

A. Foundational Concepts

1. Basic Terms

Achieved vs Ascribed Role/Status

Achieved Status

A social position that someone assumes voluntarily and that reflects personal ability and effort; a position gained on the basis of merit.

Ascribed Status

A social position that someone receives at birth or assumes involuntarily later in life; a position assigned to individuals or groups without regard for merit, but because of certain traits beyond their control, such as their race, their sex, or the social standing of their parents.

Exodus 3:2-11

Moses' status as the leader of the Israelites was given to him by God.

Ruth 1:3-5, 4:9-10,13

The husbands of both Naomi and Ruth died, leaving them with the involuntary, ascribed social status of widowers. Boaz, in choosing to marry Ruth, acquires the achieved, voluntary status of a kinsmen-redeemer.

1 Samuel 1:25-28

Samuel was offered to God as a Nazirite before he was born (ascribed status). He chose to live his entire life out of that status as a servant of God (achieved status).

1 Samuel 16, 1 Kings 1:28-35

David's status as king was achieved because God approved of his heart. The status of David's son, King Solomon, was an ascribed status through biological inheritance.

Jeremiah 1:5

While Jeremiah was still in the womb, God appointed him a prophet to the nations. Though Jeremiah would have needed to co-operate with his divine appointment (achieved), his status originated before he had the ability to choose (ascribed).

Matthew 3 & 4

John the Baptist achieved his role/status by his behaviour, while Jesus had his role/status ascribed by God.

Acts 1:4, 8:18-19

The gift of being filled with the spirit is an ascribed status, given by God. When Simon, in Acts 8, offers money to purchase the filling of the spirit, he is attempting to achieve this status. Paul rebukes him for attempting to achieve through God what can only ever be ascribed by God.

Anomie

A condition in which society provides little moral guidance to individuals; a condition of normlessness in a group or even a whole society when people either no longer know what the norms are or have lost their belief in them; a state in which norms lack definition and force, that is, in which people are not sure what the norms are and do not greatly care.

Judges

Various judges attempt to restore order to Israel, but in the end, everyone does what is right in their own eyes.

Ecclesiastes

The preacher is in the despair of meaninglessness, because he has lost faith in the things of life that are supposed to make it liveable.

Matthew 19:27-30

Jesus calls us away from the cultural achievement norms of our society in order to follow him. We are to disregard selective norms of our own culture, and seek to relieve the resultant anomie by establishing and adhering to the norms of God's kingdom.

Matthew 24:12

“And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold”

The Greek word for iniquity in this case is correctly translated as *anomia*. Jesus is warning the people that in the end days anomie will abound. People will treat God's word and Law with contempt, being influenced by the lack of moral guidelines or Godliness in their society.

Class (and Social Class)

A group of people who share a similar position in a stratification system.

Amos 5, 6, & 8

The prophet castigates priests and princes for their abuse of power or wealth over the people.

Acts 15:5, Mark 7:3-8, Galatians 1:14

The Pharisees were a prestigious Jewish sect who were committed to upholding the details of Mosaic Law and Jewish traditions.

Division of Labor

Specialized economic activity.

Exodus 35 & 36

Moses called on many skilled craftsmen to build the sanctuary.

Functions (manifest vs latent vs dysfunctions)

Latent Functions

Consequences that are largely unrecognised and unintended.

Manifest Functions

The recognized and intended consequences of any social pattern.

Biblical Example?

Gemeinschaft vs Gesellschaft

Gemeinschaft

A type of social organization in which people are bound closely together by kinship and tradition; a German word meaning community and used to describe the intimacy of life in small villages.

Gesellschaft

A type of social organization in which people come together only on the basis of individual self-interest; a German word meaning society or association and used to describe the impersonality of life in cities.

The Pentateuch

The Israelite community was based on kinship and tradition, and in this sense they are a *Gemeinschaft*. Yet trade patterns indicate specialization and division of labour among the 12 tribes, reflecting a *Gesellschaft*.

Ephesians 4:15-16

Pauls draws a parallel between the relationship of members within the church and the human body. "Each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth" seems to imply a *Gesellschaft*, with specialized division of labour.

Role Set

A number of roles attached to a single status.

Proverbs 31:10-31

The role set of the wife of noble character. Note that the "godly wife" is really a metaphor for wisdom, as the "adulterous woman" is a metaphor for folly. The chapter is not prescribing gender roles.

Matthew 28:19-29

Jesus tells his disciples that the role set of being a disciple includes, but is not limited to, a) making disciples of all the nations b) baptizing them in

the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and c) teaching them to observe all that Jesus has commanded.

Ephesians 4:25-5:21

Paul uses the metaphor of “the Christian walk” to explain to the Ephesians what the role set of being a Christian includes. Many of these instructions describe behavioural outcomes of moral character.

Role Strain (including role overload and role conflict)

Incompatibility among roles corresponding to a single status.

Genesis 22:1-9

When God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac, Abraham experienced role conflict as both a father and a servant of God.

Exodus 2:1-14

Moses’ mother was required, in her role as slave, to have her baby boy killed. In her role as mother, she desires to nurture life in her baby. Then Moses must choose, when faced with the Egyptian beating a Hebrew, whether he will act out of his status as an Egyptian prince or his status as a Hebrew.

1 Samuel 20:1-42

Jonathon’s status as the best friend of David caused conflict when his father, the King, sought to kill David. Jonathon was expected to act out of his status as the King’s son and comply with his father’s wish to have David killed, yet his personal desire was to act out of his status as David’s best friend and save his life.

Esther

Queen Esther experienced role strain and conflict in her roles as Jew, woman, queen, and adopted daughter.

Jeremiah 20:8-9

Jeremiah struggles with the conflict created by his roles as a prophet. If he speaks, he must speak reproach and destruction. If he does not speak, withholding God’s word burns like a fire within him.

Matthew 6:24

No one can serve two masters, both God and money.

Matthew 26:36-46

Jesus, in the Garden of Gethsemane, is both human and divine, creating a role conflict of deep intensity. In his status/role as a divine being, Jesus could have stepped out of his coming death at any point, right up until the

moment of his death. If he remained in his status/role as a human, he must face the loneliness of being deserted by his disciples, public humiliation, ostracism, and torture, and an agonizing death and separation from God.

Luke 10:38-42

One of Martha's statuses is that she is a close friend and follower of Jesus. When he comes to visit, she struggles with wanting to both fulfil her household hospitality responsibilities for him, and sit at his feet and receive instruction.

Social Facts

Patterns of human behaviour are the basis of established structures; they are social facts that have an objective reality beyond the lives and perceptions of particular individuals.

Leviticus 17-25

The book of Leviticus tells the children of Israel how to be holy in God's eyes. It addresses the holiness of the people in general, of the priests in particular, and even the holiness of time. It spells out regulations concerning food, marriage, and general social order. These laws taken together are a social fact for the Israelites that are external to each individual and coercive on each individual.

Matthew 9:20-22; Mark 5:24-34; Luke 8:43-48

The woman who touches Jesus does so in defiance of the fact that her condition of being female and menstruating has been defined by her culture as rendering her ceremonially unworthy, and polluting to anyone she touches, which therefore constrains her not to touch him. This social fact in her culture is clearly external to her as a person and constraining on her behaviour as a person.

Social Institution

Major spheres of social life, or society's subsystems, organized to meet basic human needs; relatively permanent patterns or clusters of specialized roles, groups, organizations, customs, and activities devoted to meeting fundamental social needs. Five major traditional social institutions are the family, economy, religion, political order, and education.

Exodus 18:17-23

Jethro explains to Moses that he, Moses, is trying to do too much himself and counsels Moses to create a political and judicial structure.

Exodus 21-23

These chapters detail God's ordinances for the people, what to do in case of personal injuries, property rights, sundry laws, and use of the land, which together establish the new polity of the nation of Israel.

Social Structure

A relatively stable patterns of social behaviour; any characteristic of a group, rather than of an individual.

Genesis 25-27

Primogeniture is the practice of giving special rights and privileges to firstborns. In this example, Jacob is deceiving Esau into relinquishing his rights and privileges as the firstborn of Isaac. Primogeniture structured the collective life of Israel in many ways.

Exodus 19:5

God establishes a covenant with the children of Israel which gives structure to their understanding of themselves individually and collectively, and to their intra and intergroup relations.

Joshua 15-21

Israelite society was structured by its tribalism, each tribe descending from one of the twelve sons of Jacob. Everything from the status of individuals to the relationship between groups was shaped by tribal relations. For example, priests all came from the tribe of Levi and King Saul is tainted by his association with the tribe of Benjamin. Israel's story is so structured around the notion of twelve tribes that they attempt to artificially reconstruct the tribal system when they return from Exile.

Socialization

The learning process through which individuals develop self-hood and acquire knowledge, skills, and motivations required for participation in social life; the internalisation of the culture of a group; the complex set of processes by which infants become distinct and unique individuals as well as members of a society.

Exodus 2:1-10, Hebrews 11:23ff

Moses resists being totally socialized into the foreign culture of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

In the Shema, the children of Israel are encouraged to socialize each other and their children into an understanding that God is one, and that they are to love Him fully.

1 Samuel 1-3

Samuel is dedicated by Hannah and then socialized by Eli the priest into a life of serving God as a prophet.

Sociobiology

A theoretical paradigm that explores ways in which our biology affects how humans create culture.

Leviticus 11

The dietary laws of the Israelite culture forbidding pork reflected their need for livestock which could be accommodated to their nomadic lifestyle. Livestock such as sheep and goats were more suited to a migratory life due to their split hooves, and also chewed cud allowing them to withstand periods of drought and no food. Pigs are neither split-hooved or cud chewing. Therefore the eating of pork was forbidden. Biology came to have deep religio-social implications.

Solidarity (mechanical vs organic)

Mechanical solidarity

Social bonds based on shared morality that unite members of pre-industrial societies.

Judges

Post-conquest Israel during the Iron Age, located in the central hill country of Canaan, was a classic mechanical society.

Organic solidarity

Social bonds based on specialization that unite members of industrial societies.

Ephesians 4:3-4, 16; I Corinthians 12:12-25

Paul's metaphor of the church as a body seems to emphasize the unity of beliefs (mechanical) in Ephesians and the harmonizing of roles (organic) in Corinthians.

Status vs Role

Status

A recognized particular position that an individual occupies within society.

1 Samuel 1, 1 Kings 17

Priest and Prophet are two different higher statuses that were familiar to the children of Israel in the Old Testament. Eli is a well-known example of a priest, and Elijah is a well-known example of a prophet.

Matthew 9:9-17, Luke 17:12-19

Tax collector and leper are two different lower statuses that were familiar to the Jews in the New Testament. Matthew is a well-known example of a tax collector, and lepers whom Jesus healed are also well-known.

Luke 3:1-21

John the Baptist is an example of the unusual category of someone supposedly without a status. His very marginality to society, his non-status as an undefined “man of God” (Ish ha-elohim), was his status.

Role

Behaviour expected of someone who holds a particular status; a set of expectations governing the behaviour of persons holding a particular position in society, a set of norms that defines how persons in a particular position should behave.

1 Samuel 1, 1 Kings 17

A priest is a religious leader who functions within the established tradition and faithfully carries out the ritual and repeats the sacred messages. In Numbers 3:5-10, and Deuteronomy 18:17-22, the priests were called to maintain the rituals and traditions of the tabernacle, and the prophets were called to speak the words of God to His people. A prophet is a religious leader who functions outside the established tradition and faithfully speaks into the tradition, calling for innovation, renewal, or revolution.

Matthew 9:9-17, Luke 17:12-19

A tax collector is a Jew who collected money from Jews as taxes for Rome. They were expected to collect more than what they actually gave to Rome, keeping the balance as their wages. They were known to collect as much money as possible, often through unscrupulous means such as extortion and thus were stigmatised as a group.

Luke 3:1-21

As an undefined “man of God,” John the Baptist had no defined behavioural expectations to follow. He created his own social role by separating himself from mainstream society, engaging in unique and eccentric behaviour (e.g. eating locusts), baptizing new converts, and challenging the tenets of Judaism.

Technology (physical vs social)

Knowledge that a society applies to the task of living in a physical environment.

Judges 4:3

King Jaban of Canaan and his commander Sisera were able to oppress the sons of Israel for 20 years because they had the technological advantage of 900 iron chariots.

Jeremiah 2:13

God contrasts himself to the broken cisterns, the dilapidated technology that his people had created for themselves.

Verstehen

The German word for “understanding.” It is the interpretive sociologist’s job not just to observe *what* people do but to share in their world of meaning and come to appreciate *why* they act as they do.

Hebrews 2:14-18

Jesus not only figuratively placed himself within the human context in order to understand us, but he also literally placed himself within the human context in order to understand us.

Luke 7:36-50

Jesus understood the meaning of the woman pouring perfume on his feet, while the Pharisees did not.

B. Society and the Individual

2. Culture

Acculturation

Learning the language, values, and customs of a dominant group by an ethnic group; also called cultural assimilation.

Deuteronomy

God’s concern that the Israelites protect themselves from Canaanite ideas and values was in recognition of the power of any culture to socialize and assimilate a new immigrant group.

Anthropocentrism

The Western cultural belief that humans are separate from and superior to other things in/on the earth, that humans are the pre-eminent species on earth, and that humans are the center and pinnacle of the universe.

Genesis 1:28-30

God tells the human to fill the earth, subdue it, and rule over it, because all of creation is given to humans.

Counterculture

Cultural patterns that strongly oppose those widely accepted within a society.

1 Kings 18

During the reign of Ahab, everyone in the land was required to worship Baal, upon penalty of death. Obadiah, the master of the palace, hid 100 prophets of Yahweh in 2 caves, bringing them bread and water. Despite

the demands of the culture, Obadiah chose to keep a counterculture alive, in hopes of defying his current culture.

Acts 2

Whether Christianity is a counterculture or subculture depends on the character of its host culture.

Cultural Distance

The relative similarity and/or difference between two cultures; the degree to which one culture is more or less similar to another culture.

Judges 1-2

There was greater cultural distance between the Israelites and the Philistines than there was between the Israelites and the Canaanites, whose languages were cognates, and whose diet and material culture were also quite similar. This contributed to the failure of the Israelites to drive out the Canaanites completely. As a consequence, the Israelites were not tempted to synthesize the religion of the Philistines, but struggled greatly with synthesizing the religion of the Canaanites. They constantly fell prey to Baalism, not to the gods of the Philistines.

Cultural Relativism

The practice of judging a culture by its own standards.

Romans 14

Paul is calling for followers of Christ to accept and understand each others' cultural backgrounds, and not place moral judgements on cultural practices.

Cultural Transmission

The process by which one generation passes culture on to the next.

Deuteronomy 4:9, 6:6-9, 11:18-20

Specific instructions are given to the Israelite people regarding how they are to pass on their faith/culture to the proceeding generations through the use of various symbol systems.

Cultural Universals

Traits found in every culture of the world.

Biblical Example?

Culture vs Society

Culture

The sum total of the heritage of a people, a whole way of life, a design for living, the social environment that is learned and does not come by nature

Society

A system of interrelationships that connects people, the complex all-encompassing level of human relationships within a defined territory and with a distinctive culture.

Society is the relationships of the actors, *culture* is the script.

Old Testament

Even though Israelite society is organized around a unique covenantal relationship with Yahweh in that they begin as a tribal, theocratic society, Israelite culture is clearly Canaanite in many respects such as language, dress, and even their concept of God.

New Testament

First century Judaism, as an institutionalised form of religion originally based on the Israelite Old Testament covenant with God, developed a highly sophisticated and codified set of laws.

There are three cultures evident in the New Testament: Jewish, Greek, and Roman. Jewish culture tends to accentuate the religious element, Greek culture the intellectual, and Roman culture the political/military. In Palestine, the religious culture instituted by Yahweh is influenced by the intellectualism of Greek while being dominated by the power of Roman society.

Culture Shock

Personal disorientation that comes from encountering an unfamiliar way of life.

Daniel 1-6

Daniel and the rest of the captured Israelites experienced culture shock when they were exiled in Babylon, as it was overwhelmingly unlike anything they had known in Jerusalem.

Ethnocentrism

The practice of judging another culture by the standards of one's own culture.

The nation of Israel often understood the identity of "God's chosen people" to mean that they were superior to other cultures.

Jonah 1:1-3, 3:3-4:2, 4:11

Jonah's insistence that the people of Nineveh should be destroyed by God, regardless of the fact that they turned from their evil ways to God, betrays his ethnocentric attitude.

Matthew 7:1-5, Romans 14

Both Matthew and Paul call for tolerance. We are not to judge the practices of others because God is the only true judge.

Luke 4:16-30

When Jesus is speaking in his hometown, he tells two stories that challenge the ethnocentrism of the people. The first story is of how, in the days of Elijah, God chose to bless a Phoenician widow instead of an Israelite widow. The second story is of how God chose to save Naaman, the Syrian leper, instead of an Israelite leper. This got Jesus driven out of his hometown. Jesus teaches that God challenges the notion of chosenness by blessing the 'other.'

John 4:7-9

The ethnocentric attitude of the Jews is evident in their unwillingness to associate with the Samaritans.

