.

A good example of honor is demonstrated in the *Iliad* through the story of Hektor, of whom it was said, "Glorious Hektor, who was ever the bravest fighter of the Trojans,"⁶ and that he "learned to be valiant and to fight always among the foremost ranks of the Trojans, winning for (his) own self great glory, and for (his) father."⁷ *Iliad* 24.505 also depicted death as being no hindrance to honor. Hektor said, "I have gone through what no other mortal on earth has gone through; I put my lips to the hands of the man who has killed my children."⁸ This was considered honorable in the eyes of the readers.

David deSilva's treatment of handbooks such as Aristotle's *Art of Rhetoric* and Cicero's *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, which motivated their readers to follow courses of action, is even more useful as we investigate the influence of honor in the Mediterranean World. The goal of orators was to persuade their hearers to adopt the action that they (the orators) considered honorable:⁹ "Praise and counsels have a common aspect; for what you might suggest in counseling becomes encomium by a change in the phrase. . . . If you desire to praise, look what you would suggest; if you desire to suggest, look what you would praise."¹⁰

Aristotle believed there were some motives that would affect people in making decisions. For these motives, deSilva interprets that "the orator's addressees would desire what was praiseworthy, the successful

⁵Homer, *Iliad*, 2.297.

⁶*Ibid.*, 6.460.

⁷*Ibid.*, 6.444.

⁸*Ibid.*, 24.505.

⁹David Arthur deSilva, *Despising Shame: Honor Discourse and Community Maintenance in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, 2nd ed. (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 41.

¹⁰Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric*, 1.9.35-36.

advisor should point to the honorable course.”¹¹ In order to make the hearers adopt the speeches given by orators, it seems that they also used shame with reference to honor. The orators caused their hearers to feel shameful as a way they chose to seek the good things for honor, as evidenced in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* 2.6.12:¹²

It is also shameful not to have a share in the honourable things which all men, or all who resemble us, or the majority of them, have a share in. By those who resemble us I mean those of the same race, of the same city, of the same age, of the same family, and generally speaking, those who are on an equality; for then it is disgraceful not to have a share, for instance, in education and other things, to the same extent.¹³

The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* mentions that there exists an essential group of virtues—wisdom, justice, temperance, and courage being the four components of honor.¹⁴ It even emphasizes “praiseworthy” as one of the most important components.¹⁵ Praise and blame were considered to be the devices that challenged, and persuaded, people to keep the values of their society. In this sense, it is obvious that the hearers of the addresses were expected to emulate the models presented by the orators in order to gain, and maintain, their own honor.

In a final set of speeches near the conclusion of Josephus’ *The Jewish War*, Eleazar addresses the last remaining resistance fighters. He wants the revolutionaries to steal the victory away from the Roman forces by dispatching their families. Throughout the speech, considerations of the preservation of honor predominated:

At this crisis let us not disgrace ourselves; we who in the past refused to submit even to a slavery involving no peril, let us not now; along with slavery, deliberately accept the

¹¹deSilva, *Hope of Glory*, 15.

¹²This idea is even emphasized in Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* 3.8.1-3, which says, “First, as most closely resembling true courage, comes the citizen’s courage. Citizen troops appear to endure dangers because of the legal penalties and the reproach attaching to cowardice, and the honours awarded to bravery; hence those races appear to be the bravest among which cowards are degraded and brave men held in honor. It is this citizen courage which inspires the heroes portrayed by Homer, like Diomedes and Hector. . . . This type of courage most closely resembles the one described before, because it is prompted by a virtue, namely the sense of shame, and by a desire for something noble, namely honour, and the wish to avoid the disgrace of being reproached.”

¹³Aristotle, *Rh.* 2.6.12.

¹⁴Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 3.2.3.

¹⁵deSilva, *Hope of Glory*, 18.

irreparable penalties awaiting us if we are to fall alive into Roman hands.¹⁶

From the above non-canonical writings, it is obvious that honor was brought to the forefront, and presented as “the pivotal value” of the world in which early Christianity began. However, Jesus challenged this deeply embedded honor value by criticizing the cultural traditions regarding who received it and how it was acquired.

