



# Marketplace Moments

## Bibliophoria

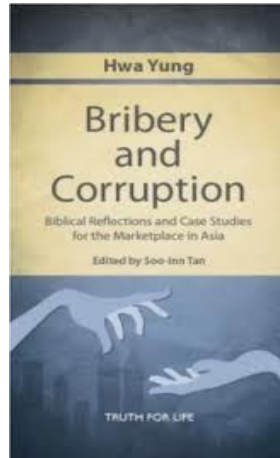
### Bribery and Corruption

Hwa Yung

Bribery and corruption is a fact of life for Christians living and working in the marketplace. This is particularly true for us living in the Asian context, anything from a simple hawker or driving license to obtaining business and projects in developing countries. How do we tread through this mine field and remain faithful to Christ?

There are generally two schools of thought in academic and practice, namely Ethical Relativism and Ethical Imperialism. Ethical Relativism is captured in the phrase, 'when in Rome, do as the Roman does'. Whereas the other is typified by 'If it is right here, it is the right thing to do all over the world'. Many Christian books on Ethics take the latter view.

Things are much more complex in the real world and either extreme is not helpful for the everyday Christian in the marketplace. Bishop Hwa Yung brings together biblically sound theol-



ogy together with the often grey situations of life. He explore the falleness of the human condition and the temptation we face and proposes an Incarnational Model in our approach to social engagement. Rather than a set of rules, he helps us set forth guidelines and demonstrates a humility rarely seen for a godly man of his stature.

There are also very helpful responses written by people who have been in the marketplace and have seen the ugliness of the world and have struggled with many of such issues providing their reflections on the writings of Hwa Yung. A must read for all who strives to glorify God in the marketplace.

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### Highlights

- Bribery and Corruption
- A Call Relationship
- Wu Xia

## Of the Heart and Mind

### A Call to Relationship

A well-to-do young man in Mark 10 came to Jesus and said, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" (v. 17) Here was a man who had "great wealth." He was a super-achiever. He was a young, urban professional. A man of learning, highly-driven, and motivated, who kept all the law since he was a boy. He was really quite good in what he did. Everything he touched turned to gold.

Someone, however, piqued this young urbanite's curiosity. Everyone was talking about Jesus the rabbi. Jesus taught with authority, did mighty deeds and drew large crowds. Something about Jesus drew the young man to him. He wanted to seek him out. The affirmation of another rabbi and wonder worker would no doubt add one more feather to his cap. So used to accomplishments and getting things done, the young man's attitude before Jesus was, "Give me a project, tell me what I need to do. Lay it out for me. I'm used to doing stuff. I'm used to meeting goals and achieving things. So give me the step. What must I do to have eternal life?" Maybe he was secretly expecting Jesus to pat him on his back and commend him, "Young man, you've been doing swell, keep it up!"

In our modern society where worth and values are often measured by performance, I sometimes wonder whether we are very much like the self-made man of Mark 10. We are goal-getters and

achievers. And so when we come to God or to church or the workplace, we might be looking for a code of behaviour and projects to accomplish: What must I do - or not do - and what do I need to be - in order to be good (or spiritual)? At least we can tell how we are faring! That's the way this young man thought about life.

When we come to Christianity, it appears that there are many things we must *do*. What must we do in order to be a good Christian? Among the things in the to-do list is to believe the rights things about God, the Bible and the church. Another thing I need to do is to go to church and be involved in church's programs. I have to follow the set of "rules" in church. I also have to do the right things in life: don't cheat in the marriage, don't steal from the workplace, be honest, be nice to people, don't swear ... and if I can hold everything together, do some worthy things, then I think I am a good Christian. This is what many people might think Christianity is - a program of achievements.

This, however, looks more like a religion. A religion is a commitment to a set of rules and rituals, to be involved in program set



by the establishment and to do good to others. But where is Jesus in all of this hustle and bustle of doing and achieving? It may be to a religion some are comfortable with, but it's not real Christianity. This was the rich young man's problem.