Acts 15, Galatians 2:11-21

Jewish believers were insisting that Gentiles must participate in the Jewish custom of circumcision in order to be accepted into the new church of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:17, 1 Cor 5:1, 10:7,20, 1 Cor 12:2, 1 Th 4:5, 1 Pet 4:3

Paul repeatedly refers to Gentiles using derogatory terms such as pagans and heathens, betraying a sense of religious/cultural superiority.

Folkways vs Mores

Folkways

A society's customs for routine, casual interaction.

Genesis 18:1-8

Abraham and Sarah followed their cultural expectations of hospitality by inviting the three strange men who came to their tent in for a lavish meal.

Luke 7:44-45

Jesus implies that his host has been rude in neglecting to greet him with a kiss and wash his feet.

Luke 10:39-42

As Mary sits at Jesus' feet to receive his instruction, Martha expresses her frustration to Jesus because Mary is ignoring the folkway of hospitality which requires that she, as a woman, be preparing food, instead of leaving Martha to do all this work.

1 Peter 5:14, Romans 16:16

At several places in the New Testament, Christians are encouraged to greet each other with a holy kiss, or a kiss of love.

Mores

A society's standards of proper moral conduct.

Genesis 17:10-14

Circumcision, originally a symbol of the covenant between God and his people, eventually became a cultural more of the Israelite people which was challenged by the New Testament church.

Ezekiel 4:9-17

God instructs the prophet how to prepare his food.

Matthew 12:1-14

Jesus violated a social norm of Judaism when he chose to pick grain on the Sabbath and heal a man's hand. The strong response of the Pharisees, who then conspired to destroy him, indicates that the social norm was a mores, not simply a folkway.

John 7:53-8:11

The scribes and Pharisees intended to stone a woman caught in adultery because she had violated a mores.

1 Corinthians 5:9-13, 8:1-13

Paul expresses concern and thoughtful interest regarding dietary laws (folkways), but voices strong disapproval of sexual immorality, greed, theft and idolatry (mores).

Ideology

Cultural beliefs that serve to explain and justify social conditions, and limit consciousness of alternatives; a connected set of strongly held beliefs based on a few very abstract ideas, used to guide one's reactions to external events; for example, a political ideology is used to decide how societies ought to be run.

Exodus 5-13

When Moses and Pharaoh debate whether the Israelites should be 'let go', more than just Egypt's loss of a valuable slave resource is at stake. If the God of Moses is successful in overpowering the decrees of Pharaoh, then the ideology of Pharaoh as a representative of God, along with the consequent structure of Egyptian society, will be undermined.

Luke 6:20-26

The beatitudes and woes can be interpreted as ideology in that they explain and justify the status quo.

Material vs Non-material Culture

Material culture

The tangible objects created by members of a society.

Non-material culture

The intangible world of ideas created by members of a society.

Matthew 22:15-21

Jesus teaches the Pharisees to give Caesar the coin (material culture) because he was the ultimate owner of that material asset, but to give to God their devotion (non-material culture) because God is the ultimate owner of life.

1 Corinthians 11:7

Paul teaches the Corinthian church that women should wear head-coverings (material culture) in order to demonstrate their desire to honour God (non-material culture). The head-covering is merely a material symbol of a non-material value.

Ephesians 2:19-22

The temple was a centrally important physical artifact of Jewish life (material culture), but Paul teaches that believers individually and collectively are the new temple of God (non-material culture).

Popular/Mass vs High Culture

Popular/Mass Culture

Cultural patterns that are widespread throughout society.

High Culture

Cultural patterns that distinguish a society's elite.

Biblical Examples?

Real vs Ideal Culture

Real Culture

Actual social patterns that only approximate cultural expectations.

Ideal Culture

Social patterns mandated by cultural values and norms.

Judges 21:25

Real Israelite culture throughout the Old Testament was often very different than the ideal culture taught by its prophets.

Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis

People perceive the world through the cultural lens of language; language functions not simply as a device for reporting experience, but also, and more significantly, as a way of defining experience for its speakers.

Daniel 1

In order to eradicate the subculture of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar took the brightest male minds of the Israelites and taught them the language and literature of the Babylonians. By speaking Babylonian they would see the world through Babylonian eyes, and ultimately, themselves through Babylonian eyes.

Social Norm

Rules and expectations by which a society guides the behaviour of its members; rules that define the behavior that is expected, required, or acceptable in particular circumstances.

Biblical Example?

Subculture

Cultural patterns that set apart some segment of a society's population; a culture within a culture; a group that maintains or develops its own set of beliefs, morals, values, and norms, which usually are at variance with those of the dominant culture.

Acts 2

Whether Christianity is a counter culture or subculture depends on the character of its host culture.

Time-based vs Space-based Media

Time-based Media

Durable and immobile media that promote tradition and religious/mystical forms of authority.

Space-based Media

Less durable and more mobile media that facilitate territorial expansion and secular forms of authority.

Exodus 24:12

The 10 commandments were literally written in stone.

Values

Culturally defined standards by which people assess desirability, goodness, and beauty, and which serve as broad guidelines for social living; ideals or ultimate aims; general evaluative standards about what is desirable.

Matthew 5, 6, & 7

The Sermon on the Mount outlines the values of the Kingdom of God as expounded by Jesus, contrasting them with the prevailing cultural values. These values are reiterated, explained, and expanded in the letters written by some of Jesus' disciples.

3. Human Social Interaction (Social Psychology)

Accounts (excuses vs justifications)

Account

An attempt to mitigate our responsibility for an untoward act.

Excuses

Admitting wrongdoing but denying responsibility by citing 1) uncontrollable events, 2) coercive external pressure, or 3) compelling internal pressure.

I Samuel 13:11-14; 15:21

King Saul attempts to excuse his first disobedience, and justify the second.

Justifications

Admitting responsibility but denying wrongdoing by defining the behaviour as 1) appropriate under the circumstances or, 2) prompted by praiseworthy motives.

Genesis 29:14-30

When Laban tricks Jacob into marrying Leah instead of Rachel, he justifies his deceitfulness by pointing out that it is social custom that the oldest daughter be married first.

Exodus 32

When Moses confronts Aron regarding the idolatrous behaviour of the Israelites regarding the golden calf, Aron's first response is to justify his behaviour by claiming that he had no choice, because the people were "bent on evil".

Excuse: Aron moves from justification to making excuses when he further explains that he threw the gold in the fire and "out came this calf." He, apparently, had nothing to do with it.

Altercasting

Attempting to impose roles/identity on another person that will complement ones we want to claim to our advantage.

Judges 6:11-24

Gideon was from the weakest clan of Manasseh, and considered himself to be the least in his family. When God sent an angel to call Gideon he found him threshing his wheat in hiding from the feared Midianites. Yet

the angel addressed him as “mighty warrior”, altercasting Gideon into a role of strength and power, that he might fulfil God’s call.

Mark 3:19-35

Mary comes concerned, as Jesus’ mother, and Jesus responds to Mary instead, as a child of God. Jesus thereby altercasts Mary into the role of an individual before God, by not allowing her to act out of her role as his mother.

Luke 11:27-28

A woman from the crowd seeks a blessing on motherhood, but Jesus responds by naming obedience to God as a greater blessing. Jesus is altercasting all women into the role of children of God with an individual will, calling them away from basing their primary identity on child-bearing.

Colossians 1 – 2:12

Paul describes what it means to be a new creation in Christ, altercasting all Christian believers into the role of the ‘holy and beloved’ of God.

Awareness Contexts

What each person knows about a) the identity of the other and b) his or her own identity in the eyes of the other. Awareness contexts may be open, closed, suspicion, or pretense.

Genesis 42-45

Joseph moves his brothers through the closed, suspicion and open contexts as he works toward disclosing his true identity.

Numbers 22:21-35

The story of Balaam and his donkey begins with an open awareness context; the donkey is a faithful beast and Balaam is righteous before the Lord. The story then moves to a closed awareness context, with the donkey being aware of the angel of the Lord while Balaam is unaware. It then moves to a suspicion awareness context when the donkey questions Balaam’s behaviour, and Balaam, in answering “no,” realizes there is more going on than meets the eye. Finally, the story moves to an open awareness context when the angel of the Lord is revealed to both Balaam and the donkey.

Psalms 139:1-6

Our interaction with God is governed by our awareness context.

Luke 22:54-62

The bystanders in the courtyard suspect Peter's association with Jesus, but Peter's denies any association with Christ.

Luke 24:13-31

The awareness context keeps shifting as Jesus meets the two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

John 4:7-26

In Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well, they begin with a closed context, as he knows her true identity but she does not know his. By the end of their conversation they share an open context, because she learns Jesus' true identity.

Acts 5:1-11

Both Ananias and Sapphira step into a closed context when they report the sale of their land because Peter knows their true identity as deceivers regarding the price of the land sale.

Civil Inattention

The social structural norm of being discrete or socially appropriate that calls for one person to be inattentive to another person in certain social situations, and in certain ways.

Biblical Example?

Definition of the Situation

All the ways that people organize their perceptions of objects, meanings, and other people; an organization of perception in which people assemble objects, meanings, and others, and act toward them in a coherent, organized way.

1 Samuel 17

In facing the Philistine giant, Goliath, the men of the army of Israel defined the giant as undefeatable, based on his size relative to theirs. David, on the other hand, viewed the giant as defeatable, based on his belief that God could do anything. David's definition of the situation, which was entirely different from everyone else's, fundamentally shaped his unique response to the situation.

John 8:1-11

A woman is brought before Jesus, having been accused of committing adultery. According to the scribes and Pharisees, the definition of the situation is that the woman is on trial. According to Jesus, the definition of the situation is that the scribes and Pharisees are on trial.

Emotion Work

Attempts to change the quality or intensity of our feelings in order to bring them into line with requirements of the occasion.

Psalm 137

We are to sing songs of Zion, but how can we sing songs in a strange land? Being in exile requires a certain emotional response.

Matthew 11, & Luke 7

We played the flute, but you did not dance.

Romans 12:15

Rejoice with those who rejoice, mourn with those who mourn.

Front and Back Regions/Stage

Front

That which we show to the public; settings in which people carry out interaction performances and maintain appropriate appearances.

Back

That which we do not want the publicly to see; settings that are inaccessible to outsiders where we do not maintain a public face.

2 Samuel 11

David's backstage behaviour with Bathsheba has consequences for his front stage behaviour as King and commander of the army. While David tries to keep the two separate, he is forced into front stage behaviours designed to cover up his backstage behaviours, which ultimately fails.

Matthew 6:1-8

Jesus teaches that personal piety such as giving alms and prayer are back stage activities best done 'in secret,' not front stage activities done 'in public'.

Impression Management

Conscious manipulation of role performance; efforts by individuals to produce favourable first impressions on others.

1 Samuel 21:12-15

King Achish's servants suspect the identity of David's kingship and his success in battle. Afraid for his life, David presents himself as a madman to them in order to escape unharmed.

Matthew 6

Jesus calls people hypocrites who draw attention to their giving, praying or fasting.

1 Corinthians 10:27-33

Paul advocates impression management regarding believers' eating of food sacrificed to idols, explaining that choices should be made based on the ultimate goal of seeking God's glory.

Master Status

A status that has exceptional importance for social identity, often shaping a person's entire life.

Genesis 22:1-9

In asking Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac, God tests Abraham to determine his master status: father of Isaac or servant of God.

Numbers 8:5-26

The priesthood was the master status of the Levites.

2 Chronicles 26:16-23

King Uzziah had two master statuses in his lifetime. He was the King of Judah, and he was a leper.

Mark 2:15-17

An individual's vocation as a tax collector inevitably became a negative master status.

Luke 9:51-62

Those who wish to follow Christ must make all other statuses secondary, and elevate their identification with Christ to a master status.

2 Corinthians 5:17

To be "in Christ" is a master status that cuts across all aspects of the believer's life.

Norm of Reciprocity

The assumption that smooth social interaction is facilitated by exchanges of equal value and worth.

Genesis 23

Abraham wants land for Sara's burial. The Hittites want to simply give it to him. Abraham insists on paying for it because he knows that the norm of reciprocity would make him indebted to the Hittites in some other way, and he wants to avoid this.

Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31

The 'golden rule,' found in most world religions, is the moral foundation that under-girds the behaviour of reciprocity.

Philemon vv.10-20

Because Philemon is indebted to Paul for his “self,” Paul asks Philemon for a favor of similar magnitude in return, “life” for Onesimus.

Personal Space

The area surrounding one’s body about which an individual makes some claim to privacy; that space surrounding one’s body where people are not welcome to intrude.

Genesis 31:33-35

After Rachel steals the household idols, she hides them underneath her camel’s saddle and, while sitting on it, claims that she is menstruating in order to prevent Laban from searching underneath her. Rachel deliberately invokes specific norms of gendered personal space to outwit Laban, saying, “the manner of women is upon me.”

Mark 1: 29-31, Mark 5:25-34, Luke 7: 36-38, 13: 10-13,

When Jesus touched women, which he did frequently, he violated rigid social norms about personal space between the sexes.

Personality

A person’s fairly consistent patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting.

Acts, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus

There is endless debate surrounding the authorship of the Pauline letters. Some of the debate is focused on the question of Paul’s personality. It is suggested that the same individual could not have written all the letters attributed to Paul because they reflect very diverse personalities. (This debate is, in some senses, a product of our psychologized culture, which places a great deal of emphasis on personality.)

Presentation of Self

An individual’s effort to create specific impressions of him or herself in the minds of others.

Matthew 16:13-17, 21:23-27

Jesus presents himself as deity to his disciples, and confirms it when they voice their perception, but when the Pharisees ask Jesus outright, he deliberately withholds his full identity.

1 Corinthians 9:19-23

Paul encourages the Corinthians to shape their presentation of self according to the people they are with, for the sake of the gospel, saying he has become “all things to all people, that by all means, I might win some.”

Role Exit

The process by which people disengage from important social roles.

Exodus 2:1-5:5

Moses experienced significant role exit more than once in his life.

Mark 1:16-20

Simon, Andrew, James and John all experienced role exit when they left their livelihood of fishing to become Jesus’ followers.

Mark 6:2-6

The people of Jesus’ hometown refused to receive his teaching in the synagogues because they could or would not accept his role exit from that of a village carpenter.

Role-making

Constructing one’s activity in a situation according to one’s definition of the situation.

Mark 2: 23-28, Matthew 12: 1-4

David and his companions eat the bread of the Presence because he and his companions are hungry. While the high priest’s definition of the situation understands this activity as theft and sacrilege, David’s definition views his role as that of providing for/saving himself and his men.

Role-taking

- a) a set of expectations attached to a status that you take one
- b) imaginatively occupying the role of another to see from their vantage point.

2 Samuel 12:1-13

Nathan rebukes David by tricking David into supposedly evaluating someone else’s wrongdoing.

John 1:14

Jesus “became flesh and lived among us.” His role-taking was not only mental and emotional, but literal.

1 Corinthians 8:10-13

Paul discusses the stumbling block principle with reference to food sacrificed to idols. To understand what might be a stumbling block for someone else, we need to role-take, that is, to see the issue through the eyes of the other and then adjust our behaviour accordingly.

Social Construction of Reality

The process by which people creatively shape their reality through social interaction. Berger identified three separate phases of externalization, objectivation, internalization.

Genesis 1 – 11

The biblical creation account rendered the entire cosmology of the subsequent Judeo-Christian world, compared to other creation myths that were current in the ancient world.

John 6: 48-58

Jesus teaches that he is the source of life, and that his body and blood externalise his life. Christians understand the bread and wine of the Eucharist as the externalised objectivation of Christ's life. When Christians receive the Eucharist they are internalising the life of Christ.

Revelation 12

The "testimony of Jesus" has been created by the stories that have been passed down to us. It is the means by which our reality is created, and becomes something to which we conform our lives.

Social Object

Anything that has been encountered by a human actor that is then defined, used to achieve a goal in a situation, and changed according to the needs of the actor.

Genesis 2: 18-20

God brought all the creatures to the man, looking for a suitable partner for the man. The man identified and named them as animals, something other than himself, thereby rejecting each one of them as a suitable social counterpart to himself. So God created the woman separately, and brought her to the man, and the man instantly recognized, described, and acted toward her as another creature just like him. Both the animals and the woman became social objects to the man as he interacted with them.

Exodus 16: 15, 31, Deuteronomy 8: 3, 16

When the Israelites first saw manna they did not know what it was. By naming it (manna means "what is it?") and using it as food, it became a social object to them.

Symbols and/or Signs

Anything that carries a particular meaning recognized by people who share culture; things used to stand for and indicate another thing. For example, the word *fish* is not really a fish, but is used to convey the thought or idea of a fish.

Leviticus 1:1-9

Description of the voluntary burnt offering performed to make payment for sins and show devotion to God.

Matthew 10:38; 16:24; Mark 8:34-5; Luke 9:23; 14:27

To understand the meaning of Jesus' call to "deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me," the cross must have been a significant symbol even before Jesus died on one.

1 Peter 1:19, 1 John 1:29

The sacrificial lamb represents the pure, faultless sacrifice of Christ.

Territoriality

The control of space in social interaction, usually a form of non-verbal communication governed by norms.

Genesis 13:8-9

Territorial norms of herdsmen suggested that Abram and Lot should separate, each finding his own piece of the land.

John 4:7-30

Jesus breaks the territorial norms of first century Judaism by having a conversation with a woman in public.

