

Multicultural 101



Understanding Culture

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In table groups

- Briefly share a multicultural challenge you face in your ministry.

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In the group

- Facilitators summarize cross-cultural challenges.



Based on the book

- *Biblical Multicultural Teams: Applying Biblical Truth to Cultural Differences*, Sheryl Takagi Silzer, 2011.

In the group

- What do these verses say to you about being created in the image of God and different cultures?
 - Genesis 1:27
 - Revelations 7:9

Genesis 1:27

- So God created man in his own image,
- in the image of God he created him;
- male and female he created them (NIV).

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Revelations 7:9

- After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands (NIV).

Revelations 7:9

- The scene before the throne shows that the image of God is visible in different nations, tribes, languages, and cultures.

Therefore,

- one culture reflects only part of the image of God so that
- we can learn more about God from people from other cultures who are also created in His image

What is God like?

- To better understand what it means to be made in God's image, we first need to understand who God is.
- We will look at one aspect of God as the Trinity—3 persons in 1

What is God like?

✧ Trinity—3 persons in 1

1. God the father

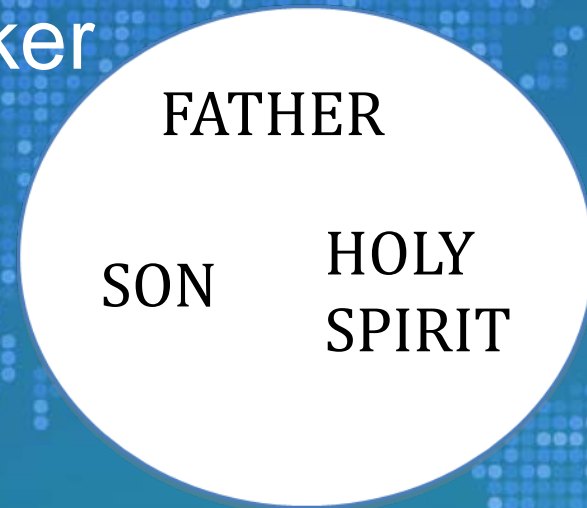
authority/decision maker

2. God the Son

the truth, the Word

3. God the Holy Spirit

guide into truth



3 views of the image of God

- ✧ 1. Father-In Substance
- ✧ 2. Son-In Function
- ✧ 3. Holy Spirit-In Relationships

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The Father: In Substance view

- ✧ the image in Substance is a basic human capacity (the will)
 - i.e. aligns decisions with God,
 - uses Biblical authority,
 - chooses to depend on God
- ✧ reflects God the Fathers' authority

The Son: In Function view

- ✧ the image in function takes responsibility for creation (knowledge & action), is God's representative, and takes dominion over creation
- ✧ reflects God the Son as truth

