

A HOMILETICAL STRATEGY FOR EVANGELICAL PREACHING IN  
SOUTH KOREA: BEYOND THE NEW HOMILETIC

BY

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## Declaration

"I, Hyun Woong Park, hereby declare that the thesis, "A Homiletical Strategy for Evangelical Preaching in South Korea: Beyond the New Homiletic", submitted to the University of Pretoria has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university and I declare further that this is my own work in design and execution and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged".

Full name: Hyun Woong Park

Date: 07, July, 2015

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the word "Park" written in a cursive style, enclosed within a large, hand-drawn oval.

Signature:

## Acknowledgement

“Obtaining a degree will be 49% and experiencing God will be 51% of studying abroad.” This precious advice from Professor Keunjoo Kim was a good stake to anchor me through tough times in South Africa.

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“For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.”

## Abstract

This research looks for a strategy for evangelical preaching in South Korea since the nation faces enormous changes in the new millennium. The researcher adopts Osmer's methodology for practical theology.

Chapter two performs Osmer's first stage, being the descriptive-empirical task of determining the current state of the research subject. The researcher examines the current trends in preaching in the Korean church and the influence of the social contexts of South Korea on the changes in homiletics through literature. It is the starting point of this study. Chapter three discusses research that was conducted by interviewing pastors and lay people and listening to their experience of the New Homiletic currently in vogue in the Korean church.

In chapter four as the second task, the interpretative task, the researcher examines the New Homiletic, which was influenced by the New Hermeneutic, especially the theories of Craddock and Lowry. In order to examine these theories concretely, the relationship between the New Hermeneutic and the New Homiletic is examined and how Craddock and Lowry's theories shape their sermons. The New Homiletic is subjected to a critical evaluation, not only as regards the positive contributions but also its limitations.

As the normative task, Chapter five presents the postliberal homiletics theory, focused on Campbell's postliberal homiletic theory, which is in turn based on Lindbeck's and Frei's cultural-linguistics approaches. The Korean church considered Campbell's homiletic as a new way. The researcher investigates postliberal theology, researches the central themes of postliberal homiletics and evaluates the validity of the evangelical church's acceptance of Campbell's homiletic as norm.

Chapter six suggests an alternative to postliberal homiletics based on Kevin Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic model. First of all, the researcher examines the

validity of using the drama analogy in theology, especially in practical theology. Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic model is explained and then applied to homiletics.

As the pragmatic task, Chapter 7 interacts with the preceding chapters and then proceeds to suggest some homiletical route markers for the evangelical Korean church: preaching as drama, looking along the text in biblical interpretation and the preacher's roles as co-dramaturge, assistant director and co-actor.

## Key Terms

1. Practical theology
2. South Korean church
3. Empirical research
4. New Homiletic
5. Postliberal Homiletics
6. Canonical-linguistic approach
7. Drama
8. Evangelicalism
9. Improvisation
10. Kevin Vanhoozer



## Table of contents

Declaration.....	ii
Acknowledgement.....	iii
Abstract.....	vi
Key Terms .....	viii
Table of contents.....	ix
Chapter 1 Introduction .....	1
1. PROBLEM STATEMENT .....	1
2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY .....	6
3. RESEARCH QUESTION.....	6
4. WORKING HYPOTHESIS.....	7
5. METHODOLOGY AND PLAN OF THE STUDY.....	7
6. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY .....	1 1
7. ABBREVIATIONS .....	1 2
Chapter 2 An investigation of the context and preaching in the Korean church.....	1 3
1. VOICES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE KOREAN CHURCH.....	1 4
1.1 The voice of criticism from outside the church of South Korea .....	1 5
1.2 The voice of reflection from inside the church of South Korea.....	2 1
2 INVESTIGATION OF THE KOREAN CHURCH’S PREACHING .....	2 8
2.1 The cultural landscape of preaching in South Korea .....	2 8
3. CONCLUSION .....	3 8
Chapter 3 Empirical research on the Korean church’s preaching.....	4 2
1. INTRODUCTION.....	4 2
2. STANDARDS FOR SELECTING PARTICIPANTS IN THIS RESEARCH.....	4 5
3. SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS AND RESEARCH PERIOD .....	4 8
4. PARTICIPANTS .....	5 0
5. SURVEY QUESTIONS .....	5 3
6. DATA ANALYSIS .....	5 5
6.1 Analysis of the pastors’ interview data .....	5 7
6.2 Analysis of laypeople’s interviews.....	7 7
7. CONCLUSION .....	9 0
Chapter 4 The New Homiletic .....	9 4