Jesus’ Reversal of Honor

It is apparent that Jesus reforms the fundamental understanding of the honor system to redefine its meanings and functions. Neyrey argues,

His reform consists not only in refining and correcting the Torah of Israel, but in engaging the values and consequent social structures of his social world. Jesus did not overthrow the honor code as such, but rather redefined what constitutes honor in his eyes and how his disciples should play the game.¹⁷

Table Fellowship (Luke 14:7-14)

A good example of Jesus’ reversal of honor is found in Luke 14:7-14, which is about the parable of the “table fellowship.” Jesus redefines the social value revealed in the honor system, which people sought in order to keep their own worth in society. Verse 11 depicts Jesus converting pride into humility. Bartchy insists that people were raised, and taught, to seek the best seats and places of honor at table,¹⁸ which indicates a tendency toward self-exaltation in the society. Jesus, however, denies this social value and, instead, urges people to be humble. Verse 11 reads (New International Version, NIV, is used throughout this paper), “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” It is modeled on Proverbs 25:6 that says, “Do not exalt yourself in the king’s presence, and do not claim a place among great men.” Jesus subverts the social value and teaches a new ethic of humility, which was actually believed to be a vice in that society. In concurring, Lyle Story notes that “The elevation of humility as a virtue

¹⁶Josephus, *The Jewish War*, 7.324.

¹⁷Jerome H. Neyrey, *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1988), 164.

¹⁸S. Scott Bartchy, “The Historic Jesus and Honor Reversed at the Table,” in *The Social Setting of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Wolfgang Stegemann (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002), 178.

stands in contrast with Greek culture wherein humility is regarded as a vice.”¹⁹

In verse 11, theological passives are used. Exaltation (ὑψόω) should be only the action of God. When used in a passive form, ὑψόω denotes being exalted by God, because the name of God as the subject of the action was avoided in the Old Testament.²⁰ In this sense, it is evident that he who humbles himself will be exalted by God. It implies that we have to concentrate on God’s way of honoring His people (i.e., through humility), not on the soical and human preoccupation with honor.

Regarding humility (ταπεινός), it is worth noting that “The humility of the publican, which contrasts with the arrogance of the Pharisee, has its basis in self-knowledge and consists in entire self-committal to God’s grace.”²¹ Furthermore, humility is described as “the fundamental attitude of Christians in view of the unity of the church”²² (see Philippians 2:3). In other words, Jesus teaches us that any attitude of selfishness and conceit is to be prevented by an attitude of humility. Thus, one’s position depends on God, not on his own self-seeking.

Also, Luke 14:12-14 depicts the inclusiveness of the members of the community in contrast to the exclusiveness, and hierarchy, in the Mediterranean World. Verse 12 says, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers, or relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid.” From this, we can find the usual custom of invitation, which was reciprocity. Neyrey sums up the motivation behind that usual custom as follows,

As a way of reassuring their friends that they had not broken faith with the system, they would invite only the right people, which is exactly what Jesus criticizes in 14:12-14. They would choose the best seats at whatever dinners they attended to signal the same thing.²³

One of the goals of table invitation of the honorable in a society was to be associated with the “influential, powerful, and well connected” for

¹⁹Lyle Story, “One Banquet with Many Courses (Luke 14:1-24),” *Journal of Biblical and Pneumatological Research*, vol. 4 (2012), 83.

²⁰TDNT, 608.

²¹TDNT, 16.

²²EDNT, 334.

²³Richard L. Rohrbaugh, “The Pre-Industrial City in Luke-Acts: Urban Social Relations,” in *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation*, ed. Jerome H. Neyrey (Peabody, MA: Hebdrickson Publisher, 1991), 146.

one's advantage.²⁴ For this reason, the guest list had to be scrutinized in order to confirm the strong bonding of the elite. However, Jesus rebukes the religious leaders for their selfish hospitality, which was based on the expectation of the same reward brought by invitees. It shows that the host of the feast only invites those who can reciprocate, grant benefits, and honor on him in the future. It is evident that the expectation is to be recompensed by means of physical rewards.

Now, Jesus is breaking down this social wall of exclusiveness of fellowship in His community. He says that one should invite "the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind" (14:13), who were marginalized by the community. According to Leviticus 21:16-20, these people were regarded in a negative way in terms of their status.

