

# An Introduction to the Theology of Robert Morrison

(An abstract)

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Dr. Robert Morrison was a pioneer among the Protestant missionaries who brought the gospel of Christ to China in the early nineteenth century. He arrived in China in September 1807 and had since then served there for more than twenty-five years. In these twenty-five years, he experienced various kinds of hardships and challenges. However, driven by his strong theological convictions, he was able to accomplish the goals of his mission with divine grace and help. His most significant contribution was the translation and publication of the Chinese Bible in 1823, thereby laying a solid foundation for further Bible translation in China.

This article analyzes those crucial theological elements found in Morrison's Chinese and English writings. By investigating Morrison's theological thoughts, we may have a deeper understanding of the nature and intention of his mission. Since Morrison is not a systematic theologian, his writings are mainly Bible expositions and sermons. It is from these writings that the author identifies at least thirteen topics of Morrison's theological concerns, including his teachings on God, the Bible, the creation and the fall of man, sin and death, the Ten Commandments, salvation,

Christ, repentance, church, Christian life, baptism, the Eucharist, and the kingdom of God. We see that Morrison's theological thoughts were governed by his Bible expositions, and were strongly Christocentric. Avoiding rational and emotional arguments, he always brought his audiences' attention to the practical and spiritual sides of Christian faith. Congregationalism was the guiding principle in his ecclesiology.