1. WHAT IS THE NEW HOMILETIC? .....	9 4
1.1 Features and limitations of the traditional sermon.....	9 5
1.2 Background of the New Homiletic.....	9 6
2. ANALYSIS OF THE NEW HOMILETIC .....	1 0 5
2.1 Key issues of the New Homiletic .....	1 0 6
2.2 An analysis of representatives of the New Homiletic.....	1 1 1
3. CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE NEW HOMILETIC .....	1 2 1
3.1. Contributions of the New Homiletic .....	1 2 1
3.2 Limitations of the New Homiletic .....	1 2 6
4. CONCLUSION .....	1 3 4
Chapter 5 Postliberal homiletics.....	1 3 7
1. PRELIMINARY RESEARCH OF POSTLIBERAL HOMILETICS: POSTLIBERAL THEOLOGY .....	1 3 8
1.1. Three representative scholars of postliberal theology.....	1 4 0
1.2 The central themes of postliberal theology.....	1 4 1
2. THE FEATURES OF CAMPBELL’S HOMILETIC BASED ON POSTLIBERAL THEOLOGY .....	1 4 9
2.1 Preaching as telling about Jesus of Nazareth, the ascriptive subject of the Gospel narrative.....	1 5 0
2.2 Preaching to build up the church.....	1 5 3
3. CRITICAL EVALUATION OF CAMPBELL’S HOMILETIC .....	1 6 3
3.1 Contributions of Campbell’s homiletic .....	1 6 3
3.2 Limitations of Campbell’s homiletic .....	1 6 6
4. Conclusion.....	1 7 0
Chapter 6 Vanhoozer’s theological dramatic theory as a normative task .....	1 7 3
1. UNDERSTANDING THEOLOGY AS DRAMA .....	1 7 3
1.1 Historical consideration of theology as drama .....	1 7 3
1.2 Criticisms of the theatrical analogy .....	1 7 5
1.3 The validity of adapting the theatrical analogy to practical theology....	1 7 7
2. VANHOOZER’S THEOLOGICAL DRAMA.....	1 7 8
2.1 The canonical-linguistic approach .....	1 8 0
2.2 Theology as drama.....	1 8 8
3. APPLICATION OF VANHOOZER’S THEORY TO HOMILETICS.....	1 9 7
3.1 A change of biblical interpretation .....	1 9 9

3.2 A change of the preacher’s role .....	2 0 0
3.3 A change to taking an interest in the context .....	2 0 2
3.4 A change to preaching that relies on the Holy Spirit .....	2 0 3
3.5 A change to practice the identity of the church .....	2 0 5
4. CONCLUSION .....	2 0 6
Chapter 7 Conclusion .....	2 0 9
7.1 FINDINGS OF THIS RESEARCH.....	2 0 9
7.2 REFLECTIVE CONVERSATION AND TALKBACK .....	2 1 9
Works Consulted.....	2 2 1

# Chapter 1 Introduction

## 1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Shortly before the new millennium, South Korean society faced great difficulties during the Asian financial crisis of 1997. As a result the country was forced to look to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for assistance. After this a period of structural reform was suggested to bring about change in Korean society. These changes took place in all areas, such as politics, economy and society. In the political sphere, after the economic crisis, a change of regime took place, with the conservative party being replaced by the progressive party (Sim 2011:134). In the economy, the number of jobs declined, which caused economic polarisation in the name of restructuring (Sim 2011:137). In society, the birth rate declined from 1.7 in 1990, to below 1.5 in 1998 and to 1.09 in 2005 (SY Lee, 2006:111). On the other hand, the suicide, divorce and crime rates rapidly increased after 1997 (KS Eun 2005:99, 104). New values of personalisation, individualisation, sensibility and convenience were emphasised rather than traditional manners and customs (YJ Lee, 2006:i, 18-30). The paradigm of authority was changed. The existing organisations, such as the Government, the press and educational institutions, not only lost trust but were seriously challenged by South Korean society (Won 2001:2, 50-59). The Korean church could not avoid the challenges.

Roh (1998:41) mentioned the necessity of structural reform of the church. Among others, he emphasised the need for change in the traditional ministries, especially the authoritarianism of ministers in a new age (Roh 1998:48-50). The authority of preachers and their preaching faced a new situation (Yoo 2013:51; JC Kim 2013:262). They naturally perceived that the authority of the Church was being challenged. The financial crisis brought many changes to South

Korean society in all areas of life, including the church and the traditional sermon style. All these challenges were similar to the North American situation of the 1960-1970s.<sup>1</sup>

The Korean churches had to establish a new order and create a new sermon paradigm. Books on the New Homiletic were translated into Korean around that time.<sup>2</sup> Unlike traditional homiletics, which is only to teach the lesson of the text in propositional form based on the propositional-cognitive model (Jensen 1980:28; Rose 1997:15) and falls short in its understanding of the reader and the reader's concerns, the New Homiletic emphasised the experience of the audience, based on the experiential-expressive model (Campbell 1997:121; Immink 2004:100; Gibson 2005:478).