Jesus' Death on the Cross

More than anything, the cross of Jesus, which is in contrast with social perspective, reaches to the climax of His honor. By Greco-Roman standards, death on a cross was regarded as a shameful death. Hengel's elucidation of Christ's crucifixion perhaps provides a better interpretation as to how it was viewed by the society:

By contrast, to believe that the one pre-existent Son of the true God, the mediator at creation and the redeemer of the world, had appeared in very recent times in out-of-the-way Galilee as a member of the obscure people of the Jews, and even worse, had died the death of a common criminal on the cross, could only be regarded as a sign of madness.²⁵

If one sees the death of Jesus through this social perspective, crucifixion must be folly, madness, dishonor, ignominy. David deSilva, however, makes a crucial observation about the crucifixion when he suggests that Jesus' attainment of the honor of sitting at God's right hand springs from enduring a cross and despising shame.²⁶

Having acknowledged that being crucified on the cross was a disgrace, Jesus decided to not consider His equality with God, but rather to humble himself and become obedient to death. This is because Jesus knew the numerous positive effects that would come to sinners through

²⁴K. C. Hanson and D. E. Oakman, *Palestine in the Time of Jesus: Social Structures and Social Conflicts* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1998), 75.

²⁵Martin Hengel, *Crucifixion in the Ancient World and the Folly of the Message of the Cross* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1977), 6-7.

²⁶David A. deSilva, *Despising Shame*, 178.

His death. David deSilva summarizes its beneficial effects, alluding to the epistle of Hebrews:

Thus, Jesus' death is a tasking of death on behalf of all people (Heb 2:9) and the cause of the exalted position the Son enjoys (2:9). Jesus' death was a battle, in which the Enemy was destroyed and the captives set free from slavery (2:14-15). Through death, Jesus arrived at his perfected state after the completion of his own formative process, becoming "the cause of an eternal salvation to all who obey him" (5:8-9). Finally, Jesus' death is a "better sacrifice" (9:23-24), which cleanses the heavenly sanctuary, institutes a new and "better covenant" (8:6), removes sins and cleanses consciences (9:14; 10:10) by opening up a new way to the throne of God (10:19-20).²⁷

Although through the crucifixion Jesus was ignored by the world, He endured it and gave His life for all. Finally, God exalted Him to the highest place for His obedience to shame on the cross, Philippians 2:9 declaring, "Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name." Even Hebrews 11 records how the many forefathers of faith in God had to go through difficult situations in order to keep God's commands rather than adhering to the world's standards.

Hence, Jesus shows clearly what faith entails, and how we as believers are to manifest faith in our situations. In this sense, the author of Hebrews encourages us to keep our faith by saying,

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.²⁸

Remembrance of Me (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

We have investigated how honor was a prominent value in the Mediterranean World, and how Jesus subverted, and refined, its social standards. I suggested that the death of Jesus on the cross should be acknowledged as the climax of His honor, rather than shame. Now, I will present the meaning and significance of "in remembrance of me" in

²⁷Ibid., 1.

²⁸Hebrews 12:2-3.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26, which was Jesus' commandment regarding the Lord's Supper in light of His honor on the cross.

It is evident that Paul felt it necessary to compel the believers to exercise communion, because they had neglected this tradition (see 1 Corinthians 11:2, 17, and 22). The fact the tradition had been kept, not only from the time of Jesus, but also from that of the early church, indicates the Corinthians were also asked to keep it for their benefits, which raises these questions: For what benefits did Jesus command them to do this in remembrance of him? And in light of this tradition, are contemporary believers to practice it as well?

The Lord's Supper is recorded in Matthew 26:24-29, Mark 14:22-25, and Luke 22:14-19, as well as in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. To understand Paul's intention in speaking about the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, it is important to recognize the distinctions between the record of the Synoptic Gospels and 1 Corinthians 11. Gordon Fee provides a good summary of the differences in Paul's letter versus Matthew's and Mark's Gospels:

Paul/Luke (1) have the verb "give thanks" instead of "bless;" (2) lack an imperative with the giving of the bread; (3) with the bread saying have the additional words "which is for you; this do in my remembrance;" (4) have the additional words "after supper;" (5) lack a blessing over the cup; (6) do not mention their all drinking from the cup; and (7) have a different cup saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood"/"This is my blood of the covenant."²⁹

The most striking to me is the repetition of the phrase "in remembrance of me," which appears at the end of each component of the tradition in the symmetrical structure in 1 Corinthians 23-26. There seems to be much debate among scholars as to the meaning of "remembrance of me," especially in terms of subject and object of the action of remembering.