4. Socialization

Agents of Socialization

All those individuals, institutions, or settings that transmit culture to individuals, and thereby shape the individuals, giving them a sense of self .

Exodus 13:8-15; Joshua 4:6-7

Fathers are instructed to socialize their children into the covenant by explaining the meaning of the Passover and the twelve stones beside the Jordan River.

Luke 2:22-52

From the time of his birth, Jesus was brought to the temple in Jerusalem for the Passover festival every year. This religious place/ritual was an agent of socialization in Jesus' life.

Anticipatory Socialization

Social learning directed towards gaining a desired position; adapting to ways of a group to which one aspires but does not yet belong.

I Samuel 1,2,3

From the time Samuel was a small child, Eli modelled for him the role of a priest in order that Samuel might someday fulfil the responsibilities of the priesthood.

I Samuel 16:11, II Samuel 7:7; Jeremiah 23:5-6

David's shepherding of sheep as a boy socialized him into the role of shepherding the people of Israel as their King, and becoming both a shepherd and a king made him into a type of Christ.

Acts 11:25-26; 13:2-4

Barnabas went to Tarsus to bring Paul back to Antioch where they met regularly with the church and taught them for one year, until the Holy Spirit called them to become itinerant preachers/teachers.

Developmental Stages (imitation, play, & game)

Imitation

Meaningless mimicry.

Play

Taking the role of a single, known other

Game

Taking the role of many different others at the same time; understanding the set of roles in a complex system; the ability to take the perspective of multiple others in a situation.

II Samuel 11

While Uriah was commanding David's army, David impregnated Uriah's wife Bathsheba. In order to prevent Uriah, and everyone else, from knowing it was not Uriah's child, David asked Uriah to come home, assuming he would sleep with his wife, but Uriah slept at the city gates out of loyalty to his army. In order to make it appear to others like a war casualty, David orders Joab to abandon Uriah on the front lines, where he is subsequently killed. David's palace politics allow him to get what he wants without public disapproval, due to his ability to perceive the situation from multiple perspectives.

"I" and "Me"

As we initiate social action, the self operates as a subject – the "I". As we take the role of the other, the self operates as an object – the "Me". Social experience is thus the interplay of the "I" and the "Me".

2 Samuel 11:1-12:13

In the story of David and Bathsheba, David's "I" is the subject that acts impulsively to sleep with Bathsheba and murder Uriah. When, after obtaining David's judgment on a hypothetical situation, Nathan tells David that he is the one so judged, David's "me" comes to the fore, and he sees himself as an object, imagines how God would see him, and acknowledges his sin.

2 Corinthians

The apostle Paul initiates the beginnings of a church in Corinth ("I" subject). The letters he writes to the Corinthians defend his apostleship based on how he believes he has been perceived by the members of the church ("me" object). Paul continually shifts between these two perspectives of "I" and "Me" throughout 2 Corinthians.

Internalization

Taking the perspectives, attitudes, and expectations held in common by the members of one's reference group (i.e. the social norms) and making them one's own; the process by which individuals come to "carry society around in their heads."

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

God's mission was to develop Israel as a distinct nation that would bring God to the rest of the world. Accordingly, he instructs the Israelites to internalize his words, and to assist the internalisation process in their children, reciting them, talking about them when they are at home, when they are away, when they lie down and when they rise.

Jeremiah 31:33

God instructs the Israelites to write His laws on their hearts and minds.

Looking-glass Self

Cooley's term for the self-conception humans develop on the basis of feedback from others – how we see our image as it is reflected in the eyes of others; the image people have of themselves based on how they believe others perceive them.

Matthew 1:18-25

Joseph, using the looking glass of his community, plans to dismiss Mary when he discovers she is pregnant. When the angel appears to Joseph, God becomes Joseph's looking glass, and he decides to marry Mary.

Luke 15:16-24

Our primary socializers often serve to shape our looking-glass self. The prodigal son anticipates that his father's perception of him will be that of a fool, and he shapes his repentant response accordingly.

1 Corinthians 1:8, Philippians 2:15, 1 Thessalonians 3:13,5:23, 2 Peter 3:14

We are called to strive to be blameless before God. In order to do this we must use God as our looking-glass, that we might shape our sense of self according to Him.

James 1:23-25

The Bible shows God's view and judgment of us, so when we read it, or look into its mirror, we can examine ourselves accordingly.

Mass Media

Impersonal communications directed to a vast audience.

I Peter; Colossians 4:16

Peter's letters, I and II Peter, were intended for the people of five separate churches, all of whom presumably Peter did not know personally. Paul requested that his letter to the Colossians be passed along to the Laodiceans. Both Peter and Paul's letters were intended to be circulated to all the churches, so that multiple audiences could read/hear them.

II Chronicles 36:22; Ezra 1:1; Ezra 5:13; Ezra 6:3

King Cyrus of the Persian empire often assisted the Jews, and it was not uncommon for him to send a "herald throughout all his kingdom, and also in a written edict", notifying his entire kingdom of his wishes/commands.

Primary vs Secondary Socialization

Primary

Basic socialization that occurs in childhood, providing our language, identity, values, cognitive skills, etc.

Secondary

Subsequent socialization into particular roles such as marital, vocational, etc.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7, Colossians 3:16

God desires that his ways be written on our hearts. This requires primary socialization, both of the young child, and the young Christian. Secondary socialization may only produce compliant behavior, not internalized beliefs.

Proverbs 22:6

“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”

II Tim 1:5 & 2:2

Paul knew that Timothy had experienced primary socialization into a “sincere faith” from his parents, his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice. Now Paul engages Timothy in secondary socialization by teaching/socializing him as an adult student to become a teacher to, or socializer of, others.

Reference Groups

A social group that serves as a point of reference in making evaluations or decisions; a group a person uses as a standard for self-evaluation.

Ezekiel 48:11

The “sons of Zadock,” a whole school of certain prophets, remained faithful to God even when the Levites and the rest of Israel did not, because their point of reference and evaluation was each other’s faithfulness.

Luke 6:15; Matthew 3:7; Acts 15:5

Judaism was very diverse and sectarian, including the Zealots, the Essenes, the Sadducees, and the Pharisees among other groups, some of which had defined membership and some not, but all of which served as reference groups for their adherents and aspirants.

Resocialization

Radically altering someone’s personality through deliberate manipulation of their environment; efforts to change a person’s socialization, that is, to socialize a person over again in hopes of getting him or her to conform to certain norms.

Genesis 37:39-50

Joseph was resocialized from an Israelite farming family into an Egyptian slave, and then into an Egyptian governor.

Daniel 1:1-6

Daniel is taught and trained in the Babylonian way of life. This includes removal from his home, learning and speaking the Chaldean language and studying their literature, eating their food, and literally living in their world.

Luke 19:1-10

Zacchaeus, the tax collector, experiences resocialization, changing his life-style, vocational practices, and foundational ways of thinking in order to

follow Jesus. He transitions from a greedy, selfish tax-collector to a life of generosity and service.

Acts 9:1-30

Saul's response to his conversion on the road to Damascus.

Ephesians 4:17-24

Paul calls new believers to "put away...your old self", and to "clothe yourself with the new self".

Rites of Passage

Ceremonies that mark the transition from one life-stage to another.

Genesis 17:10-14; Luke 1:59 & Acts 15:1

In the Old Testament, circumcision of males is a rite instituted by God, and performed on the eighth day when a child is named. In the New Testament, it is avowed as a means of salvation by false teachers.

II Samuel 2:1-4

David is anointed King, even though in his case this rite of passage does not give him practical kingship for awhile.

Matthew 28:19-20

Though Christians disagree on when and how it should be done, and what it means, Christ commanded the rite of baptism in the Great Commission.

Schema

An organized collection of beliefs and feelings about some aspect of the world. Schemas operate like mental scaffolds, providing structure for the interpretation and organization of new information we encounter.

The parables of Jesus are effective teaching tools precisely because they play off of the many different types of schemas that people hold.

Luke 10:25-37

The parable of the good Samaritan plays off of race and class schemas, as the persons expected to engage in helping behaviour do not, and the person who was not expected to help does.

Matthew 22:1-14

The parable of the wedding banquet plays off of an event schema, as normally it is invited family and friends who attend a marriage celebration, not strangers from the streets.

Luke 15:11-32

The parable of the prodigal son plays off of a role schema, as fathers were understood to be disciplinarians of wayward, wasteful sons, not forgivers.

Luke 11:5-13

The parable of the friend at midnight also plays off of a role schema, as it would be unthinkable, even humorous, that a friend would refuse hospitality to a friend.

Matt 13:31-32

The parable of the mustard seed plays off of a concept schema, as the kingdom of God is presented as something that starts small and grows, not something that is big and instantly present in final form.

Luke 16: 19-31

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus plays off of a concept schema, as the poor man is rich in heaven, and the rich man is poor in hell.

Self-concept

The organized structure of thoughts we have about ourselves regarding our qualities, attributes, characteristics, etc. Also known as self-image or self-schema.

2 Samuel 12:1-13

Nathan helps David develop a more negative but more accurate self-concept.

Philippians 3:1-11

Paul's self-concept of a righteous, behaviourally law-abiding, zealous Jew, is rendered irrelevant by his newfound, faith-based relationship with Jesus Christ.

Significant vs Generalized Other

Significant Other

Those individuals whose views have greatest impact on our self-concept.

Esther 2:7,10,20, 8:1-2

Mordecai adopted his cousin Esther, who was parentless. Esther deeply respected Mordecai, seeking his advice and approval even after she became queen.

Generalized Other

Conception of attitudes and expectations held in common by members of organized groups with whom an individual interacts; widespread cultural norms and values that we use as references in evaluating ourselves.

1 Samuel 17

David's initial sense of self is derived from a few *significant* others, his father (he is the son of Jesse), and his brothers. When his nation is confronted by the Philistines and Goliath, his primary sense of self shifts from a familial context to a national context, a *generalized* other. He sees himself primarily as an Israelite.

Acts 3: 12-26

As one of Jesus' disciples, Peter's sense of self was derived from a small group of *significant* others. Later, as a leader of the early church, the entire early Christian faith community would have been Peter's *generalized* other in shaping his sense of self.

Total Institution

A setting in which people are isolated from the rest of society and manipulated by an administrative staff.

Daniel 1:1-6

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were members of the royal family of Judah who became prisoners of war to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, along with many other members of the royal family and nobility. The King had them sequestered in his palace and placed under the control of the palace master. They were educated/re-educated in the language and literature of Babylon, and ordered to be fed only royal rations of food and wine. Though the palace did not exist to be a total institution, it nevertheless functioned as one for Daniel and his friends.

5. Social Control and Deviance

Conformity vs Compliance

Conformity

The internalisation of values, attitudes, and norms of the group; a voluntary internal attitude.

Compliance

Behavioural alignment with the norms of the group; coerced external behavior.

Numbers 26:1-13 & Deuteronomy 28:1-14

God spells out laws and the punishments for their violations that induce the Israelites into conformity.

I Samuel 8:5-6, 19

Wanting a king like the other nations around them is an act of collective conformity by Israel that God has specifically warned them not to do, and that resulted in all kinds of pain for the nation.

Daniel 6:6-24

King Dairius' ordinance and interdict that no one was to pray to anyone except him required compliance from all his people. Daniel refused to comply, praying before his open window three times a day, and was hence thrown into the lions den where he was saved by God.

Matthew 4:10

The devil tempts Jesus to be merely compliant, knowing that even external behaviour alone, wrongly motivated, can be sinful regardless of ones internal values and attitudes.

Matthew 5:21-27

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches that it is not enough merely to comply externally in behaviour by not committing murder or adultery. Rather, Jesus calls us to conform internally in attitude to God's view and value of others, teaching that angry attitudes toward our brother/sister are viewed by God as equivalent to murder, and lustful thoughts about a woman are viewed by God as equivalent to adultery.

Control Theory

The essence of social control lies in people's anticipation of the consequences of their behaviour. This theory stresses how weak bonds between the individual and society make people free to deviate, whereas strong bonds make deviance costly.

2 Samuel 11

David's attachment to Uriah was not strong enough to prevent him from committing adultery with Uriah's wife. As King, David had no human authority figure who ruled over him, other than God. All the types of social control had little or no effect in curbing David's deviant behaviour.

Deviance

Recognized violation of cultural norms.

Genesis 34

Shechem, a Hivite, broke an Israelite social norm when he raped Dinah, the daughter of Leah and Jacob, wishing to marry her. Dinah's brothers responded by breaking a Hivite norm of neighborliness, deviously plotting and enacting an extreme revenge, killing and plundering the city of the Hivites.

Ezekiel 3:24-27; 4:4-6; 5:1-4; 12:3-7; 19:1ff; 24:16-17

The people could not comprehend the meaning of Ezekiel's bizarre behaviour.

Mark 2:23-3:6

God made the Sabbath for humans, not humans for the Sabbath. A powerful way for Jesus to teach this truth was through deviating from the norm by performing a miracle on the Sabbath.

John 4:7-26

Jesus had a conversation with a Samaritan woman in public. In first-century Judaism, cultural norms required that Samaritans be shunned, that men never speak to a woman in public, and that men never speak to an adulterer. Jesus' deviant behaviour in this passage is nothing short of scandalous.

John 7:23-24

Jesus refers to the Law of Moses, explaining that if circumcision, performed on the Sabbath, is meant to 'heal' a man, why would the Scribes and Pharisees object to the healing of the whole man on the Sabbath. Jesus is pointing out that healing a man on the Sabbath is only considered deviant behavior if you are obeying cultural norms rather than God's norms.

Romans 7:7-8

Apart from social norms and values, deviance does not exist. "Apart from the law sin lies dead".

Differential Association Theory

Any person's tendency towards conformity or deviance depends on the relative frequency of association with others who encourage conventional behaviour or norm violation. M&G 223

Ezra 9:1-4, Nehemiah 13:23-29

In both books, mixed marriages are forbidden on the basis that (marital) association with Canaanites will draw the children of Israel away from the Lord.

Proverbs 22:24-25

The writer warns against associating with someone who finds it acceptable to be hot-tempered. If you do, you will soon find yourself accepting behaviours which you previously found unacceptable.

1 Corinthians 15:33

"Bad company ruins good morals" is a classic statement of differential association theory.

Labelling Theory

A theory that explains deviant behavior as a reaction to having been socially identified as a deviant; the assertion that deviance and conformity result not so much from what people do, as from how others respond to those actions.

Luke 6:29-32

The Pharisees and their scribes attempt to label Jesus and his disciples because they were eating and drinking with “tax-gatherers and sinners.”

John 8:3

By dragging the adulterous woman into the temple before Jesus and all the people, and calling for her death by stoning, the scribes and Pharisees are actively calling for her to be labelled by all the people. Jesus’ response, asking that the one without sin throw the first stone, prevents the completion of the labelling process.

1 Corinthians 5:9-13, 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15, 2 Corinthians 3:10

Paul informs his readers that Christians who choose lifestyles of various immoralities should be disassociated from the church, in order that “they may be ashamed”. By encouraging Christians to engage in the process of labelling, he hopes that the fear of stigma, by those labelled as wayward, will coerce them.

Medicalization of Deviance

The transformation of moral and legal issues into medical matters.

Matthew 17:15-18

A father comes to Jesus with a medical understanding of his son’s deviant behaviour. Jesus recognizes that this is not a case of lunacy or epilepsy, but deviance based on the spiritual condition of demon possession, and drives the demon out of the boy. This is a reversal of the modern trend of reinterpreting the spiritual as medical.

Moral Entrepreneurs

Individuals or groups who try to impose their definition of deviance on others.

Romans 1:26-32

Paul’s various lists of sinful behaviour serve to impose his definition of deviance on the churches he is writing to.

2 Timothy 3:2-7, 2 Peter 2

Both Paul and Peter, moral entrepreneurs in their own right, are here warning the early church of other moral entrepreneurs.

Primary vs Secondary Deviance

Primary Deviance

Episodes of norm violation that provoke little reaction from others and have little effect on a person's self-concept; whatever behavior a person engages in that causes others to identify or label him or her as deviant.

Secondary Deviance

When an individual engages in repeated norm violations and begins to take on a deviant identity; behaviour that is a reaction to having been labelled a deviant.

Exodus 1:15-22

The Pharaoh commanded the Hebrew midwives, Shiphrah and Puah, to kill all male Hebrew newborns, and when called before the Pharaoh to explain, offered him a response which allowed them to remain unpunished despite their direct disobedience.

Acts 3 –4

When Peter and John first preached and performed miracles in the temple, the priests, Sadducees, and the captain of the temple were concerned and called them in to reprimand them. At this point, all these officials were viewing this episode as *primary* deviance, and were willing to dismiss it, provided that Peter and John would promise not to do it again. But Peter and John fully intended to continue preaching, which would soon make their deviance *secondary*, and would thus soon draw far stronger, and ultimately violent responses to their deviance.

Punishment (retribution, deterrence, rehabilitation, social protection)

Retribution

Moral vengeance by which society inflicts suffering on the offender comparable to that caused by the offence.

Deuteronomy 19:16-21

The statutes and ordinances that God gave to the people of Israel included forms of retributive punishment, for “you shall do to the false witness just as the false witness had meant to do to the other”.

Matthew 27:5

Society was not given a chance to exact retribution from Judas for betraying Jesus. Seemingly Judas had internalised society to the point where he exacted retribution on himself by hanging himself.