It is not to a religion, but to a relationship that Jesus was calling the young man. Jesus said to him, "You know the commandments." And indeed the young man did! He was a moral man, an exemplary man of the law. But Jesus did not say to him, "Now all you have to do is to continue following the rules." Instead he pointed out one thing, which he lacked. "One thing you lack, go sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." We can debate about Jesus' seemingly impossible command (or even the logic of it): to sell everything and give to the poor? How would one live henceforth? I believe what Jesus was getting at was his relationship with the Lord. Will the young man follow Jesus - even if it meant leaving everything behind? Can he let go of his achievements and self-made glory to follow the Lord Jesus who now beckons him?

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## Eyes in a Darkened Room

### Wu Xia (武侠) - Swordsman

This is a martial arts thriller film directed by Peter Chan and starring Donnie Yen, Takeshi Kaneshiro and Tang Wei. The film is set in 1917 in a post-Qing Dynasty era, at Liu Village on the border of Yunnan, China.

Liu Jinxi (Donnie Yen) and his wife Yu (Tang Wei) are an ordinary couple with two sons, Fangzheng and Xiaotian, living together in Liu Village. One day two bandits enter the village and attempt to rob the general store. Liu Jinxi happens to be in the shop and he fights with the robbers when they turn violent towards the shopkeeper and his family. He kills them during the fight. During an autopsy, detective Xu Baijiu (Takeshi), who is sent to investigate the case, discovers that one of the dead bandits was Yan Dongsheng, who is among the government's ten most wanted fugitives. The local magistrate is pleased, and Liu Jinxi is regarded as a hero by his fellow villagers.

However Xu becomes suspicious because he does not believe that Yan Dongsheng, a fighter,

could be easily killed by Liu, who appears to be a mere paper worker. Based on traces of evidence in the shop and Liu and other witnesses' recollections of the fight, in addition to his extensive knowledge on physiology, Xu is able to deduce that Liu is in fact a highly skilled martial artist, as well as the actual events during the fight after noting signs of brain hemorrhaging due to an injury on Yan Dongsheng's Vagus nerve. From subsequent observation, investigation and tests, and information gathered by his partner, Xu learns of Liu's true identity - Tang Long, the second-in-command of the 72 Demons, a group of vicious and bloodthirsty warriors of Tangut descent, who brutally murdered a butcher's family in Jingzhou ten years ago. Xu immediately returns to the county office to obtain an arrest warrant for Tang Long. (Wiki)

In Xu's pursuit of justice to convict Liu of the murders, he also unveiled Liu as one who is repentant of his past and wanted to start anew. Liu was in a sense a



victim of the Master of the 72 Demons from childhood.

The movie brings forth a key concept of our Christian faith, i.e., the seemingly paradoxical juxtaposition between grace and justice. In the movie, there is the imagery of the death of Tang Long and 'resurrection' of Liu, the payment of 'sins' through the cutting off of Liu's own arm.

Xu, who also learns in the process of the investigation, not only about justice, but also grace and forgiveness and how the two might not be mutually exclusive. The ultimate irony came at a point where in order to prevent evil, he too must break the law which he live by, to kill the Master and save the one whom he persecutes. By doing this, he sacrificed himself and in his last breath, declared the case closed. The movie brings the gospel message to the forefront to reflect on the work of the Cross.

(Timothy Liu)



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## Kingdom Building at the Workplace

### Coming Events

For more information check our web-site.

23 Aug  
8:00 PM

Looking for God in the Wrong  
Places...Finding the Glory of God  
in the Ordinary.

Public Lecture by  
Prof Robert Banks.  
Faith Methodist Church



Jesus did not come to start a new religion or to replace an old one (i.e. Judaism). Jesus is calling us to a relationship. It is a dependency upon the One who is alive today and has radically change our lives, as we place our lives in His hands and follow Him faithfully.

Church activities will continue to develop. Programs will exist. It is hard to resist the thought that our spirituality and value is tied every much to what we do. But that is what we must resist. Resisting the call of Jesus, the young "man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth." He chose to remain where he was and to live on trying to be an achiever -

living to amass, acquire and accomplish. Isn't that what life is without Jesus Christ? It does not mean that being a Christian means we can't have things or quit accomplishing our goals. What it means is - what's the basis of our life? What drives us? What makes us get up in the morning and do what we do each day? Is it to amass, acquire, accomplish ... even in church?

Jesus calls us to walk with Him. It is a call to a real relationship. To live life as He intends for us and to give Him our lives and to depend on Him, in all that we do and say.

Rev Dr. Oh Boon Leong