Regarding the treatment of εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν, Hans Lietzmann insists that the meal at the Lord's Supper was a memorial meal for the dead.³⁰ However, Joachim Jeremias subverts Lietzmann's idea by presenting evidence of the absence of this phrase in his own writing. This causes Jeremias to conclude that the commemorative meals

²⁹Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians, The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014), 615.

³⁰Hans Lietzmann, *Mass and Lord's Supper: A Study in the History of the Liturgy*, trans. D. H. G. Greeve (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1979), 182.

were to celebrate one's birthday rather than to commemorate one's death.³¹

Interestingly, Jeremias suggests that εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν be read as "God's remembrance. . . . Something is brought before God . . . *that God may remember.*"³² His interpretation shows how he understands the subject and the object of the action. For him, God is the subject of remembering something, not the believers of Jesus; and it is the judgment that God will remember through this tradition. Regarding the judgment of God as being the object, Jeremias insists that both negative and positive judgment is to be remembered by God. The former is the case that God remembers sin and disobedience; and the latter is that God will show mercy and grace when He recalls His promise to the people.³³ However, this remains controversial among scholars.

Robert Clancy provides us with a significant presentation regarding three Hebrew words translated ἀνάμνησις by the Septuagint (LXX): זכר; זכרון; זכורה. From the first two Hebrew nouns, he elicits the subjects of the action. The first noun זכרה denotes God as the subject, and emphasizes His remembering His promise. On the other hand, the second noun זכרון refers to the people as the subject who are remembering what God did for them when He brought them out from Egypt (see Exodus 12 and 13) as the object of remembrance.³⁴ In putting both God and the people as the subjects, Clancy provides a significant answer about what to remember via the Hebrew verb זכר, which means to remember in relation to the interpretation of the εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν. First, God remembers His testimony and His people, not their sins; it's His promise that provides security to them in His remembrance. Second, the people are to remember the Exodus as God's redemptive act.³⁵ It is His unconditional love and grace to save them. Thus, they were required to remember what He had done for them, and to teach its significance to the next generation. In this way, Clancy's presentation of those Hebrew words is very helpful to read "remembrance" in relation to its subjects and objects.

In addition, the use of εἰς denotes the manner of the Lord's Supper. Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament (VGNT) suggests εἰς is used as an adverbial phrase that expresses manner.³⁶ In other words, it is

³¹Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, (London: SCM, 1966), 239.

³²*Ibid.*, 248.

³³*Ibid.*, 247-8.

³⁴Robert A. D. Clancy, "The Old Testament Roots of Remembrance in the Lord's Supper," *Concordia Journal* (January 1993): 37-40.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 41.

³⁶James H Moulton, *Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949), 463.

therefore possible that “In the Lord’s Supper, εἰς indicates the manner in which the body is to be eaten and the blood to be drunk in remembering Christ.”³⁷

As stated above, Paul intentionally mentions Jesus’ commandment to the believers for compelling them to keep this in their mind. For this reason, Paul’s repetition of remembrance is more understandable. For him, it is definite that remembrance was primarily “humanward.” Fee argues that the apostle’s great concern in repeating those words was to remind believers of the humanward implications of this remembrance.³⁸ They are to be required to remember how grateful they should be for God’s salvation accomplished by the sacrifice, and death, of Jesus on the cross. It is to mean more than mere mental recognition of his sacrifice, but rather the “living out of this Christomorphic individual and corporate identity.”³⁹

All things considered, remembrance means Jesus will remember His testament to His people. In His remembrance of promise, we find that we are secure. On top of that, it requires us to show our loyalty, and obedience, to Him by remembering His death, which was the climax of His honor. At the same time, it indicates that we have to pass on its relevant value, and significance, to the next generation:

To remember was to actualize the past, to bridge the gap of time and to form solidarity with the fathers. Israel’s remembrance became a technical term to express the process by which later Israel made relevant the great redemptive acts which she recited in her tradition.⁴⁰

Interpreting “Remembrance of Me” Through the Korean Honor Lens

The Rise of Christianity in South Korea

Christianity was introduced to Korea over 140 years ago. Due to the nation’s strict exclusion of outsiders, western missionaries often had to go through severe difficulties, and make sacrifices, many dying as martyrs. However, once the Gospel was proclaimed to the Korean people, the number of believers increased rapidly. By 1989, there were

³⁷Clancy, 47.

