SBC Chapel Dr. Andrew Spurgeon

3 February 2015 NT Professor, Asian Christian Academy

Session 3 Notes by Dr. Rick Griffith, Singapore Bible College

**Reading Romans from an Asian Perspective**

***How Can I Read Romans from an Asian Perspective?***

**Topic:** Hermeneutics

**Subject:** How can I read Romans from an Asian perspective?

**Complement:** See purity and kinsman relationship as priorities to Paul.

**Purpose:** The listeners will listen to multi-voices in interpreting Romans

# Introduction

### Interest: Every culture has its code words that only that culture understands.

#### Indian newspapers say that “the PM spoke to the CM about the BJP in the NWT.” Outsiders have no idea what this means.

#### The West sees evil as a philosophical concept whereas the East sees evil as evil forces surrounding us to hinder us from the will of God.

### Need: How do you read “deliver us from evil” in the Lord’s Prayer?

### Subject: How can I read Romans from an Asian perspective?

### Preview: Several Asian themes appear in Romans.

# I. Purity

## Purity occurs 18 times in Romans.

### The Scriptures are holy (1:2). In India, a pastor took Andrew’s Bible off the floor and put it up on the table. When he had a Bible at the bottom of a stack of books, he put it on top instead.

### Our calling is holy (1:7).

### God’s love constrains us by the Holy Spirit (5:5).

### The law and commandments are holy and righteous (7:12).

## We neglect to see holiness in the text when it is not a concern in our own lives.

# II. Kinsman Relationship

## This refers to someone with whom you partner. A handshake in Australia is deemed as legitimate as a signed contract.

## In the Philippines, the youngest son in a family without daughters is dressed as a girl and fulfills the role of caring for his parents throughout their life.

## In India, an uncle often marries his niece to preserve the family name.

## “Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners” (Rom. 8:7-8).

## “In China, harmony and balance are the ultimate pursuits… As a result, there is less categorization than in the West…” (John Nesbit, *Geographical Thinking*).

# Conclusion

### We should listen to multiple voices in interpreting Romans (MI).

### All voices are equal to hear, but not all are equal in helpfulness.

### We must separate the core doctrines from the peripheral issues.

#### Style of music is peripheral.

#### Theology in the music is core.