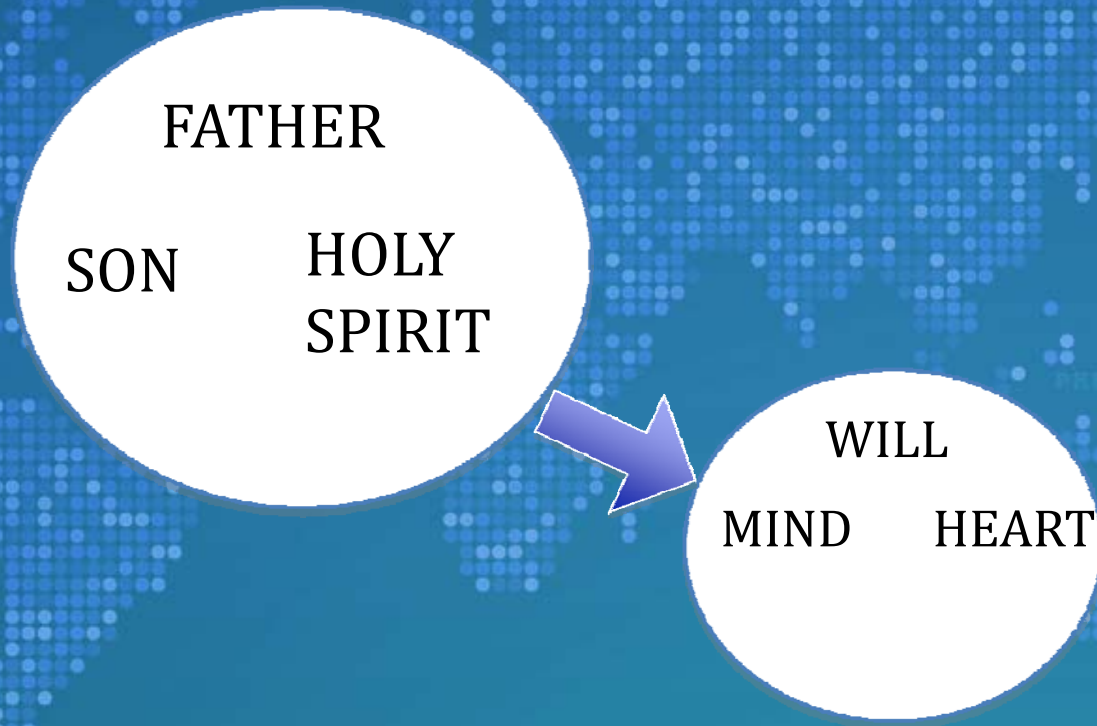
The Holy Spirit: In Relationship view

- ✧ the image in relationships, demonstrates the fruit of the Spirit, Body of Christ, is guided by the Spirit, and loves one another in community
- ✧ reflects God the Holy Spirit.

How are we like God—the Image of God?

- ✧ 1. Will (decision-making, authority= reflecting God the Father in *substance*)
- ✧ 2. Mind (thinking/responsibility for creation= reflecting God the Son in *function*)
- ✧ 3. Heart (interpersonal relationships, social responsibility = reflecting God the Holy Spirit in *relationships*)

Created in the Image of God



How the image of God works

When we encounter cultural differences...

- ✧ Heart – what emotional response do we have (frustration, upset, anger)?
- ✧ Mind – based on what cultural belief or truth?
- ✧ Will – what decisions do we make (complain, criticize, avoid)?

Cultural Drama/Sketch

Church music.



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In the group

- What was your emotional response to this drama/sketch?



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Culture is...

- ✧ Everyday way of doing things
- ✧ Ideals shared by those around us
- ✧ Ideals that shape our will,
influence our mind,
and affect our hearts

Mary Douglas

- ✧ British social anthropologist
- ✧ Studied cultures all over the world
- ✧ Found 2 basic dimensions of culture
 1. differences—structure
 2. similarities—community