Deterrence

The attempt to discourage criminality through punishment.

Mark 11:18

The chief priests and scribes were afraid of Jesus' power over the people, therefore they sought to kill Jesus as a way of deterring the crowds from following his teachings.

Acts 5:1-11

Both Ananias and Sapphira dropped dead immediately after lying to God and the apostles. Their deaths served as a reminder to the church that the sin of lying had serious consequences.

Acts 5:27-40

The Sanhedrin had the apostles flogged for teaching in the name of Jesus, hoping it would act as a specific deterrent to the apostles, and also as a general deterrent against spreading public interest in Christ.

Rehabilitation

A program for reforming the offender to preclude subsequent offences.

1 Corinthians 5 & 2 Corinthians 7:12

The man who, in 1 Cor. 5, was removed from the Corinthian church for an incestuous relationship with his mother, is apparently rehabilitated and restored to fellowship in 2 Cor. 7:12.

2 Corinthians 7:8

Paul has punished the Corinthians with a very stern exhortation which he regrets. But when he sees the positive behavioural changes, the rehabilitative effects of his exhortation, he no longer regrets his strong words.

Social Protection

Rendering an offender incapable of further offences either temporarily through incarceration or permanently by execution.

1 Corinthians 5:5-8

Paul instructs the Corinthians to “deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh” so that “a little leaven [does not] leaven the whole lump of dough”. In so doing he is protecting the group from the deviant by separating the deviant from the group.

Joshua 6:6-7:26

Because he sinned and caused the defeat of Israel at Ai after the great success of Jericho, Achan and his family are stoned and burned in order to protect the nation of Israel from the consequences of his sin.

Role Engulfment

The process whereby an individual’s deviance becomes a master status. Good traits are ignored or misinterpreted, while bad ones are magnified out of proportion.

Matthew 26:47-56

Despite the fact that Judas was one of Jesus' disciples throughout his three year ministry, that identity was lost in light of his unfaithfulness to Jesus. Judas' main identity became and remains that of a betrayer.

Luke 7:36-50

The woman who bathed Jesus feet with her tears and ointment and dried them with her hair was known in her community, not as the woman who worshipped Jesus, but as the woman with a sinful past. No matter what her present actions, she was identified only by her past behavior, that of a prostitute.

Sanctions (formal vs informal, positive vs negative)

Either rewards or punishments for breaking social folkways and mores.

Matthew 12:1-2

Informal Negative Sanction: When Jesus' disciples picked grain to eat on the Sabbath, the Pharisees pointed them out and accused them of being unlawful.

1 Corinthians 5:1-11

Formal vs. Informal: In advising the Corinthians regarding how to respond to sexual immorality. Paul recommends that the guilty individual be excommunicated when the believers are assembled together (formal sanction). Then later on in the same passage he also recommends that individual believers disassociate themselves privately from the guilty individual (informal sanction).

Colossians 2:8-23

Formal Negative Sanctions: Paul encourages the Colossians not to be influenced by a number of the negative sanctions of the Jewish community.

Social Control

Various collective efforts and means by which members of a society encourage conformity to norms.

Leviticus 20:1-8

God tells the people of Israel that if they worship Molech He will set his face against them, and they are to be stoned to death. Further, if anyone is aware of another Israelite worshipping Molech and does not have them stoned, God will cut the conspirator off from the community.

Daniel 6:1-18

The presidents and satraps of King Darius forced him into a situation where, against his personal wishes, he was required to throw Daniel into the lion's den. Bound by his own ordinance and interdict, which he had been deceived into issuing by his aids, he was controlled by the legal/societal expectations of a King.

Luke 23:32

The two criminals crucified along with Jesus were a demonstration of Roman social control, that reinforced their control.

I Corinthians 5:9-13

Sexually immoral people were to be expelled from the church.

Stigma

A powerfully negative social label that radically changes a person's self-concept and social identity.

2 Samuel 6:12-23

When David dances virtually naked before the Ark, his wife Michal fears that he will have become stigmatized in the eyes of Israel, and rebukes his imprudent behaviour. David rejects her interpretation/label of his behaviour, seeing his actions as a spontaneous act of worship. In turn, Michal is stigmatized from this point on, because she remains barren until her death.

2 Samuel 13:10-20

Tamar becomes a desolate woman, stigmatized by society, after being raped by her brother, Amnon.

Luke: 7:37-50

Simon the Pharisee thought it was inappropriate for Jesus to let a prostitute touch him because all prostitutes were stigmatized.

John 4:7-26

Jesus was breaking multiple social norms, if not moral codes, when he found himself not only alone with a woman at the well, but conversing with her. She was stigmatized in at least three ways: she was a woman, she was a Samaritan, and she was sexually immoral. Yet Jesus engaged her in theological discussion, and chose to reveal to her, for the first time publicly, that he was the Messiah.

Strain Theory of Deviance

The inability or unwillingness of an individual to agree with society's goals and the institutionalized means of achieving them causes him or her to deviate from them.

Matthew 19:27-30

Jesus' upside-down kingdom calls us to rethink our goals and our means of achieving them.

Techniques of Neutralization

Rationalizations that allow deviants to define their behaviour as acceptable.

Genesis 12:10-20

Abram lied to the Pharaoh of Egypt by telling him that Sarai was his sister rather than his wife. He neutralized this unacceptable behaviour and the subsequent consequences to Sarai, by 1) pointing out that it was Sarai's beauty that was causing the problem, therefore he was not responsible, and 2) claiming that the Pharaoh would have him killed in order to have access to Sarai if he did not lie.

Luke 11:14-23

When accused by the Pharisees of being deviant by casting out demons in the name of Belzebul, Jesus points out that doing so would be aiding his adversary, rather than establishing God's authority, and therefore questions why he would do that.

Acts 2:1-21

Peter neutralizes suspicions that those who are speaking in tongues are drunk by pointing out that 1) it is only the third hour of the day, and 2) that the tongues are a manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

White-Collar Crime

Crimes committed by persons of high social position in the course of their occupations.

2 Samuel 11:14

King David makes use of his high social status as King to 1) commit adultery with Bathsheba and 2) have her husband, Uriah, killed when he finds out that Bathsheba is pregnant with his child.

1 Kings 21:1-29

Jezebel uses her influence as the King's wife, writing letters in his name, to create a false witness against Naboth so that he will be stoned to death, in order to secure Naboth's vineyard as the property of the King.

C. Social Differentiation

6. Social Stratification

Bourgeoisie

Marx's name for the class made up of those who own the means of production; the employer or owner class.

Ruth

The whole encounter between Naomi and Ruth on one hand, and Boaz on the other is a foreshadowing of bourgeoisie-proletariat relations, as Boaz owns the field, negotiates the purchase price of property, etc., while Ruth is forced to go to him.

Capital

Capital is money that produces more money, or money/assets that is invested rather than used to satisfy human needs or desires.

Matthew 25: 14-30

The parable of the talents tells of how the slaves who used the money given them by their master to get more money were commended by their master, but the slave who did nothing with his money was rebuked.

Class (and social class)

A group of people who share a similar position in the stratification system.

Luke 16:19-20

The rich man dressed in fine purple linens stands as a stark social class contrast to the poor beggar named Lazarus who lay at the rich man's gate, covered in sores, "longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table."

Class Consciousness and Conflict

Class Consciousness

The awareness of members of a class of their unity as a social class, their class interests, and their class enemies.

Class Conflict

Antagonism between entire classes over the distribution of wealth and power in society.

Exodus 1, 5 & 6

The Israelites developed a class consciousness during their time of oppression as slaves in Egypt, becoming not just a class *in* itself but a class *for* itself. They evolved from understanding themselves as a collection of relatives/family, to viewing themselves as a dominated people/nation.

I Samuel 8:1-3

Samuel's sons abuse their power and status as judges, taking bribes and perverting justice.

Amos 4-6

Amos does not criticize the priests and princes because they are wealthy, but because they are unjust, abusing their wealth and ensuing power, willing to "sell the righteous for a piece of silver".

Acts 6:1

Though the early church lived communally, social stratification became evident fairly quickly. The Hellenists complained against the Hebrews, because their widows were not receiving a fair portion of food.

Distributive Justice

Equality

Rewards distributed equally regardless of contribution.

Equity

Rewards distributed in proportion to contribution.

Relative needs

Rewards distributed according to individual needs of members regardless of contribution.

Matthew 20:1-16

In Jesus' parable of the workers in the vineyard, the landowner distributed wages according to principles of equality, giving each worker, regardless of the hours worked in a day, an equal amount. The griping workers had assumed equity.

Matthew 25:14-30

In Jesus' parable of the talents, men are given differing amounts of money by their master. The two servants who invested the money were rewarded with double the amount they had originally received, but the servant who did not invest the money was stripped completely of any of his master's assets, and rebuked.

Exploitation

All profit in an exchange that is in excess of the minimum amount needed to cause an exchange to occur.

Acts 16:16-19

The owners of a slave-girl do not care about her well-being, as evidenced by their aggressive behaviour toward Paul and Silas after Paul casts a spirit out of the girl. As a result of the exorcism, she can no longer predict the future, which was a source of income for her owners.

False consciousness

Explanations of social problems grounded in the shortcomings of individuals rather than the flaws of society.

1 Samuel 8

The Israelites clamour for a king, and the Lord reluctantly lets them have a monarchy, but not without first warning them, through Samuel, of all the grief kings will bring them. The subsequent history of Israel is that of a mix of good kings and bad kings, but the resultant problems the Israelites encounter is not that of the character of individual kings, but with the kingship system that produces systemic problems for Israel. Monarchy, as a system of governance, is a problem, not individual kings; the problem of kingship is the pathology of power.

Poverty (absolute vs relative)

Absolute Poverty

A deprivation of resources that is life-threatening.

Relative Poverty

The deprivation of some people in relation to those who have more.

Mark 12:41-44

Jesus notes that the widow who gave her only two coins gave relatively more than the rich who gave a portion of their surplus.

Proletariat

Marx's name for the class made up of those who do not own the means of production; the employee or working class.

Ruth

The whole encounter between Naomi and Ruth on one hand, and Boaz on the other is a foreshadowing of bourgeoisie-proletariat relations, as Boaz owns the field, negotiates the purchase price of property, etc., while Ruth is forced to go to him.

Property, Prestige, Power (Weber's class, status, party)

Primary measures of social inequality.

Property

Objective economic wealth/ income

Prestige

Subjective social honor

Power

Political influence/control; the ability to carry out your own will despite resistance.

Exodus 3:1-10

Moses was an amazing leader and prophet par excellence, who clearly had great power and prestige, but virtually no property.

1 Samuel 8:4-18

Samuel describes to the elders of Israel what it will be like to be ruled by a King, leaving no doubt of the ultimate power of the King.

1 Samuel 9:2; 10:1-16

Saul is a big handsome man who is also admired by the people. When he becomes king, he has it all – property, prestige, and power – but eventually loses it all.

I Kings 21:1-25

Naboth is the owner of a vineyard coveted by King Ahab. Jezebel, Ahab's wife, plots against Naboth, and gets him killed, enabling Ahab to take Naboth's vineyard. Naboth had property, but not enough prestige and power to prevent Ahab and Jezebel from using their prestige and power to take his life and property.

Matthew 3:1-17, Matthew 9:10-11; Matthew 21:31-32

John the Baptist did not have power or property, yet he had great prestige – all the people of Jerusalem and Judea gathered to listen to him. The tax-collectors on the other hand had considerable power and property, yet did not have prestige – the people despised them.

Matthew 19:13-15

Jesus scolds the disciples for attempting to prevent the children from seeing him, and raises their status by telling everyone present that the kingdom of heaven 'belongs to such as these'.

James 2:1-4, 8-10

James is critical of differential treatment based on social stratification.

Social Mobility (intra & intergenerational, structural vs exchange)

Intragenerational

A change in social position occurring during a person's lifetime.

Genesis 37, 39-41

Joseph's social position changes from slave and criminal to being the ruler over all the land of Egypt.

Exodus 2:10-3:10

Moses changed social position three times in his life. He moved from being an Egyptian prince to a shepherd in Midian, and finally to the leader of the nation of Israel.

I Samuel 16:22, 18:5, 2:7, II Sam 17:14-15

David rises from Jesse's family of shepherders to be king.

Intergenerational

Upward or downward social mobility of children in relation to their parents.

Genesis 37-50

Joseph's upward social mobility is from being a shepherd like his father Jacob to being vizier of Egypt. In a sense, every example of intragenerational mobility will also be an example of intergenerational mobility.

1 Samuel – 1 Kings 11

Jesse was a shepherd, but his son David became a king, demonstrating intergenerational mobility between Jesse and David, and intragenerational mobility in the life of David. David's son Solomon was born into kingship and died in kingship, demonstrating no social mobility.

Structural

Mobility that results from changes in the distribution of statuses in society.

Judges – 1 Kings

The nation of Israel develops from being a subordinate rural people living in villages in the hill country to being a dominant urban people living in a city ruled by a King.

Exchange

Mobility that is not structural, where some people rise to fill positions made available because other people have fallen in the status system.

Acts 1:15-26

When Judas lost his disciple status, there was a need to replace him, and Matthias wins out over Barabbas as the replacement.

Social Stratification

Social inequality or hierarchy based on factors such as class, race, sex, or age.

Galatians 3:25-28

The apostle Paul teaches against social stratification, calling for Christian believers to eliminate class distinctions. In Christ, there is no longer any

moral or theological justification for permanently granting or denying a person status, privilege, or prerogative solely on the basis of that person's race (Jew or Greek), class (slave or free), or sex (male or female). Any religious pecking order is alien to the new order in Christ.

Socio-economic Status

A composite ranking based on various dimensions of social inequality, primarily income, occupation, and education.

Biblical Example?

Status Inconsistency

The degree of consistency of a person's social standing across various dimensions of social inequality.

Daniel 1

Daniel and his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were slaves in Babylon who owned virtually nothing, but through education were elevated to high positions of power and prestige. They all have high education, and high occupation in the King's court, but low property as servant slaves.

7. Race and Ethnic Relations

Acculturation

An ethnic group learning the language, values, and customs of a dominant group; also called cultural assimilation.

Biblical Example?

Assimilation

The process by which an individual or a group reacts to a new social environment by gradually adopting the dominant culture in that environment.

Deuteronomy 32

The people of Israel repeatedly assimilated with surrounding people groups, despite God's prohibition.

Joshua 9:3-27, Nehemiah 7:25

During the conquest of Canaan, the cities of Gibeah were fully assimilated into the Israelite culture. By the time of Nehemiah, after the exile, the Gibeonites were considered a part of the Israelite nation.

Judges 2:6,7; 3:1-8

The Israelites pass through the typical stages of contact, competition, accommodation and assimilation.

Ruth

Though a Moabite, Ruth adopted the beliefs and practices of Judaism.

I Kings 11:2-4

King Solomon marries many foreign wives, who turn his heart away from God.

Chain Migration

Sequential movement of persons from a common place of origin to a common destination with the assistance of relatives or acquaintances already settled in the new location.

Ezra 1:2,3, 2:68

A group of Israelites went ahead to Jerusalem in Judah to build a temple, in order to facilitate subsequent migration of the Israelites back to Jerusalem.

Discrimination vs. Prejudice

Discrimination

Treating various categories of people unequally; actions taken against a group to deny its members rights and privileges available to others.

Prejudice

A rigid and irrational generalization about an entire category of people; negative or hostile attitudes toward, and beliefs about, a group.

Esther 3:1-15

Haman develops *prejudices* against Jews based on his relationship with the Jew, Mordecai. He then *discriminates* against the entire Jewish population by acting against them, convincing King Ahasuerus to destroy all Jews.

Jonah 1-4

Jonah maintained his prejudgment of the people of Nineveh, even after there was good evidence to the contrary.

Mark 2:13-17

The scribes and Pharisees expose their negative prejudgment of all tax collectors by questioning why Jesus is eating with them.

John 1:46

Nathanael displays prejudice against Nazareth when he says "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

James 2:1-13

If you treat someone honourably because they are richly dressed, that is positive discrimination. If you treat someone dishonourably because they are poorly dressed, that is negative discrimination. James condemns both forms of discrimination.

Titus 1:12

Paul passes his prejudice against Cretans along to Titus, when he labels them as “liars, vicious, brutes, [and] lazy gluttons”.

Ethnic Consciousness

The awareness of a people as a separate and identifiable ethnic people group.

2 Kings 17:24-41; John 4:7-9; Luke 10:30-37

Though they were made of mixed races, the Samaritans were identifiably disparaged. Nehemiah rejects their help, the woman Jesus meets at the well understands it as a stigma, and the parable of “the good Samaritan” plays off the expectation that nothing good could come from them.

Ethnic Stratification

A combination of class and ethnicity in which ethnic groups are arranged into a hierarchy of dominance.

Joshua 9

The Gibeonites are Canaanite neighbors of Israel who deceive Joshua by pretending to be from a far away land so that Joshua will enter into covenant with them instead of destroying them. When Joshua discovers their guile, he keeps his oath to let them live, but assigns them to a servitude status and role forever as “hewers of wood and drawers of water.” They remain a distinct low-class ethnic group within Israel until the Babylonian destruction.