³⁸Fee, 613.

³⁹Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 882.

⁴⁰Brevard S. Childs, *Memory and Tradition in Israel*, (Naperville, IL: Aleck R. Allenson, Inc., 1961), 74-5.

29,820 churches and 55,989 pastors;⁴¹ and according to 2005 statistics, nearly 34% of the South Korean population was Protestant Christians.⁴² All this denotes that Christianity in South Korea has expanded remarkably since its introduction in 1884.

It is widely agreed that the messages of material prosperity, divine healing, along with shamanism and Confucianism, were key components of the religious background for Korea's acceptance of Protestantism. Shamanism, which dominated ancient Korea for many centuries, provided a religious and cultural basis for Koreans, its major function being the promotion of material prosperity. Thus, it's not surprising that, early on, Christianity was accepted by many people through the preaching of material blessing and secular prosperity. These kinds of messages are found in Yonggi Cho's sermons. In addition, up to the 1970s, many revival meetings were held, and people came to Christ through healing ministries, which were the most significant theme.⁴³ Although it is true that material blessing/divine healing messages were the predominant components of the remarkable expansion of Korean Christianity, there is no doubt that the Korean honor system also has played an important role.

The Five Relations of Confucianism

In order to understand the honor system in Korea, one needs to review the Confucianism that strongly shaped pre-modern Korean society. The people were taught to maintain a high view of human dignity. According to Confucianism, persons could be honored by appropriate relationships with each other.

Confucianism especially, intensified the following five major relations that one had to practice in relation to social honor. First, *bujayoochin* (父子有親) is the relationship between father and son; it explains that a father should be honorable in every aspect of life, and that a son should follow the examples given by his father. Second, *gunshinyooeui* (君臣有義) denotes that integrity should be kept between the subject and the sovereign. Third, *bubuyooobeol* (夫婦有別) is the relationship between husband and wife; it is to be kept properly distinctive in terms of different functions at home. Fourth, *jangyooyouseo* (長幼有序) means that the young should yield to the old

⁴¹Andrew E. Kim, "Korean Religious Culture and its Affinity to Christianity: The Rise of Protestant Christianity in South Korea," *Sociology of Religion* (2000), 117.

⁴²"Size of Religious Groups," Korea.net, www.korea.net/AboutKorea/Korean-Life/Religion (accessed June 10, 2016).

⁴³Christian Academy (ed.), *The Relationship Between Contents of Preaching and Church Growth*, (Seoul, Korea: Christian Academy Press, 1986), 25-44.

in such a way as to show reverence for them. Fifth, *bungwoyooshin* (朋友有信) is the relationship between friends; confidence and faith should be maintained between them.⁴⁴

In short, for centuries these five relations played a significant role as a ruling ideology of the Chosun dynasty. The people were taught a distinctive human manner of relating to one another, which enabled them to act in a way worthy of being human. In other words, honoring others in a proper way was one of the most important values that persons had to keep if they were to be worthy. Each member of society was required to behave accordingly by learning these five relations found in Confucianism, which is still exercised in modern Korean society. Dr. Young Gweon You explains how one was considered honored, or shameful, in his society:

This leads to various sets of values, such as the concept of honor, reverence for others, harmony, proper order in society, and a keen awareness of what others do for us and what we should do in return. If we Koreans succeed in doing this, we feel honorable. On the other hand, if we fail to do this, we feel fatal shame and disconnected in the relationship.⁴⁵

Bakgolnanmang as a Concept of Unhae

Furthermore, these five relations can properly be understood in the concept of *unhae*, which means “gracious favor.”⁴⁶ The following analysis of this concept by Michael Kalton is helpful for this study:

Closer analysis reveals that the concept implies a twofold obligation those in superior positions should grant assistance, *unhae*, to those who depend upon them and need their help, the recipients of this favor in turn owe a debt of gratitude which can be repaid whenever a fitting occasion arises. The kind of obligation involved in this is not so much a matter of duty in the strict sense as it is a matter of simply behaving in a fitting, human manner.⁴⁷

⁴⁴Jun Ho Woo, *Contemporary Reflection on the Three Bonds and Five Relationships in Confucianism* (Seoul, Korea: Iwha Press, 2007), 123-9.