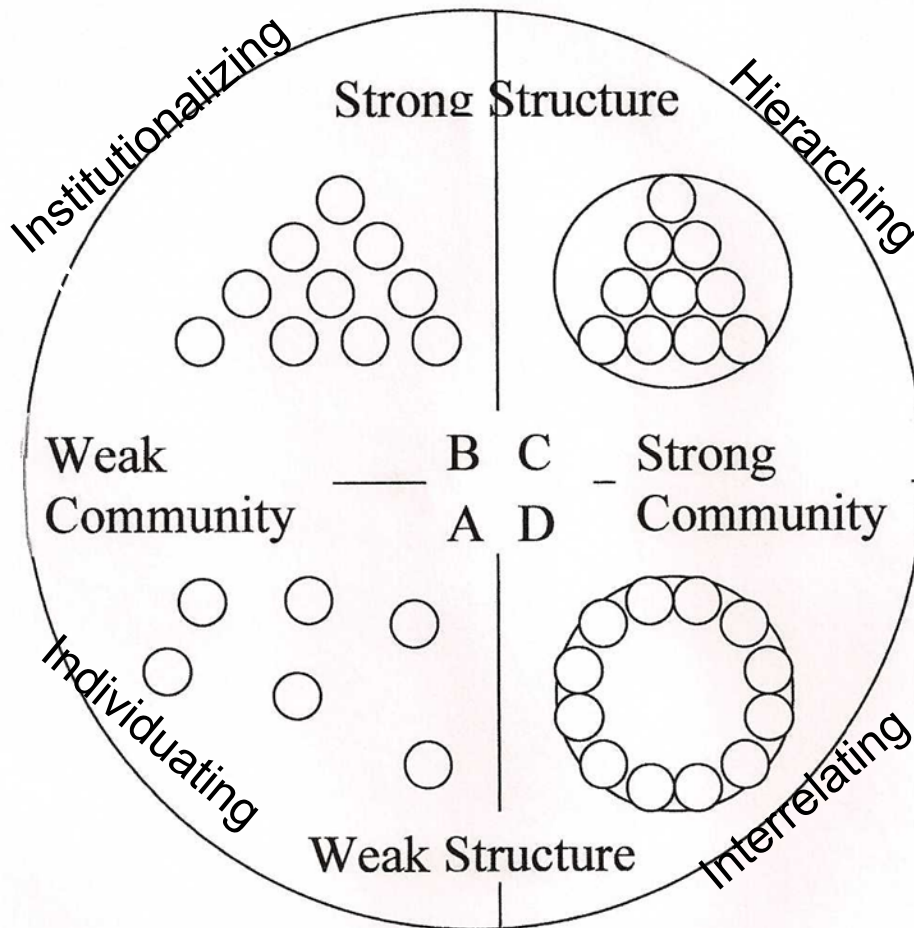
A Model of Culture

- ✧ Differences (Structure and Power)
 - age, gender, ethnicity/race, language, social or work status, color, wealth, history, etc. with individual identity
- ✧ Similarities (Community)
 - cohesiveness through regular social activity and social responsibility with group identity

Four types of cultural activities

- ✧ Individuating
(weak structure, weak community)
- ✧ Institutionalizing
(strong structure, weak community)
- ✧ Hierarching
(strong structure, strong community)
- ✧ Interrelating
(weak structure, strong community)

Structure and Community Theory



Cultural behaviors

- ✧ Individuating behaviors
- ✧ Institutionalizing behaviors
- ✧ Hierarching behaviors
- ✧ Interrelating behaviors

4 Cultural Types

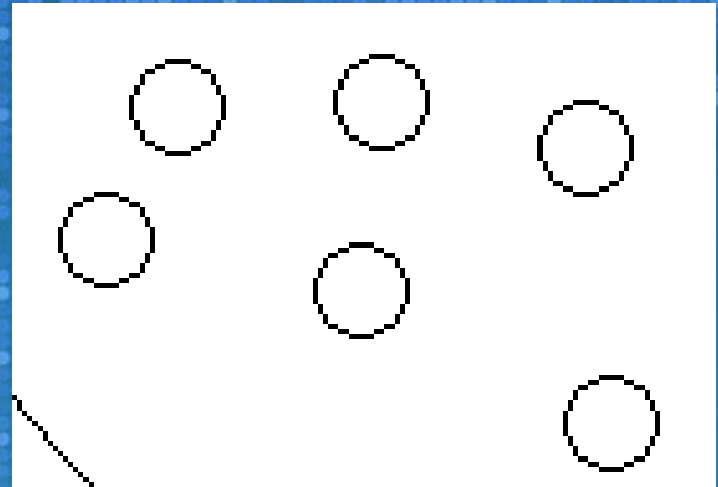
- ✧ Each type has a cultural ideal reinforced by typical behaviors
- ✧ Each type has a different decision-making style (will) based on its own truth (mind), with different social responsibility (heart).
- ✧ Each type has a Culture-based Judging System (CbJS) to maintain its type

Culture-based Judging System

- ✧ Our emotional response to cultural differences, what we say, think, and do.

Individuating Culture

- ✧ Weak structure
- ✧ Weak community
- ✧ Eg. American culture



Individuating Culture & Image of God

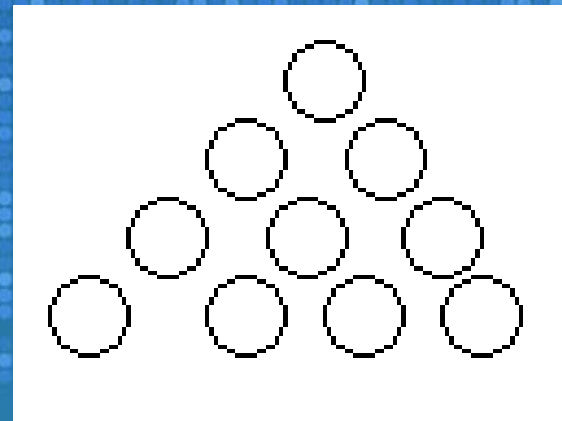
- ✧ Will=Individual choices (control)
- ✧ Mind=Individual or Personalized truth
- ✧ Heart=Individual social responsibility

Individuating CbJS

- Individuating people typically complain about anyone and anything that prevents them from achieving their personal needs, wants, or desires. They justify their actions with detailed explanations.