Ethnocentrism

The practice of judging another culture by the standards of one’s own culture.

The nation of Israel often understood the identity of “God’s chosen people” to mean that they were superior to other cultures.

Jonah 1:1-3, 3:3-4:2, 4:11

Jonah’s insistence that the people of Nineveh should be destroyed by God, regardless of the fact that they turned from their evil ways to God, betrays his ethnocentric attitude.

Matthew 7:1-5, Romans 14

Both Matthew and Paul call for tolerance. We are not to judge the practices of others because God is the only true judge.

Luke 4:16-30

When Jesus is speaking in his hometown, he tells two stories that challenge the ethnocentrism of the people. The first story is of how, in the days of Elijah, God chose to bless a Phoenician widow instead of an Israelite widow. The second story is of how God chose to save Naaman, the Syrian leper, instead of an Israelite leper. This got Jesus driven out of his hometown. Jesus teaches that God challenges the notion of chosenness by blessing the 'other.'

John 4:7-9

The ethnocentric attitude of the Jews is evident in their unwillingness to associate with the Samaritans.

Acts 15, Galatians 2:11-21

Jewish believers were insisting that Gentiles must participate in the Jewish custom of circumcision in order to be accepted into the new church of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:17, 1 Cor 5:1,10:7,10:20, 1 Cor 12:2, 1 Th 4:5, 1 Pet 4:3

Paul repeatedly refers to Gentiles using derogatory terms such as pagans and heathens, betraying a sense of religious/cultural superiority.

Genocide

The systematic annihilation of one category of people by another.

1 Samuel 15:1-9

At God's command, as relayed through the prophet Samuel, King Saul annihilates the Amalekite people.

Institutional Discrimination

Bias in attitudes or action inherent in the operation of society's institutions.

The physical layout of Solomon's temple restricted access based on social status, ethnicity, and sex. Foreigners and women could only enter specified outer areas.

Marginality

The state of having within the self two conflicting social identities; also, the social condition of a minority group that lives on the edge of a society, not treated as a full member of that society.

Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 4:14

Jesus had two conflicting social identities that he functioned out of; that of human and that of God.

Minority Group

A category of people, distinguished by physical or cultural traits, that is socially disadvantaged.

Exodus 1:1-22

The Egyptians feared the increasing numbers of Israelites, so they systematically oppressed and disadvantaged them. Despite their large numbers, the Israelites were a minority group.

Mobilization

The transfer of resources, particularly human resources, from the pursuit of one goal or set of goals to the pursuit of another goal or set of goals.

Biblical Example?

Universalism/Particularism

Universalism

Treating everyone exactly the same.

Particularism

Treating selected others differently than everyone else, i.e. discriminating

Biblical Example?

Scapegoating

A scapegoat is a person or category of people, typically with little power, whom people unfairly blame for their own troubles.

Genesis 3

Instead of taking responsibility for his own sin, Adam blames Eve.

John 8:1-11

When a woman accused of adultery is brought before Jesus, he exposes the accusers as being sinful, just as she is, by challenging those without sin to throw the first stone. He does not allow them to focus their attention on her sin to the exclusion of their own.

John 10:48-50

Caiaphas, the high priest, advises the chief priests and Pharisees to draw the attention of Roman authority to Jesus in a negative way, in order to focus Roman concerns regarding the Jews on Jesus alone.

Segregation

The physical and/or social separation of categories of people.

Genesis 11

When God confused the languages of the builders of the tower of Babel, he forced the people to separate geographically and socially.

2 Corinthians 6:14, 15, 17

Believers have nothing in common with unbelievers, and should come out from among them and be separate.

Social Distance

An expression or form of prejudice in which undesirable others are kept a desirable distance away from self.

Genesis 43:32

The Egyptians would not eat with Joseph and his brothers.

Stereotypes

Prejudicial views or descriptions of some categories of people; mental images that exaggerate traits believed to be typical of members of a social group.

Titus 1:12

Paul passes on a blatant stereotype, offered by a Cretan, that “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons.”

Structural Assimilation

Acceptance of a minority group by a dominant group into its intimate, primary, social relationships.

Judges 7-8

After his great victory, Gideon's name is changed to a purely Canaanite name, the counter-name for Gideon. This suggests a structural assimilation between Israelites and Canaanites that is going on steadily throughout the period of the Judges. The archaeological record makes a compelling case that the Israelites and Canaanites eventually became the same people, taking on each other's values through institutions, positions in society, trade, etc.

8. Inequalities of Gender and Age

Ageism

Prejudice and discrimination against the elderly; a set of beliefs, norms, and values used to justify age-based inequality.

I Samuel 17:28-18:30

David is at first prevented from challenging Goliath because of his age.

2 Kings 2:23-24

Youths from Bethel mocked Elisha's age, calling him "bald head."

2 Kings 22:1-2

Josiah was given all the responsibilities of being King at the age 8.

Matthew 19:13-15

The disciples did not want Jesus to be bothered by the little children.

1 Timothy 4:12,5:1,17-19

Paul encourages believers to grant equal respect to both the young and the old, welcoming each to contribute to the church.

Aging

Physical and mental deterioration for which you can no longer compensate with skills or experience.

Genesis 3:19, Revelation 21

Among the opening words of the biblical text we are told that each person will return to the dust from which they came. To be human is to age. The closing words of the Biblical text tell us that in the new world to come, aging and death will no longer take place.

Ecclesiastes 12:1-7

The Preacher describes the process of aging, in which we can no longer compensate for deteriorating health, reminding the reader to remember their creator in the days of youth, in order that they might be able to accept the aging process gracefully.

Cohort

A category of people with a common characteristic, usually age.

Numbers 14

Only those Israelites younger than twenty at the time of the rebellion against God will enter the promised land.

2 Chronicles 36, Ezra 3:10

The people of Judah were exiled to Babylon by the King of the Chaldeans, who also destroyed their temple. They remained 70 years in exile before they were released and allowed to rebuild their temple. Those who were young when the destruction of the temple and the exile took place became

a very unique cohort that, when the temple was rebuilt 70 years late, wept because it was such a poor replacement for the magnificent temple which they had known in their youth.

Expressive vs Instrumental

Expressive

To be emotionally responsive and sensitive to others. In leadership, it focuses on collective well-being of the group.

Instrumental

To be rational, self-assured, and competitive. In leadership, it emphasizes the completion of tasks.

Galatians 5:22-23,25, Proverbs 31

Paul counsels all the Galatians to be filled with character traits of the Spirit, many of which would be considered by functionalists as “expressive/feminine”. In Proverbs, the writer speaks of the ideal woman, ascribing traits to her that functionalists would consider to be “instrumental/masculine”.

Gender vs Sex

Gender

The personal traits and social positions that members of a society attach to being female and male.

Sex

The biological differences between males and females.

Judges 4:4-14

Deborah is one example of a prominent person who, though she was female by sex, was not feminine in personal traits or social position. As an elder, judge, prophetess, and military leader of Israel, her success was not merely by default in the absence of good men, and evidently did not violate any moral boundaries or absolute values. God blessed her leadership regardless of her sex, not in spite of it.

Gender Roles

Behavioural expectations based on social/cultural definitions of masculinity and femininity.

Ephesians 5:21-33

Despite his call for mutual submission, Paul’s teaching on headship and submission is interpreted by gender hierarchalists as indicating that males and females are fundamentally different, and therefore have different roles and authority in marriage, the church, and society at large.

I Timothy 2:11ff

A supposedly clear statement of the subordinate role of women in the church, and the ideology that explains and justifies it.

Gender Stereotypes

Substantial agreement about attributes that characterize males and females that are rigidly held, oversimplified, and viewed as deriving from nature.

Genesis 3:1-17

In the account of the fall, the fact that the woman sinned first, that the woman was deceived while the man was not, that God addressed the man first, and that the curses received by the man and the woman are different are all interpreted by gender hierarchalists as indicating that males and females are created substantially different.

Gerontocracy

A form of social organization in which the elderly have the most wealth, power, and prestige.

Deuteronomy 21-25

The ruling role of elders in the community is outlined.

Life Course

Society organizes human experience according to age, resulting in distinctive stages of life: childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and finally, old age.

Proverbs 1-22

The first half of the book of Proverbs is predicated on the notion of a life course – son, youth, old age. The social structure assumed in wisdom literature points to the near eastern idea of a common life-course.

Macromanipulation vs Micromanipulation

Macromanipulation

The imposition of will through the control of major social institutions, typically practiced by males.

Micromanipulation

The resistance to, and subversion of, macro-power, employing personal resources, typically practiced by females.

Genesis 38:6-26

Judah is clearly in control of his family as evidenced by controlling whom his sons will marry, but Tamar poses as a harlot and tricks her father-in-law into having sex with her, impregnating her in the process, in order to gain her personal security by exposing him if need be.

Judges 16:4-22

Samson and Delilah struggle in different ways, using different resources, to control each other.

Esther 4-8

Having seen Queen Vashti's punishment for refusing to be put on display by King Xerxes, Esther nevertheless courageously uses her own charm to get what she wants from the king, protection from Haman for Mordecai and the Jews.

I Corinthians 14:34-35; I Tim 2:11-15

By instructing women to be silent in churches and prohibiting them from having authority over men, Paul is seemingly granting control of the church to men. However, when individual women, despite the social system and cultural norms, can get themselves educated enough to be contributing members, they too gain leadership.

Matriarchy/Patriarchy

Matriarchy

A form of social organization in which females dominate males.

Patriarchy

A form of social organization in which males dominate females.

Genesis 3:16

Patriarchy began as a result of the first act of human disobedience against God.

Exodus 20:1-17

The books of the Law, like the biblical text in general, is clearly written by men to men, with a literary voice and examples that are relevant only to men. Throughout the Ten Commandments, the masculine form of the Hebrew second-person pronoun (you) is used exclusively. The 10th commandment forbidding coveting is a list of property owned exclusively by men, including wives.

I Timothy 2:11ff

A clear statement of the subordinate role of women, and the ideology that explains and justifies it.

Multiple Jeopardy

Having more than one disadvantageous social status, such as gender, age, race, etc.

John 4:7-26

The woman Jesus met at the well was female, Samaritan, and divorced five times – triple jeopardy in that society.

Objectification (sexual)

Reducing the personhood of a member of the other sex to their body as an object of desire, often to be pursued/owned/consumed.

Genesis 19:4-5

Lot's visitors in Sodom were viewed as merely sexual objects to the men of the city who were demanding that Lot "bring them out" so that they could have sex with them. Notions of hospitality, mutual respect, etc., were obviously not a concern for these men – they merely wanted the bodies of Lot's visitors.

2 Samuel 13:1-22

Amnon's love for Tamar turned to loathing as soon as he had raped her. Ultimately, Tamar was nothing more than a sexual object to Amnon, that he desired to possess.

Sexism

The belief that one sex is innately superior to the other.

Esther 1

King Xerxes' complete control of Queen Vashti, wishing to place her on display for her beauty, and punishing her for not obeying him, exposes a deep sense of cultural male superiority.

Sexual Harassment

Comments, physical contact, or gestures of a sexual nature that are deliberate, repeated, and unwelcome.

Genesis 39

Potiphar's wife harasses Joseph.

Social Clock

The individual subjective sense of being early, on time, or late, in life-course transitions such as graduating, getting married, having children, or retiring.

Genesis 17:15-21; Luke 1-2

Social clock issues in the biblical text are most evident regarding women and child-bearing. Sara and Elizabeth are old women supposedly long past child-bearing age, for whom the notion that they will yet conceive and bear a child has become a joke. Yet they do. The fact that the unmarried Mary is about to bear a child is much too soon, and certainly not a joke.

D. Social Institutions

9. Families

Cohabitation

The sharing of a household by an unmarried couple.

John 4:7-26

The woman Jesus met at the well was divorced five times – and living unmarried with a sixth man.

Conjugal vs Consanguineal Family

Conjugal

A family unit based on the marital relationship or love bond of husband and wife.

Consanguineal

A family unit based on the blood/genetic relationship of parent-child.

1 Samuel 18:20-29; 2 Samuel 11

Whereas the patriarchs always went back home to get their brides (consanguineal), David married for politics (Michal, Saul's daughter) or passion (Bathsheba).

Descent

The system by which members of a society trace kinship over generations. It may be unilineal (patrilineal or matrilineal) or bilateral.

Genesis 46, Matthew 1: 1-16

The nation of Israel traced their kinship through men, though women are mentioned occasionally.

Dowry vs Bride Price

The money a bride brings with her to her husband to increase her value to him, or the money/assets a husband pays to get his wife.

Genesis 24:22-53; Exodus 22:17

The story of Rebekah becoming the wife of Isaac is the first recorded extended story of the practice, which was sanctioned in the Law.

1 Samuel 18:20-27

The bride price David paid to Saul for his daughter Michal was the foreskins of 100 Philistine enemies of Saul.

Endogamy vs Exogamy

Endogamy

Marriage between people of the same social category.

Exogamy

Marriage between people of different social categories.

The pattern of the OT seems to be that God discouraged racially and religiously exogamous marriage, not class or age exogamy, whereas the NT only discourages religiously exogamous marriage.

Genesis 24:3,4

Abraham made his servant swear by the Lord that he would bring home a wife for Isaac from among his own kin.

Judges 14:1-20

Samson's parents encourage him towards an endogamous marriage, but Samson seeks an exogamous marriage with a Philistine woman, the idea having come 'from the Lord'.

Ezra 10:14-44

All the Israelite men who had exogamous marriages were asked to send away their wives and children.

1 Kings 11:1-8

King Solomon chose to marry foreign women, thus breaking God's commandment requiring endogamous marriages within Israel.

Family of Orientation vs Procreation

Family of Orientation

The family into which one is born.

Family of Procreation

The family one forms by getting married

Genesis 2:24

The well-known "for this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" is taken as a mandate to form two separate and distinct families.

Homogamy vs Heterogamy vs Hypergamy

Homogamy

Marriage between people with similar personal/psychological characteristics such as skills, interests, temperament, attractiveness, intelligence, etc.

Heterogamy

Marriage between people with dissimilar personal/psychological characteristics.

Hypergamy

Marriage to someone with greater social assets such as wealth, power, education, attractiveness, social class, etc.

1 Samuel 18:20-29; 2 Samuel 11

First David marries up into the king's court by marrying the king's daughter, Michal, then Bathsheba marries up by marrying David.

Incest Taboo

A norm forbidding sexual relations or marriage between a certain level of relatives.

Genesis 19:33-36

Lot's daughter had sexual intercourse with their father while he was drunk.

Leviticus 18

God commands the Israelites not to "approach anyone near of kin to uncover nakedness," listing specific relations.

2 Samuel 13:1-14

Despite Tamar pleading with Amnon, and pointing out to him that incest is considered vile in Israel, Amnon rapes his sister Tamar.

Mating Gradient

The tendency for women to marry their slight social superiors in age, wealth, education, etc.

Genesis 24:20

Rebekah's marriage to Isaac was a move 'up' for her in that he was older, and established.

Nuclear vs Extended Family

Nuclear

A family unit composed of one or two parents and their children.

Luke 1-2

The births of John to Zacharias and Elizabeth, and Jesus to Joseph and Mary create two new nuclear families.

Extended

A family unit including parents and children, but also other kin.

From the patriarchs on, the Bible is all about extended families.

Polygamy (polygyny & polyandry)

Polygyny

A form of marriage uniting one male and two or more females.

Polyandry

A form of marriage uniting one female with two or more males.

Genesis 29:1-30

Many of the patriarchs of the Hebrew Bible practiced polygyny. Jacob was practising sororal polygyny when he first married Leah, and then her sister Rachel. Curiously, God's law regulated it, but never forbade it, probably because it was a functional arrangement for pastoral, nomadic peoples with high male morality rates.

Traditional vs Egalitarian Marriage

Traditional (“Complementarian”) Marriage

Hierarchical marriage based on traditional gender roles of husbands being instrumental “heads” that lead and wives being expressive “hearts” that follow. He is the authority and provider who represents the couple in public, she is the nurturer and care-giver who manages the private realm.

Genesis 2:18-20; Ephesians 5:21-33

The wife is the “suitable helper” that was created for the husband, and is called to submit to him in everything. Paul’s teaching on headship and submission is interpreted by gender hierarchalists as indicating that males and females are fundamentally different, and therefore have different roles and authority in marriage.

Egalitarian Marriage

Equal marriage that does not divide labor or roles based on sex, but is committed to shared responsibility and equal authority in everything.

Genesis 3; Ephesians 5:21-33

Egalitarians believe that gender is a social construction that originated in the fall, not in “God’s design” for humans and their relationships. They provide alternate readings of all the biblical texts typically used to argue gender, usually deeming them to be culturally specific to the time and culture of authorship, and not trans-cultural or universal. They emphasize equal giftedness and mutual submission in marriage.

10. Religion

Animism and Totemism

Animism

The belief that elements of the natural world are conscious life forms that affect humanity.

Ezekiel 8:16-17

Ezekiel has visions of men worshipping the sun in the house of the Lord.

Totemism

Sacralizing a species of plant or animal that represents the group, clan, or society.

1 Samuel 5:1-4

The Philistines worshiped Dagon, a physical statue which they considered to be their god.

Asceticism

The notion that spiritual experience derives from self-mastery, that salvation is attained by denying self and pleasure, working hard, and in so doing, glorifying God.