⁴⁵Young Gweon You, “Shame and Guilt Mechanisms in East Asian Culture,” *The Journal of Pastoral Care* 51, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 62.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 63.

⁴⁷Michael C. Kalton, *Korean Ideas and Values*, Philp Jaisohn Memorial Papers, vol. 7, (Royal Asiatic Society, 1979), 12.

What's important for this study is that the recipients of this concept need to remember how grateful they were to those who showed them favor. It is generally accepted that the remembrance of grace given by a superior should be delivered even to the following generations in light of honoring them. For this reason, there is a variety of expressions regarding *unhae*, including: *geolchoboeun* (結草報恩), the act of repaying someone's kindness, even after death; *gakgolnanmang* (刻骨難忘), remembering one's debt of gratitude towards another person because it is deeply engraved in one's memory; *banpoboeun* (反哺報恩), repayment of kindness; *mangkeukjieun* (罔極之恩), unforgettable grace; and *bakgolnanmang* (白骨難忘), the act of carrying one's favor to the grave.

Among these expressions of *unhae*, *bakgolnanmang* (白骨難忘) has the most striking meaning in light of remembrance. As one of Korean society's maintaining values, it denotes the unforgettable grace that is shown by the sacrifice and death of someone.⁴⁸ It consists of four letters, each one of which intensifies the meaning of this concept. Bak (白) refers to the color white, gol (骨) to bone of the human body, nan (難) to difficulty, and mang (忘) to forgetfulness. Putting them together literally means that it is difficult to forget the grace of someone's sacrifice and death, even after the human body decays and white bones appear. This is the strong declaration that one will show his loyalty, and trust, via the remembrance of the one who sacrificed. Thus, it reminds us of the significant reason why the Korean people commemorate *Hyeonchung-il*, or Memorial Day. For it is the day to express our *bakgolnanmang* (白骨難忘) to those who sacrificed their lives in order to save our nation. It is the genuine way of expressing honor through remembrance of them.

Conclusion

The journey of this paper has begun to bring the Korean concept of honor, especially *bakgolnanmang* (白骨難忘), into the reading of "remembrance of me" in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 as a way of "thickening" its meaning in the Korean context. Before presenting that meaning, I investigated some non-canonical writings to prove that honor was a pivotal value in the Mediterranean World. I also discussed how Jesus inverted the social standards of honor, and redefined them, through His parable of table fellowship and His crucifixion.

As the death of Jesus on the cross is to be seen as the climax of His honor, the meaning of remembrance in I Corinthians 11:23-26 was

⁴⁸Woo, 178.

studied. Especially, Paul's repetition of "remembrance of me" in this pericope intensifies its meaning in terms of loyalty and trust.

Furthermore, the Korean concept of honor, *unhae*, through *bakgolnanmang* (白骨難忘) has been examined to introduce the similar values between the New Testament and the Korean context. As *bakgolnanmang* (白骨難忘) is to express unforgettable grace, honor, gratitude, and reverence to those who died for others' sake, "remembrance of me" manifests Christ's salvation for us accomplished through His death on the cross, which was considered shameful in His time.

Acknowledging that the world considered His death on the cross dishonorable, Jesus chose to go through extreme sufferings for our sake. Therefore, it is His love and grace that we honor. Whenever we remember His cross, we express how grateful we are for that grace, and decide to be loyal and obedient to Him forever. It is not mere mental remembrance, but the living out of His sacrifice.

Thus, when we as Korean believers say *bakgolnanmang* (白骨難忘) for Jesus, it means that we will never forget His grace and love expressed by His death even after we die. We will remain loyal and obedient to Him as witnesses of His salvation for others.

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