



Honor, Patronage, Kinship Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture

David A. deSilva

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Contemporary Western readers may find it surprising that honor and shame, patronage and reciprocity, kinship and family, and purity and pollution offer us keys to interpreting the New Testament. But as recent scholarship has proposed and as David deSilva demonstrates, paying attention to these cultural themes opens our eyes and ears to new discoveries and deeper understanding. Through our understanding of honor and shame in the Mediterranean world, we gain new appreciation of the way in which the personhood of early Christians connected with group values. By examining the protocols of patronage and reciprocity, we more firmly grasp the meaning of God's grace--and our response has fresh meaning. In exploring the ethos of kinship and household relations, we enlarge our perspective on the early Christian communities that met in houses and functioned as a new family or "household" of God. And by investigating the notions of purity and pollution along with their associated practices, we come to realize how the ancient "map" of society and the world was revised by the power of the gospel. DeSilva's work will reward you with a deeper appreciation of the New Testament, the gospel and Christian discipleship. More than that, it will also inform your participation in contemporary Christian community.

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