Matthew 3:1-6

John the Baptist's eccentric life of living in the desert and eating and dressing strangely were measures of his devotion, but also functioned to draw curious, searching people from all Judea.

1 Corinthians 7:5

Paul instructs husbands and wives to stop depriving each other sexually except "by agreement for a time that you may devote yourselves to prayer." His reason is that sexual self-denial as a form of spiritual asceticism on a long-term basis makes them more vulnerable to temptation.

Charisma

The attribution of extraordinary personal qualities to someone who can then turn an audience into followers.

Acts 8:9-13

Simon the Sorcerer had attracted a large following with his astonishing magical arts, and had even been called the "Great Power of God," but when he heard the gospel of Jesus Christ from Philip, he himself became a believer and was constantly amazed at the signs and great miracles taking place.

Collective Conscience

The social cement that binds people together; a set of beliefs and sentiments common to average citizens of the same society which forms a determinate system that has its own life.

Biblical Example?

Conversion

A transformation of one's self concurrent with a transformation of one's basic meaning system.

Acts 9:1-30

Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus is the classic example. His transformation was so radical that he changed his name. Those whom he had persecuted did not at first trust him, but he became their champion.

Church vs Sect vs Cult

Church

An established religious organization that is religiously dominant and well integrated into the mainstream of the larger society.

Sect

A religious group begun by breaking away from the established church in an effort to return to its original vision and purify its theology and ethics. It is therefore in tension with the larger society, though it remains within the conventional religious tradition(s) of its society.

Cult

An unconventional belief system that is entirely new to a society, because it has been imported or innovated.

Biblical Examples

The Samaritans of the New Testament can be traced back to a split that happened within Judaism in the period of the exile. They achieved sect-like status when the exiles returned and reconstituted the faith of their ancestors under Ezra and Nehemiah, and the Samaritans were left as an aberrant form of Jewish religious expression. Nevertheless, the Samaritans saw themselves as the original or pure faith.

Judaism was the *church* of the New Testament world, inasmuch as the Romans in general and Pilate in particular showed respect for the Sanhedrin. This religious group was coterminous with national identity, representing the Jews to the secular authority of Rome. But Josephus observed that there were also many *sectarian* trajectories within Judaism, such as the Pharisees, who were attempting to re-establish a pure Judaism through their interpretation of the law. Finally, though Jesus claimed continuity with Judaism, the whole Jesus movement was like a *cult*.

Civil Religion

The set of beliefs, rites, and symbols that sacralize the values of the society and place the nation in the context of an ultimate system of meaning; ultimate meaning given to citizenship.

Biblical Example?

In Roman society, Rome itself is divine, is seen as a personified religion.

Disenchantment (of the world)

The process by which the world is perceived as losing its magical, religious, and non-rational attributes.

Judges – I Samuel

The devotion of the Israelites ebbs and flows throughout the book of Judges, and by I Samuel 8 their society becomes so disenchanting that they reject charisma as a system of authority, and demand a king like the nations around them. They want an end to the rule by judges and want rather to be ruled by kings, despite the warnings by prophets about the boundary they are crossing, and what kings will do.

Institutionalization of Religion

The transition of a new religion from the spontaneity of following its founder to a more systematically organized and bureaucratized self-perpetuating group. Also known as the routinization of charisma.

Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

Moses was a charismatic man who led the Israelites out of Egypt. Over time many different laws and commandments were instituted to maintain order and harmony among the people. The charismatic leadership of Moses changed to a bureaucratic system of rituals and laws.

Titus 1:5-9

Paul advises Titus put things in order and appoint overseers in every town to deal with unsound doctrine. He is advocating structure, and some form of hierarchy, in order for the church to remain healthy, survive, and thrive.

Magic

The manipulation of the impersonal transcendent for utilitarian reasons; the use of the supernatural for personal benefit without needing to submit to a system of ethics or any form of group life.

1 Samuel 28: 3- 25

Saul consults a medium in order to gain information regarding a pending war.

Acts 8:9-24

A man named Simon, who claimed to be someone great because he had amazed the people of Samaria with his magic, became a believer of Christ and was baptized.

Millenarianism

A religious group that organizes itself with the understanding of the imminent end of the world, assuming that the transformation of the world will be sudden, collective, terrestrial, imminent, total, and supernatural.

Thessalonians

The Thessalonians had a heightened sense of end of world. Paul has to write them to tell them to relax. Their expectations of the immediacy of the end has produced in them an ethical ambivalence which Paul is trying to talk them out of. Apocalypticism is the belief that God is going to deliver his people out of this current experience of hardship and suffering into a new recreated order. It is fed by pre-millennialism and the expectancy of a literal return, whereas post-millennialism is built on optimism and an ethical obligation to bring improvement to this world, so as to bring the golden age in.

Mysticism

The pursuit of spirituality that is separate from human organization and traditions, and moves beyond traditional theological formulations of transcendent reality. Spiritual experience is instead derived from altered states of consciousness.

Ezekiel

Ezekiel is a prophet who lived at a time when Israel could not reconcile their promises from God and their exile. Rational/traditional experience of religion had broken down, and Ezekiel's mystical experience created new ways to stay connected to the traditions. He lay naked on his side for three months, had visions of God, dreamt of being taken by hair and flown over Babylon by an angel, had a vision of the temple in the New Jerusalem, etc.

Matthew 11:7-14

John the Baptist, whose life reflected that of Elijah, lived and taught outside the boundaries of traditional, mainstream religion in ways that seemed non-rational to the public.

Myth

A sacred story or drama whose factuality cannot be determined, but is a truth-telling story helps people understand the nature of the cosmos, the purpose and meaning of life, and/or the role and origin of evil and suffering.

I Kings 18:20-46

In a deliberate public competition of myths on Mount Carmel, the prophets of Baal are re-enacting their myth by slashing themselves with knives, ritualizing the combat with death. Elijah's myth wins the showdown decisively.

Plausibility Structure

Specific social processes/interactions within a network of persons sharing a meaning system, that make the meaning system more believable.

Hebrews 10:23-25

The author of Hebrews is deliberately encouraging followers of Christ to build the church, using it as a plausibility structure to help each other remain faithful to the truth, love, good deeds, and meeting together.

Priest vs Prophet

Priest

A religious leader who functions within the established tradition and faithfully carries out the ritual and repeats the sacred messages.

Prophet

A religious leader who functions outside the established tradition and faithfully speaks into the tradition, calling for innovation, renewal, or revolution.

Numbers 3:5-10, Deuteronomy 18:17-22

The priests were called to maintain the rituals and traditions of the tabernacle, and the prophets were called to speak the words of God to His people.

Privatization

The process by which religion is segregated from the dominant institutions of the public sphere and relegated to the private sphere, and in which the norms and values of the private sphere become irrelevant to public institutions.

Matthew 5:14-16

Jesus speaks against the privatization of religion when he explains to the crowds that just as a lamp under a bush cannot fulfil its purpose, so too should they live out their faith openly for all to see, and God to be glorified.

Ritual

Formal, ceremonial behaviour; repeated symbolic behaviour.

Gen 31:43

Jacob and Laban follow a pattern for establishing a covenant by setting up stones of a memorial, eating a meal, etc.

Leviticus 23: 9 – 14

God's prescription, given through Moses, for the ritual offering of the first fruits of harvest.

Leviticus 24:5-9

A prescription for the ritual baking of bread, to be eaten by the high priest, thus serving as a symbol of the Lord's covenant with the people of Israel.

1 Samuel 15:22-23

Ritual, if practiced with the wrong intent, becomes meaningless/sinful.

Isaiah 58:2-5

Rituals performed without the right attitude toward God are meaningless.

Routinization of Charisma

The transformation of charismatic authority into some combination of traditional and bureaucratic authority.

Matthew 16:18-19

According to Catholicism, Jesus' handing over of the keys of the kingdom of heaven to Peter is part of the process of Christ beginning to routinize his authority.

Sacred vs Profane

Sacred

That which is defined as extraordinary, inspiring a sense of awe, reverence, and even fear.

Profane

That which is an ordinary element of everyday life.

Exodus 20:8-11, Matthew 12:1,2

The Israelite culture set apart the seventh day of the week, limiting the amount and type of activities one could do on the Sabbath day, making it sacred.

Joshua 3:3-4

The people of Israel are given instructions regarding the Ark of the Covenant, which begins as an ordinary (profane) object, a box, that is then transformed into the tangible sacred symbol of God's presence.

1 Samuel 4-6

The Ark of the Covenant was perhaps the most sacred object in Israel. It symbolized God's presence, was carried into battle, and was central to many miraculous international and private events.

2 Samuel 4

The Israelites go to war with Philistines but get defeated, so they go back and get the Ark of the Covenant. But they get defeated again, because they are simply using the Ark as a good luck charm.

Isaiah 44: 9 – 20

This is a discussion regarding construction of the sacred out of what is commonly held as profane.

Colossians 3:16,17

Paul is suggesting that we should not separate the activities of our lives into sacred and profane categories. Rather, all that we do should be sacred, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Sacralization

The process of making the profane sacred; the process of the social institutions becoming more and more influenced by both sacred symbols and institutions, as well as the movement of the sacred from the periphery of people's consciousness to the center.

2 Samuel 24:18 – 25; 1 Chronicles 21:18-27

David takes a census of the people, and God unleashes a plague on the people. David buys a threshing floor from Arunah and builds an altar on it, and offers a sacrifice to the Lord, in order that the plague be held back from Israel. It becomes the place where Solomon builds his temple.

Secularization

The historical process of change that involves a decline of the supernatural element in systems of meaning

Genesis – 2 Kings

As Israel's history unfolds, the actual theophanic, anthropomorphic elements of the story get less and less, and it becomes a more ordinary historical narrative. God becomes increasingly transcendent, less immanent, as a character in the plot. He no longer walks and talks with his people directly, or appears to them in burning bushes. In that sense Israel's story secularizes from Genesis thru to the end of Kings.

11. Education

Credentialism

Accumulating as many educational credentials as possible regardless of their relevance to the performance of the actual job requirements. These credentials function as an arbitrary screening device for job applicants.

Matthew 12:8

Jesus claimed authority over the temple and the Sabbath, despite his perceived lack of credentials according to the Pharisees.

Matthew 13:55-58

Jesus' teaching authority is questioned due to his lack of formal training.

Acts 4:13

The credentialism present in the religion of Judaism is exposed by the surprise of the Jewish council when they realized that, though Peter and John were both uneducated, they spoke well publicly.

Philippians 4:4-6

Paul cites the credentials whereby he gained high social status in his society.

Cultural Capital

Various kinds of cultural acumen and legitimate knowledge that results from both peoples' social class of origin and their educational experience.

Exodus 4:10-11, 1 Samuel 16

Both Moses and David had very little cultural capital. Moses was a nomad of the desert, and described himself as slow of speech and tongue. David was a shepherd, and the youngest of his family. Yet both men significantly furthered God's kingdom; God used Moses to lead his people out of bondage, and it was through the Davidic line that the Messiah was born.

Daniel 1:17-2:49

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were stationed in the King's court because they each had many forms of cultural capital, such as knowledge and skill in every aspect of literature, and wisdom and understanding. Daniel also had insight into visions and dreams.

Hidden Curriculum

Subtle presentations of political or cultural ideas in the classroom.

Matthew 13:31-35, Matthew 26:57-67

Jesus spoke to the crowds through parables, and the crowd often assumed that Jesus was speaking of a new life on earth, a political revolution. But Jesus' hidden curriculum was to teach the people of a new internal, eternal life for every human being, to be accomplished through his own death.

Human Capital

The level of educational achievement of a population within a society; the knowledge and skills of people, both individually and collectively.

Daniel 1 & 2

Nebachudnezzar depopulates Jerusalem of all of its brightest and best in order to educate them further for the purpose of serving the Babylonian empire.

Linguistic Code (elaborated vs restricted)

Elaborated

Language that is explicit, impersonal, abstract, referential, and universal, more common among the middle class.

Restricted

Language that is implicit, personal, concrete, and context-bound, more common among the lower class.

Mark 4:10-20,33-34

Jesus spoke to the crowds using a restricted linguistic code, that of parables, but with his disciples he used an elaborated linguistic code, explaining the meaning of the parables to them in detail.

Acts 17: 16-34

In speaking to the crowds in Athens, Paul used an elaborated linguistic code, citing their poets and drawing a link between God and the inscription to the unknown god.

Meritocracy

A system of social stratification based on personal merit.

Romans 11:6, Galatians 3:2-3

According to Paul, no works or behaviours here on earth will earn the merit necessary for eternal life. Those who one day find themselves in heaven will not have gotten there by adhering to the social stratification created by meritocracy.

Philippians 4: 4-6

Paul cites the credentials whereby he gained high social status in his society.

Schooling vs Learning

Schooling

The transmission of knowledge, skills, and values through a formally organized, structured, and evaluated learning process under the direction of specially trained teachers.

Learning

A process, frequently informal and unorganised, through which a person acquires knowledge, skills, and values.

Matthew 5:17

Jesus received formal religious schooling as a young Jewish boy, yet when he began his public ministry, he taught people informally. Jesus chose to reveal the spirit of the law to the crowds via their capacity for informal learning, rather than their capacity for formal schooling.

Luke 2:41-52

Despite being God's son, Jesus sought to learn under the direction of specially trained instructors when, at the age of 12, he sat among the teachers in the temple, listening and asking questions.

Self-fulfilling Prophecy

Predictions that, in a sense, make themselves come true.

Genesis 37:1-31

Jacob treats Joseph in such a way that Joseph cannot help seeing himself as a competent individual. Favored treatment results in a favored life, despite the attempts of the brothers.

1 Samuel 18

Once Saul is told by Samuel that the kingdom is taken from him, Saul becomes complicit in that prophecy by continually acting toward David in ways that produce the negative results. Saul assumes the worst of David, hunts him down, and exposes himself, forcing David to ally himself, for protection sake, with the Philistines. From the day Saul eyed David with suspicion, the rest of relationship is a self-fulfilment of that assumption/suspicion.

Status Power

The power of a group that is achieved by acquiring prestige, often through education. It is obtained by forming status groups that monopolize particular cultural attributes, creating social distance and exclusiveness, and then demanding deference.

Exodus 31:1-11

The craftsman who are responsible for building the tabernacle are singled out, and are in charge of whole project because of this particular ability/education they possess.

Jeremiah 32:12-26

The scribes were an occupational group that were the transcribers of legal contracts, the keepers of records, the advisers in state affairs, and the professional Torah readers.

Streaming

The assigning of students to different types of educational programs.

Daniel 1:1-21

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were recognized by the palace master of King Nebuchadnezzar as being physically pleasing in appearance, well educated, and wise. Therefore, they were brought to the palace to be further educated and nourished in preparation to serve in the King's court.

12. State and Polity

Authority (charismatic, traditional, rational-legal)

Charismatic

Power legitimised through extraordinary personal abilities that inspire devotion and obedience from others.

2 Samuel 15:1-14

Absalom charmed the men of Israel, seeking the King's throne.

Matthew 7:28-8:1

Jesus astounded people with his teaching, and people flocked to hear him.

Mark 1:4-5

People flocked to John, to be baptized by him.

Traditional

Power legitimised through respect for long-established cultural patterns.

Exodus 3

God appeals to the traditional authority of Moses' ancestors when establishing his authority over Moses at the burning bush.

Daniel 3

King Nebuchadnezzar had the power to have Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego thrown into a furnace, based on his traditional authority as King.

Matthew 12:1-14

Jesus challenged the traditional authority of the Pharisees and Scribes regarding working on the Sabbath and the washing of hands before eating. Jesus' charismatic leadership challenged traditional authority, yet eventually his followers, who originally undermined traditional authority through the early Christian church, evolved into the traditional authority of the Roman Catholic Church.

Matthew 15:1-20

The Pharisees are so bound by their traditional forms of authority that, according to Jesus, they are willing to “break the commandment of God for the sake of ...tradition”.

Colossians 2:8,16

Paul urges the believers in Colossae not to be deceived and held captive by authority based only on human tradition.

Rational-legal

Power legitimised by legally enacted rules and regulations.

Matthew 22:15-21

Jesus teaches obedience to rational-legal authority when he instructs the Pharisees to “give to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s”.

Elite Theory (Elitism)

The notion that power in all forms of society is inevitably held by a small ruling group.

Titus 1:5-9, 2:3-5; 1 Tim 3:1-13

In calling for the appointment of elders, Paul offers a list of criteria that would be characteristic only of people already high in socio-economic status, for example, people who can control money, who have good households, etc. This appears to be not so much a list of moral qualities, as much as a list of status qualifications, a narrowing and reserving of privilege for those who already have it.

Hegemony

Cultural leadership exercised by the ruling class, in which the ruled consent to the exercise of power. Hegemony is a process that shapes common sense itself and when it becomes impossible for people to think outside the framework of hegemonic culture, the people’s allegiance to the cultural leaders/intellectuals is complete.

1 Samuel 8:1-22

It was the elders of Israel, the intellectual and social leaders, not the people themselves who demanded a king. The elders were the ones that stood to benefit from a king while their subordinates would be the ones to suffer. It was inevitable for royal states to place some in bondage for the inordinate well-being of others. Yahweh told Samuel all the horrible things that would happen with a king ruling over Israel, and the elders and the people refused to listen to these warnings when Samuel relayed them to Israel. All the people of Israel were convinced of the idea of kingship, regardless of the costs. The elders needed the people of Israel to consent to the very

high costs of kingship if the elders were going to be the ones who would experience the rewards of kingship.