Institutionalizing

- ✧ Strong structure
- ✧ Weak community
- ✧ Eg. Germany, UK, US institutions, PCUSA and corporations



Institutionalizing Image of God

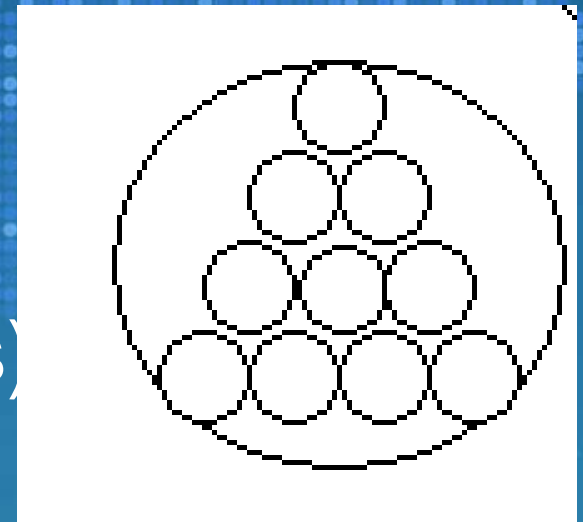
- ✧ Will=Decisions follow system rules and policies interpreted by authority figures
- ✧ Mind=Truth/policies/rules of the system
- ✧ Heart=Individual chooses social responsibility

Institutionalizing CbJS

- Institutionalizing people typically explain that bad things happen because people do not follow the rules and do not normally expect changes to be made.

Hierarching

- ✧ Strong structure
- ✧ Strong community
- ✧ Eg. Asia (Korea, Japan, China, Indonesia, Philippines), Latin and African cultures



Hierarching Image of God

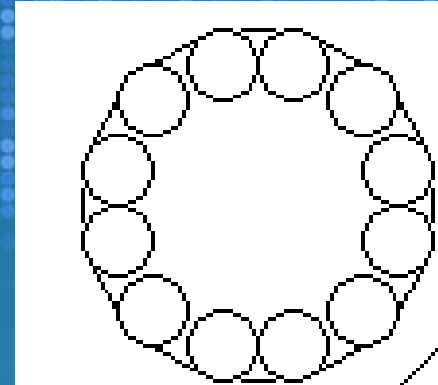
- ✧ Will=Top-down decisions by hierarchy (authority), tradition, upheld by consensus
- ✧ Mind=Truth defined by tradition
- ✧ Heart=Community defines social responsibility

Hierarching CbJS

- Hierarching people seek to gain consensus regarding their complaints about individuals who do not uphold community standards or who deviate from the norm. Community members put pressure on those who do not conform to traditional ways of doing things reinforcing the hierarchy.

Interrelating

- ✧ Weak structure
- ✧ Strong community
- ✧ Eg. Australia, Papua, Central Asia, Latin jungle cultures



Interrelating Image of God

- ✧ Community decisions by consensus
- ✧ Truth defined as equality
- ✧ Community defines social responsibility

Interrelating CbJS

- As community defined equality is the standard of right and wrong, people in Interrelating cultures seek to gain consensus regarding their complaints about unequal structures that prevent the equal distribution of goods.

4 Types of Cultures

- The strengths of each type are actually the weaknesses of the other types. What one type prefers, the other types do not prefer. As such the four types make up a whole and provide a fuller picture of the image of God.

In table groups

Put the appropriate decision-making, truth, and social responsibility in the appropriate quadrant.

Discuss which type best describes you

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Individuating & Image of God

WILL - Individual decision-making

MIND – Individual or personal truth

HEART- Individual social responsibility

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Institutionalizing & Image of God

WILL – System decision-making

MIND – Truth/policies/rules of the system

HEART – Individual social responsibility

Hierarching & Image of God

WILL – Top-down decision-making

MIND – Group traditional truth

HEART – Group social responsibility

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Interrelating & Image of God

WILL – Group consensus decision-making

MIND – Group beliefs/truth

HEART – Group social responsibility

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In table groups

- Discuss how an understanding of your cultural type might help you better understand the previous multicultural challenge you mentioned.

Homework

- Consider how a better understanding of culture might help God's image to be restored in you.