# H/S-1 to H/S-5: Levels of awareness of honor/shame in cross-cultural ministry

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**NOTES:**


2) A 3,000-word article explaining this chart appeared in the April 2015 issue of EMQ (Evangelical Missions Quarterly). See [www.EMQonline.com](http://www.EMQonline.com).

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## H/S-1 to H/S-5: Levels of awareness of honor/shame in cross-cultural ministry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Legal</th>
<th>Legal + Regal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Level of awareness of honor/Shame dynamics; cultural / theological blind spot</td>
<td>Blind spot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Awareness of only the unethical or dark side of honor/Shame</td>
<td>Inferior values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Awareness of honor/shame as pivotal cultural value of Bible societies helps to reduce or minimize the Western bias in Scripture interpretation</td>
<td>Bible cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Awareness of honor/shame dynamics as central to the meaning and proclamation of the gospel of Christ</td>
<td>Gospel message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Awareness of honor/shame dynamics as central to the meaning and proclamation of the gospel of Christ</td>
<td>Glorious kingdom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Level 1: Unawareness

- **Honor/Shame Awareness:** No awareness
- **Legal view of the atonement / resurrection:** Exclusively legal understanding of the atonement; the cross is for sin/guilt
- **Ethical or doxological:** No awareness
- **Strategic issues:** In the history of Christian mission, missionaries have sometimes violated honor/shame principles—"Pay to all what is owed to them: …respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed" (Rom 13:7).

### Level 2: Ethical

- **Honor/Shame Awareness:** Little to no awareness of positive aspects of honor/shame dynamics
- **Legal view of the atonement / resurrection:** Primarily legal understanding of the atonement; the cross is for sin/guilt
- **Ethical or doxological:** Ethical only
- **Strategic issues:** Learning the honor/shame culture of the Bible … deep listening … apology & relationship repair.

### Level 3: Functional

- **Honor/Shame Awareness:** No awareness
- **Legal view of the atonement / resurrection:** Gospel of the kingdom embraces both legal and regal aspects of the atonement; the cross is for sin/guilt and sin/shame, for personal and social transformation
- **Ethical or doxological:** Ethical and doxological
- **Strategic issues:** Honor/shame dynamics are incorporated into theology, hermeneutics, discipleship, missiology; Western theological bias of legal over regal, (ignoring honor/shame) is recognized as a remnant of colonialism

### Level 4: Evangelical

- **Honor/Shame Awareness:** Little to no awareness of only the positive aspects of honor/shame dynamics
- **Legal view of the atonement / resurrection:** Gospel of the kingdom embraces both legal and regal aspects of the atonement; the cross is for sin/guilt and sin/shame; Christ’s ascension is the victory of King Jesus over all rivals, all enemies
- **Ethical or doxological:** Primarily doxological
- **Strategic issues:** Honor/shame dynamics offer contextualized gospel for unengaged and unreached peoples; legal and guilt-oriented gospel is relativized to be in balance with honor/shame and regal-based gospel of the kingdom

### Level 5: Teleological

- **Honor/Shame Awareness:** Awareness of only the positive aspects of honor/shame dynamics
- **Legal view of the atonement / resurrection:** Gospel of the kingdom points to ultimate purpose of the atonement / ascension—to glorify Christ while also glorifying the redeemed among all the peoples, tribes and nations of the world
- **Ethical or doxological:** Doxology as goal-destiny of all creation
- **Strategic issues:** Honor/shame dynamics facilitate culture of honor in global church collaboration; strong partners relativized to work in unity with weak; creative worship arts for ethnolinguistic harmony honors Christ as King and honors value of all peoples

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**Key words**

- Blind spot
- Inferior values
- Bible cultures
- Gospel message
- Glorious kingdom
- Unawareness
- Ethical only
- Ethical and doxological
- Primarily doxological
- Doxology as goal-destiny of all creation