Human Rights (civil, political, social)

The assertion that individuals have rights simply by virtue of their humanity.

Civil rights

The rights of the individual in law, such as the right to equal justice, freedom of speech, religion, travel, residence, and occupation; protection **from** the government

Political rights

The right to participate in decision-making and/or hold office.

Social rights

The right to a minimum standard of living, such as guaranteed access to housing, education, health services, and work; protection **by** the government **from** an extreme free market.

Esther 8

When Haman's accusation against Mordecai is proven false, the King cannot undue his edict that the Jews will be slaughtered, but he can issue a second edict allowing the Jews the civil right to defend themselves.

Mark 10:14

Jesus indignantly told the disciples to allow the children to come to him because God's kingdom belonged to them. Access to Jesus was/is civil right for all of the children in God's kingdom.

Acts 22:25-28

In his defences, Paul repeatedly appealed to his civil rights as a Roman citizen, rights that other citizens like Jesus and Peter had not had.

Iron Law of Oligarchy

Oligarchy is the rule of the many by the few. Any group that organizes itself will be taken over by a few people who choose their own successors.

Exodus 18

Jethro tells Moses he needs to get elders together and distribute power to a small group of people. Jethro asks for leaders which were already heads of households, and so power leads to more power. Moses, Aron and Miriam, along with Nadab and Obia, seem to exercise disproportionate control over the group. The succession of Joshua that follows on from that is God handpicking him.

Legitimacy

The process of rendering power acceptable to those affected by its exercise; the probability that pronouncements will be taken seriously.

Joshua 1

God transfers authority over Israel from Moses to Joshua; God legitimizes Joshua.

Mark 1:9-11, Matthew 17:1-8

Jesus' authority on earth was legitimized by God, both at his baptism and again at his transfiguration when he said, "You are my son, the beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Pluralism

A system or a society in which power is dispersed among many competing elites who act to limit one another's power, and therefore minimize the repression and exploitation of members.

1 Kings 10 & 11

Most of the cultures surrounding Ancient Israel were polytheistic, a few being pluralistic, but in the eyes of the prophets, all would be denounced as idolatrous. Solomon was religiously pluralistic in the sense that he married wives of many religions and allowed them to retain their religion and to continue worshipping their gods. He even built temples for their gods.

Power

The ability to achieve desired ends despite resistance.

1 Samuel 9-10; 15; 22:ff

King Saul's monarchy begins with the exercise of authority but loses legitimacy and ends in ruling by power alone.

Proverbs 29:2

When righteous individuals rule, people grant them authority. When evil individuals rule, they do so with power.

Matthew 8:23-27, Mark 1:29-31, 9:17-27

Jesus had the supernatural power to control the weather, expel unclean spirits, and heal the sick.

Luke 9:51-56

James and John wanted Jesus to rule by power, destroying the Samaritans who had rejected him, but Jesus rebuked them, choosing to rule only by authority.

Power Elite

An elite with multiple sources of power, usually concentrated among the rich, often consisting of an inner circle of military, government, and business leaders.

Matthew 23

Jesus was harshly critical of the Pharisees, a Jewish sect of wealthy, educated, powerful men who effectively ruled Israel.

Public Good

Benefits that cannot be distributed selectively in a society; things necessary for group life that individual members of a society cannot provide for themselves and which require cooperative actions by many members.

Genesis 42:25-57

After the seven years of plenty in Egypt, Joseph is able to maintain the public good during the seven years of famine he had predicted and planned for. He was not only able to feed the people of the state of Egypt, but “the people of all the earth” as well. That he did so in a manipulative way that ultimately benefitted the Egyptian state more than the people is less well known.

State

A political entity in a territory with designated borders which has an organized monopoly on the use of force (or coercion) within that society. It is more than just the government.

Genesis 42:46-49

As a head of state, Joseph was able to coerce the Egyptians to surrender their surplus food during the seven years of plenty, and then was able to use that food to sustain the public good during the seven years of famine.

1 Samuel 8:1-22

By choosing a king, Israel evolves from a people group occupying a land to a political state controlling a territory with secured boundaries, central control, public works, etc. Saul creates a state.

Matthew 27:11-44, Acts 22:22-29

The Roman government had a monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force, as demonstrated by their complete control of Jesus’ crucifixion, as well as the flogging and imprisonment of Paul.

Terrorism

Calculated unlawful use of physical force or threats of violence against persons or property in order to intimidate or coerce a government, organization, or individual for the purpose of gaining some political, religious, economic, or social objective.

1 Samuel 27

David fled to the Philistines to escape Saul, but while he lived in Gath, he terrorized the back country and decimated the population there.

Totalitarianism

A political system that denies popular participation in government and extensively regulates the lives of all the citizens.

Luke 2:1-5

Though a truly totalitarian state requires modern surveillance, control, and communication technologies, the Roman Empire did all the things that modern totalitarian societies do, to the extent of their technologies. They denied popular participation in government, and they could decree that there would be a census and everybody had to go to their place of birth be counted.

Welfare State

A state that protects citizens from the excesses of market forces, ensures their well-being, and treats every person equally.

Exodus 20:1-26

Mosaic Law provides for a welfare state that sees to the well-being of all people regardless of their status in society. Relative to the Hammurabi law of Babylon, Israelite law is remarkably egalitarian in terms of how it treats people, except women.

13. Political Economy and Work

Capital

Capital is money that produces more money, or money/assets that is invested rather than used to satisfy human needs or desires.

Matthew 25: 14-30

The parable of the talents tells of how the slaves who used the money given them by their master to get more money were commended by their master, but the slave who did nothing with his money was rebuked.

Capitalism vs Socialism vs Communism

Capitalism

An economic system, based on free-market exchanges and individual property rights, in which natural resources and the means of producing goods and services are privately owned.

Socialism

An economic system in which natural resources and the means of producing goods and services are collectively owned.

Communism

A hypothetical economic and political system in which all members of a society are socially equal.

Ecclesiastes 4:4, 5: 8-17

The Preacher describes the consequences of private ownership.

Acts 2: 44-47, 4:32-37

The early Christians shared everything and made sure no one was needy.

Informal Economy

The non-institutionalized, non-monetary production, distribution and consumption of goods and services.

Genesis 18:1-8

Abraham hosting angels is only the first of numerous stories of hospitality in the biblical text. The hospitality ethic could be viewed as institutionalized in Israelite culture, in that it is punished when violated, but it was clearly a non-monetary distribution and consumption of goods and services.

Ruth 2:2-23

As illustrated in the story of Ruth, gleaning laws required reapers to leave some grain on the edges of their fields to be collected by the poor to ensure their survival.

Infrastructure (base) vs Superstructure

Infrastructure

The economic system which serves as the base social entity of a society.

Superstructure

The social institutions, including the family, polity, religion, and education systems, which are built on the foundation of the infrastructure.

Genesis 12-50

The economy of the patriarchs was that of sheep-herding, nomadic pastoralists. Therefore in early Israelite culture, swine flesh is religiously forbidden because it is not herdable, their religious shrine, the tabernacle, is portable, and they root their identity in the place from which they have come, not from the particular place where they are at any given moment. The Israelite God is one that goes with them, and is not a god of a particular geographical space/place, as the gods of the surrounding cultures were. This creates a sense of history for the Israelites that people are constantly moving through time and space, in contrast to the very static,

cyclical views of time and history of the Egyptians and Babylonians. Israel's sense of separateness as a people comes because they are people economically driven to be constantly moving outside of established places. They have always been separated as nomads, which leads to a notion of a separate people of a separate God who moves through time, space, and history, not limited to any one.

Mode of Production

The combination of the forces of production (physical and social technology) and the relations of production (social organization of economic activity).

Joshua

When Israel shifted from nomadic pastoral to settled and agrarian, the character of their society also shifted.

Monopoly

Domination of a market by a single producer.

Genesis 41:53-57, 47:13-22

Joseph gains a monopoly of all the grain in Egypt, and later all the land in Egypt as well, with the exception of the land owned by the priests.

Sectors of the Economy (primary, secondary, tertiary)

Primary

The part of the economy that generates raw materials directly from the natural environment.

Secondary

The part of the economy that transforms raw materials into manufactured goods.

Tertiary

The part of the economy that generates services rather than material goods.

Exodus 1:8-14

The Israelites never call themselves Hebrew, as the term originally referred to people who fill secondary and tertiary roles in the economy. Hebrew is an ancient near-eastern term for gypsies, and gypsies have no homogenous ethnic background. The whole idea of Hebrews is rooted in the existence in the ancient world of a group of people who fill secondary and tertiary economic sectors. The Israelites in Egypt serving as brick-makers, etc., are collectively identified as Hebrews.

I Kings 5

When Solomon built the temple, he needed all sectors of the economy, though most of the raw material comes from other economies.

Luke 6:12-16

Jesus and the disciples come from a complete mix of economic sectors. Andrew, James, and Peter were fishermen, and thus from the primary sector. Jesus the carpenter comes from the secondary sector. Matthew and Levi were tax-collectors from the tertiary sector. In a complete reversal of post-industrial society, it was the primary sector that was most honoured, and the tertiary sector most dishonoured, and this will have affected relations within the group of disciples.

Surplus Value

The difference between the cost of production and the price of sale of a commodity.

Luke 19:1-10

Tax-collectors lived off the surplus value of the taxes they collected, the difference between the amount of money they took from people and the amount they actually forwarded to Rome. Like contemporary capitalists, they took as much “market value” as they could get away with charging. Zacheus repents of doing so.

E. Social Organization and Change

14. Groups and Formal Organizations

Alienation

A sense of un-involvement in the social world, or lack of influence on it, that manifests itself as self-estrangement, powerlessness, meaninglessness, social isolation, or cultural estrangement. It may be specific (limited to a single institutionalized sphere of life) or general (fully withdrawn from the social world).

Genesis 16:1-15, 21:1-21

Hagar was marginalized by Sarai, who “dealt with her harshly” to the point where she ran away. She came back, but within a few years Sarah jealously demanded of Abraham that he send her away. Powerless to alter her plight, alienated and alone with her son in the desert, Hagar pleaded with God not to let her watch her son die.

Ecclesiastes 2:21

The Preacher of Ecclesiastes speaks of the meaninglessness created when a laborer does not receive the reward for their labor, but instead someone else, who did not earn it, does.

I Peter

Peter addresses four kinds of alienation being suffered by God’s elect scattered throughout the world, who were feeling like “aliens and

strangers”: cultural alienation (1:1-2; 2:9-14), conversational alienation (4:12-19; 4:1-6; 3:13-17), conjugal alienation (3:1-7), and believer alienation (1:3-9; 4:12-13).

Bureaucracy

An organizational model rationally designed to perform complex tasks efficiently.

Ecclesiastes 5:8

The writer suggests that we should not be surprised when hierarchical government structures lead to oppression of the poor and denial of justice.

Dyads/Triads

Dyads

A social group consisting of only two members.

Triads

A social group consisting of three members.

Ruth

The relationship between Ruth and her mother-in-law Naomi is an example of a very strong dyad.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

The Preacher identifies several ways in which two are better than one, but ends by observing that “a chord of three strands is not quickly broken.” A group of two cannot survive the loss of a member, whereas a group of three can survive, and then go on to replace the lost member.

Acts 15:13, 37-39

The relationship between Paul, Barnabas, and Mark reveals classic characteristics of dyads and triads.

Formal vs Informal Organization

Formal

A large, secondary group of people participating in a division of labor, coordinated by communication and leadership, to achieve a common goal efficiently.

Informal

The complex personal networks within a formal organization, neither codified or obvious, that are based on personal qualities and feelings of individual members.

Exodus 18

Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, encourages and instructs Moses on how to change the informal organization of the nation of Israel into a formal organization.

1 Kings 6:1-38

Solomon's building of the temple was a 7 year construction project which will have required significant formal organization to achieve.

Ezra 2:68 - 3:13, 6:13-18, Haggai 1:12-15

The people of the exile organized themselves very efficiently in order to achieve their goal of rebuilding the temple.

Goal Displacement

What occurs when the official goals of an organization are ignored or changed.

Mark 10:35-45

James and John betray that they have lost sight of their original goal of serving through and for Christ, when they ask that they be allowed to sit in places of honor at Jesus' right and left hand, in glory.

Groups

Two or more people who identify and interact with one another based on some common interest.

Biblical Example?

Groupthink

The tendency to abandon personal dissenting opinions for sake of the group when pressures for conformity and unanimity overwhelm members' motivation to appraise situations realistically and/or voice dissent.

Numbers 13-14:10

Moses sends out one spy from each of the twelve tribes to spy out the land of Canaan in preparation for occupying it. When they return, ten of the spies say that the Canaanites are invincible, and so all the Israelites despair. But Joshua and Caleb, the remaining two spies, resist groupthink and insist that with the Lord's help, the Israelites are indeed capable of conquering the people and land of Canaan.

Acts 5:33-42

Peter and the apostles have just refused to stop teaching in public, saying they will obey God rather than men, and so the Sanhedrin has decided to kill the group. Gamaliel stands up and counters the groupthink, convincing the Council to let the apostles go with just a flogging.

Ingroup vs Outgroup

Ingroup

The group toward which individuals feel loyalty.

Outgroup

The group toward which individuals feel antagonism.

Mark 7:3-8

The Pharisees considered themselves to be the ingroup, and Jesus and his little band of followers to be the outgroup. Jesus was ‘unclean,’ breaking many of their cultural/religious rituals, and they were ‘clean’, adhering to all that Judaism demanded.

Instrumental vs Expressive Leadership

Expressive

Focuses on individual and collective social-emotional well-being of members.

Instrumental

Emphasizes the completion of group tasks.

Colossians 2:1-5

Paul expresses deep concern for the Colossians and Laodiceans, and his wish for their collective well-being through an understanding of God in Christ.

Intragroup Cohesion & Conflict

Cohesion

The degree to which members remain unified in the pursuit of the group’s goals (task), and like each other in the process (affect).

Conflict

When group members take antagonistic action toward each other in order to control some aspect of the group important to each member.

Acts 15:1-30

There was “much debate” when the Council at Jerusalem convened to discuss what to do with the Gentiles that were coming to faith in Christ – should they be accepted or not? The proceedings were a delicate balance of both intragroup cohesion and conflict. But by the end the participants reported “having become of one mind” and referred to each other as “beloved.”

Network

A web of social ties that links people who have little common identity or interaction.

Biblical Example?

Primary vs Secondary Group

Primary

A small groups engaged in face-to-face interaction over extended periods, and in which relationships are both personal and enduring.

Secondary

A large and impersonal social group based on specific interest or activity, and whose members have only limited emotional attachments to one another.

Matthew 4:18-22, 10:2-4, 12:1, 13:36, 14:15-33

Jesus and his disciples became a primary group.

Reference Group

A group whose perspectives the individual shares, and uses as a standard to evaluate him or herself, even if he or she does not belong to it.

Biblical Example?

15. Demography and Urbanization

Population Composition

The distribution of characteristics in a population, such as age, sex, and race.

Ezra 2

There is an obsession with reconstituting the people of Israel in the wake of the exile and the return, when what were the real familial ethnic connections are lost.

Demography

The study of human population with regard to how they grow, decline, or migrate.

Numbers 1-4

God asked Moses to take a census of the entire congregation of Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai, including the size and composition of each clan, as well as the distribution of each clan.

I Chronicles 21

King David orders Joab to take a census of all the Israelites.

Dependency Ratio

The number of working-age people relative to the number of dependent-age people (children and elderly) in a population.

Exodus 12:37-38

The sons of Israel are described in terms of their notion of a dependency ratio: "six hundred thousand men on foot, aside from children." The number of men capable of fighting was their measure of the parameters of

their population; it indicated the capacity to carry a total population of a certain size.

Fecundity vs Fertility

Fecundity

The total potential childbearing of women in a population.

Fertility

The incidence of actual childbearing in a country's population.

Genesis 16

The Israelite cultural pro-natalist value that the primary purpose of women was to bear children created a situation in which Sarai offered her slave-girl, Hagar, to Abram in her place, in order to ensure procreation.

Gentrification

Upper-middle class professionals move into and renovate the formerly run-down working class areas of the central city.

Biblical Example?

Life Expectancy

The average life span of a society's population.

Genesis

There is a clear difference in the life-expectancy of pre-flood versus post-flood societies, and many theories have been advanced to explain why and how the ages come down so substantially. Lifespan plays a big part in the stories of the patriarchs – all exceed 100 years. Generally it is very righteous people who surpass life expectancy; it is understood that virtue is rewarded with longer life.

Marriage Squeeze

A shortage of single eligible members of the other sex in a population.

Judges 20-21

The tribe of Benjamin is decimated at Gibeah by the other tribes of Israel because of their outrage against the dismemberment of the Levite's concubine. Only a remnant of 600 Benjaminite men who fled survived. The other tribes had also sworn not to give their daughters to the tribe of Benjamin as wives. Yet the other tribes did not want the tribe of Benjamin to be blotted out from Israel. But they still needed to get wives for the remnant of Benjamin so that the tribe could be repopulated. So they do two things. They go to the city of Jabesh-Gilead who had not helped in the civil war against the tribe of Benjamin, kill all the men there, raid the

city for 400 young virgins, and deliver them to the remnant of the tribe of Benjamin. But that did not produce quite enough wives. So they tell the remaining 200 Benjaminite men to go to Shiloh at the time of its festival, hide in the vineyards, and when the maidens come out to dance, they should grab them and take them off as their wives, which is what the men did. The narrative ends with the famous verse: “In those days there was no king in Israel: everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

Megalopolis

A vast urban region containing a number of cities and their surrounding suburbs.

Biblical Example?

Metropolitan Area

A large city that socially and economically dominates the surrounding area; a city and its immediate sphere of influence.

Biblical Example?

Migration

The movement of people into (immigration) and out of (emigration) a specified territory. A refugee is forced migrant.

Genesis 12 – 50, Exodus, Joshua

Territories in the ancient world did not have clear boundaries; borders were the grey zones between ethnic territories. As such, Abraham and his family migrates from Mesopotamian to Canaan to Egypt and back to Canaan, for many different reasons and under many different conditions.

Neighborhood vs Community

Neighborhood

The specific physical area surrounding one’s place of residence.

Community

The interpersonal contact patterns/networks with which one identifies and interacts regularly. It is social, not physical.

Romans 16

Paul ends many of his letters with greetings and expressions of love, a salutation from and for the saints. They are community-oriented greetings, and Paul is deliberately connecting these groups of people who are not neighbors into one spiritual community.

Positive vs Preventive Checks

Positive

Population-reducing disasters such as famine, disease, and war – the primary factors that check or stop population growth.

Genesis 6:7

All of humanity, with the exception of eight people, was wiped out by the flood.

Numbers 11:33-34

The Israelites were struck with a plague during the time they were in the wilderness, struggling for food.

Preventive

Individual and collective human actions taken to limit births.

Exodus 2:1-25

Pharaoh killing all the first-born of Israel is trying to control the growth of an ethnic population.

Push and Pull Factors of Migration

Push Factors

The negative factors that motivate people to emigrate from a particular place, region, or country.

Pull Factors

The positive factors that motivate people to immigrate to a particular place, region, or country.

Genesis 13:1-12

The land of the Negeb was not able to support both the herds of Abram and Lot, thus ‘pushing’ them to migrate to other areas. Lot was ‘pulled’ to choose Sodom, in the Jordan, because the land was well watered.

Exodus 3: 7-10

The oppression of slavery ‘pushed’ the Israelites out of Egypt, and the promise of a land of milk and honey ‘pulled’ them to Canaan.

Acts 8:1

The gospel stayed in Jerusalem because there was nothing to pull it out to Judea or the ends of the earth. It took the push of persecution to spread believers and hence the gospel.

Sex Ratio

The number of males for every hundred females in a given population.

Biblical Example?

Urban Ecology

The study of the link between the physical and social dimensions of cities.

Biblical Example?

Urbanization vs Urbanism

Urbanization

The concentration of humanity into cities.

Biblical Example?

Urbanism

The nature of life in cities; the patterns of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviour of people living in cities.

Biblical Example?

16. Collective Behaviour and Social Movements

Collective Behaviour

Relatively large numbers of people engaging in emergent and extra-institutional behaviour, usually in violation of established norms.

Exodus 32:1-25

In Moses' absence, the children of Israel create the golden calf.

Contagion Theory

Crowds exert a hypnotic influence over their members, so that shielded by the anonymity of a crowd, people evade personal responsibility and surrender to the contagious emotions of the crowd.

Exodus 32:1-25

In Moses' absence, the children of Israel create the golden calf.

Matthew 21:6-11, 27:15-26

The chief priests and elders incite the crowd which eventually calls for Jesus' crucifixion. Yet these are the same people who, a week earlier, were calling out all manner of blessing on Jesus when he entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey. In each case, most of the people were following the emotion and energy generated by the crowd.

Acts 14:19

Jews from Antioch incite a crowd to stone Paul.

Craze

Excessive and unreasonable enthusiasm for a special object or prize expressed by a large number of individuals, but regarded as strange by most people in the society. Crazes are generally more outlandish than fads, and therefore require greater personal commitment.

Biblical Example?

Crowd

A temporary gathering of people who share a common focus of attention and who influence one another.

2 Kings 2:23-25

Elisha is jeered by a crowd of youths.

Matthew 14:13-21

The feeding of the five thousand.

Acts 6-7

The crowd that gathered to witness Stephen before the council was an acting crowd, collectively motivated by a single purpose, that of desiring to see Stephen's preaching silenced. When Stephen accused them of killing prophets, and the Messiah, they became enraged and turned into a mob, violently seeking Stephen's destruction.

Deprivation (absolute vs relative)

Absolute Deprivation

Objective, abject poverty or oppression that leads to passivity, because people without hope do not act.

Relative Deprivation

A subjective sense of deprivation is based on comparison to some reference group or ideal standard; a perceived disadvantage arising from some specific comparison.

Exodus 6:9

The Hebrews only became noticeably agitated and discontent during the relative deprivation of the exodus, not during the absolute deprivation of slavery in Egypt.

Mark 10:23-25

Physical wealth and abundance creates self-reliance which becomes a deficiency of the rich because they are less likely to be as acutely aware of their need of God. Lack of physical deprivation predisposes spiritual deprivation.

Luke 15: 11-32

The prodigal son lived in absolute deprivation, yet hoped to be only his father's servant, while the older brother was greatly distressed by the relative deprivation of having no party thrown in his honor.

Emergent Norm Theory

If similar interests draw people together, distinctive patterns of behaviour may emerge within a crowd itself.

Mark 11:1-11

As Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey, people in the crowd who had come to believe in him privately discover their belief is shared by others, and collectively make it normative in that situation to lay down their cloaks, wave palm branches, and shout "Hosanna," thereby treating him like royalty. Certain behaviors became defined as appropriate, and others inappropriate, as what began as an ambiguous situation turned into a collective definition of the situation.

Fads and Fashions

Fads

An unconventional social pattern that people embrace briefly but enthusiastically. A fad is shorter in duration, more specific and trivial, and not as relevant to style or good taste as fashion.

Fashions

A social pattern favoured by a large number of people. To be fashionable is a compliment, to be faddish is an insult.

Biblical Example?

Free Riders

People who passively support social movements in order to reap the benefits, but decline to participate actively.

1 Timothy 9:5-16

Paul discusses which widows should be supported, based on their own past involvement with the church, and in what way, exposing the fact that the early church was having trouble with free riders who wished to benefit from the communal life of the church without contributing to it.

Revelation 3:15-16

Those who are neither hot nor cold are free riders, and will be 'spit out'.

Mobs and Riots

Mob

A highly emotional and focused crowd that pursues a violent or destructive goal.

Riot

A social eruption that is highly emotional, undirected, and indiscriminate in its violent actions.

Genesis 19:1-11

A mob of men of the city of Sodom gathered around Lot's home, desiring to rape the men who were visiting in his home, and threatening violence against Lot and his family if their demands were not met.

Acts 6 & 7

A mob succeeds in getting Stephen stoned to death.

Acts 19:22-41

What begins as a mob focused on Paul and his travelling companions for having disrupted economic activity, disintegrates into a confused riot that is eventually brought under control.

Acts 21:27-36

While in the temple at Jerusalem, a number of Jews seized Paul and publicly accused him of teaching against their laws. In their attempts to have Paul killed, they generated an uproar which soon aroused the entire city.

Panic and Dread

Panic

A form of localized collective behaviour in which people react to a threat or other stimulus with irrational, frantic, and often self-destructive behaviour.

Exodus 12:29-36

The Egyptians panicked when their firstborn children were killed, urging the Israelite slaves to leave as quickly as possible, even though the Jewish slaves were their means of livelihood. They were so afraid that they sent them out at night, and allowed the Israelites to plunder their riches before they left.

Judges 7:15-22

The Israelite army surrounded the Midianite camp at night, simultaneously breaking clay jars and playing trumpets, throwing the Midianites into a state of panic in which they begin to kill each other and run away in fear.

1 Samuel 14:14-16

The Philistine army panicked when Jonathon and his armor-bearer killed 20 of their men. The uproar resulted in a major Israelite victory.

Dread

A situation in which one's current well-being is secure, but long-term well-being is in question.

Genesis 42

As they safely return home to get their youngest brother Benjamin, Joseph's brothers have many reasons to feel their future is threatened.

Propaganda

A deliberate and organized attempt at persuasion in which verbal and visual symbols are manipulated to modify attitudes or behaviour; information provided by individuals or groups that have a vested interest in furthering their own cause or damaging an opposing one.

Numbers 13:31

The spies sent into the land of Canaan by Moses did not want the Israelites to attempt to overcome Canaan. So they spread false reports of giants in the land who 'devoured their inhabitants' in order to create fear among the Israelite population, and therefore, resistance to Moses and Aaron's plan to conquer the land.

Public

A large, scattered, amorphous group of people interested in forming a collective opinion on an issue. They may hold similar views, or they may sharply disagree.

Biblical Example?

Resource Mobilization

The human and material resources needed to get and keep a social movement going, such as leadership, volunteer labor, money, and communications,

Nehemiah 1-4

Nehemiah creatively mobilizes a wide range of resources in order to accomplish the rebuilding of the Jerusalem wall.

Rumour and Gossip

Rumour

Unsubstantiated information spread informally, often by word of mouth, where proof is unavailable or ignored

Luke 24:13-35

The two men on the road to Emmaus discuss the rumours surrounding Jesus' death and supposed resurrection.

Romans 1:28-30

Paul suggests that idleness and disinterest in God lead people to engage in rumours and gossip.

Gossip

Rumours about the personal affairs of others.

Exodus 23:1, Proverbs 18:8

Rumour and gossip bring destruction for everyone involved.

Luke 7:33-34, Matthew 11:18-19

The Pharisees spread rumours and gossip about John the Baptist, saying that he did not eat and drink wine with other people, therefore he had a demon. They also spread rumors and gossip about Jesus, saying that he ate and drank wine with the wrong people, therefore he was a glutton and drunkard.

Ephesians 4:29, James 3:3-12

Misuse of the tongue generates destruction. The tongue should be used for building up, and giving grace.

Social Cleavage

A social division based on multiple factors such age, sex, class, education, and ethnicity, that results in the formation of more pronounced and distinct social groups separated by more than one variable.

Exodus 1:1-22

The Israelites in Egypt at the beginning of the exodus story are referred to as Hebrews, indicating the social cleavage that separated them from the Egyptians. They are separated by race, religion, and social class, having little in common with the Egyptians.

Social Movement

Collective and organized activity that attempts to bring about or resist social change.

Acts 2

The followers of Jesus scattered after his death and existed as separate individual believers in Jesus. But they eventually come together again and become both a church in itself, and church for itself, a group with an identity and mission.

17. Social Change

Core vs Peripheral Nations

Core Nations

The rich, powerful, economically diversified, industrialized nations of the world that benefit from access to the raw materials and markets of “periphery” nations.

Peripheral Nations

The low-income nations that are weak and underdeveloped, and that support core nations by providing inexpensive labour, easy access to raw materials, and vast markets for industrial products. They often rely on a single cash crop, and have accumulated unmanageable debt, and therefore are dependent on external agencies.

Genesis 10

Though the basis of categorization is different, the table of nations in Genesis 10 organizes all the people after the flood into a hierarchy of nations based on Noah’s sons. The descendants of Shem are the core nations (Mesopotamians, Syrians, etc.), the sons of Japheth are the semi-peripheral nations, and the sons of Ham are the peripheral nations (Egyptians, Canaanites, Philistines, etc.).

Cultural Lag

Cultural elements changing at different rates, causing various degrees of disruption in cultural systems; the period of delay following a change in one part of a society when other parts of the society have not yet readjusted.

Acts 15

The Jerusalem Council addressed the theological idea that grace had freed people from the law. While producing many benefits to the believer, this new development also created a dilemma, inasmuch as believers were tempted to employ “cheap grace” by taking it as license to do whatever they wanted. Believers ever since have been struggling to “catch up” with the principle of grace vs law in a freed but mature and responsible manner.

Hinterland-Metropolis Relationship

The division of labour between regions where the hinterland sends in its raw materials and labour, while the metropolis sends out its manufactured goods, ideas, technology, and protection.

When the hinterland-metropolis construct is applied beyond the rural-urban distinction, all Judea is a hinterland to the metropolis of Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon at different times in the Old Testament. It is good agricultural land, and a bridge land between competing nations. In the New Testament, Rome is the metropolis and Palestine is clearly a hinterland.

Historical Materialism

A society's social structure, worldview, and social relations are not forged by its ideas and values, but by its economic structure and social conditions.

I Samuel 8:5-6, 19

The Israelites want a king because they are tired of being ruled by a succession of charismatic leaders in times of crisis. Their desire to have a king in order to be less vulnerable moves them away from theocracy toward more conventional forms of human government. Eventually their ideas of God are shaped by their ideas of king and kingdom.

Israel's history

All of the major movements of the nation of Israel, from the initial Abrahamic journey to the promised land, to the sojourn down into Egypt and enslavement there, to the exodus and the conquest, to their capture and the exile, to the return to the promised land after the Babylonian exile, to their eventual diaspora, have shaped their social structure (organized by tribe) and self-understanding (chosen people of God).

Imperialism / Neo-imperialism

Imperialism is the drive to conquer and subjugate other peoples. Neo-imperialism is maintaining subjugation through economic and cultural means, instead of political or military means.

Daniel 1:1-5

Cultural Imperialism: The extent of dominance of Babylon over the nation Israel can be seen in King Nebuchadnezzar's attempt to entirely acculturate the finest Israelite men by teaching them the literature and language of the Babylonian culture, removing them from their homes and stationing them in the palace, and feeding them Babylonian food.

Mass Society

A society in which industry and expanding bureaucracy have eroded traditional social ties.

Life in the city of Rome is probably the closest example of a modern mass society found in the Greco-Roman world. Life was lived on a very large scale, with an ever-expanding state/bureaucracy and a breakdown of kinship and neighbourhood networks, leaving individuals socially isolated and personally powerless.

Modernization

A model of economic and social development that explains global inequality in terms of technological and cultural differences among societies.

Though no society in the ancient Near East can be described as modern, some societies were clearly more technologically advanced than others. For example, the Egyptians had the military technology of chariots that gave them an advantage over other societies, the Philistines had the advantage of iron weapons, and in New Testament Israel, Galilee was often thought of as politically, culturally and socially backwards compared to Judah.

The Biblical text, in many ways resists essential characteristics of modernity, primarily human autonomy and self-reliance and the seeking of absolute control over their worlds. In particular, the Bible counsels reliance on God, not armies, wealth and trade, priests and sacrifices.

Acts 2:14-36, Acts 17:22-34

It could be said that Athens was culturally/philosophically more modern than Jerusalem, as evidenced by the way Paul preached to the Athenians compared to the way Peter preached to the Jews and Gentiles in Jerusalem.

Protestant Ethic / Spirit of Capitalism

The Protestant ethic is Weber's thesis that Calvinist doctrine was taken to suggest that economic success reflects God's favour and grace. The spirit of capitalism is values favouring hard work, thrift, and the importance of economic success.

Deuteronomy 28

God promises to bless the children of Israel with spiritual and physical prosperity if they obey His commands, and promises to curse them with spiritual and physical poverty if they disobey His commands.

Social Change

The transformation of culture, social institutions, and patterns of social organization over time.

Over the course of time represented in the biblical text, the primary people group, the Israelites/Jews, change from a semi-nomadic society to a fixed tribal pastoral-horticultural society, to a monarchy, to a people group colonized by Rome, with all the attendant transformations of culture, social institutions, and patterns of social organization.

Social Evolution

Theories that account for the existence of a social structure on the basis of its survival benefits for societies. For example, technologically superior societies will be better able to withstand environmental challenges; hence, societies will evolve toward increased technological capacity.

Leviticus

The land of Canaan in general was the place promised to the nation of Israel, though they were eventually exiled from it. By the time of the exile, the Jerusalem temple in particular had become the physical centre and focus of the nation/religion of Israel, though it was eventually destroyed. Judaism was able to survive because it had already begun to evolve into a text-based nation/religion based on texts such as the Ten Commandments, or the more extensive Levitical Holiness codes, rather than a place-based nation/religion focused on the land of Canaan and the Jerusalem temple.

Leviticus 17:1-16

The dietary laws can, in retrospect, be seen as a profound technological advantage that, though unknown at the time, enabled the nation of Israel to enjoy better physical health, and thereby to thrive and prosper as a nation.

Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles

The tribal structure of Israel enabled them to retain identity and community, and to organize/divide labour effectively and efficiently. Without this attribute, the nation probably would not have survived its many difficulties.

Underdevelopment

The active process of promoting national dependence that pre-empts the dependent nation's development.

Joshua 9

Underdevelopment is one result of the process of one group exploiting another. In the case of Joshua and the Gibeonites, underdevelopment was a form of punishment, meted out to the Gibeonites for having lied to Israel. They were assigned a permanent servile task which precluded their development.

World System Theory / Dependency Theory

A model of economic and social development that explains global inequality in terms of the historical exploitation of poor societies by rich ones.

Biblical Example?