The New Homiletic was expected to renew sound pulpit growth in the Korean church. Young homiletics scholars and students were charmed by the New Homiletic with a new sight on sermonic form and the variety of genres in the Bible.<sup>3</sup> Churches welcomed the lively preaching, and the preachers expected that the New Homiletic would bring vitality and change the congregation. Allen's acknowledgement of the New Homiletic's influence may apply to the Korean church:

‘All of us who today stand in the pulpit or in the lectern preparing students to enter the pulpit have derived much of what we offer from conversation with the New Homiletic’ (Allen, OW 2010 in Acknowledgement).

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on the challenge of America in the 1960-1970s, see Chapter 4.1.2.

<sup>2</sup> The books of the New Homileticians that have been translated into Korean are listed in Chapter 4.2.2.

<sup>3</sup> After 1997, the New Homiletic was one of the popular subjects among the Korean homileticians. For example, Unyong Kim studied for his Ph.D. dissertation in 1999: Faith Comes From Hearing: A Critical Evaluation of the Homiletical Paradigm Shift through the Homiletical Theories of Fred B. Craddock, Eugene L. Lowry, and David Buttrick, and its application to the Korean church; Wooje Lee's study for his Ph.D. dissertation in 2003: A Critical Evaluation of the Audience-oriented Preaching Theories of Fred Craddock and Eugene Lowry; Ung Joe Lee's study for the Ph.D. dissertation in 2005: The New Homiletic: The Strategies for the Listener-oriented Communication of the Gospel in the Postmodern Korean Context.

Fifteen years into the new millennium, however, the Korean church has doubts about whether what Allen said is true, namely that 'we should not forget that the movement breathed new life into an ailing pulpit' (Allen, OW 2010:1) because of Campbell and RJ Allen's comment. Campbell (1997:xi) said that during the blooming of the New Homiletic, the mainline churches declined. RJ Allen (2010:79) also said: 'Majority-culture churches in the long-established denominations in North America have been in institutional decline since the beginning of the New Homiletic.' Therefore the Korean church also needs to examine the effect of the New Homiletic just as the American church did with the question: 'Does the New Homiletic bring life to the pulpit in the Korean church?' The Korean church needs to put this question to the congregation to hear their experience of the New Homiletic.<sup>4</sup>

Although no quantitative or qualitative research of the effect of the New Homiletic in the Korean church has been conducted, some comments on the reality of the pulpit in the Korean church have been reported. Choi (2010:77) said that pastors did not concentrate on the gospel, which is the essence of a sermon. The preacher is treated as being without authority.<sup>5</sup> With the authority of preaching lost, the content of the sermons lapsed due to the attempt to please the audience with a TV show (Jeong 2011:40-41). The preference of the individual preacher and his audience determined the message (JC Kim 2013:282).

Despite some criticisms, Seo's comment represents the reality of the Korean church. Seo<sup>6</sup> said the churches in Korea have become like the Presbyterian

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<sup>4</sup> Chapter 3 as qualitative research will listen to pastors and laypeople's experience of the New Homiletic.

<sup>5</sup> [http://qt1000.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?CTS\\_ID=57425](http://qt1000.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?CTS_ID=57425) visited Feb in 2015.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.igoodnews.net/news/articleView.html?idxno=30579> visited Feb in 2015.

church, but sought church growth with the Yoido Full Gospel's cloth of gospelisation.<sup>7</sup>

The trend to pursue church growth is not only apparent in the Korean church, but is a worldwide trend (McGrath 1994:75). So is the indifference to theology. Vanhoozer (2005:xii) cited Wolfe's argument:

'Evangelical churches lack doctrine because they want to attract new members. Mainline churches lack doctrine because they want to hold on to those declining numbers of members they have.'

Evangelicalism is losing its place and faces many criticisms.<sup>8</sup> In Korea, where the evangelical church showed rapid growth in the past, it is criticised for not displaying social responsibility (Son 2014:4). In this situation, what point of view does the evangelical church have for its preaching? Can the New Homiletic point the way for the church's sermons? This research will examine the validity of the New Homiletic for the evangelical church in South Korea.

Another point of discussion of Campbell's homiletic, as an alternative to the New Homiletic, is the progress in the Korean church<sup>9</sup>. Campbell (1997:39) said the New Homiletic is based on the New Hermeneutic, which focuses on soteriology rather than on Christology, and that it defends universal psychology.

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<sup>7</sup> The Presbyterian church is the largest denomination in South Korea. The denomination has a presbyterian governing system, but in South Korea all denominations, including the congregational churches are fundamentally presbyterian. Nevertheless, all churches pursue church growth by following the Yoido Full Gospel Church.

<sup>8</sup> Smith (2006:29) criticized the features of modern evangelicalism, saying the church is too focused on individuals. He said 'Modern Christianity tends to think of the church either as a place where individuals come to find answers to their questions or as one more stop where individuals can try to satisfy their consumerist desires. As such, Christianity becomes intellectualized rather than incarnate, commodified rather than the site of genuine community.

Horton (1991:8) revealed modern American Evangelicalism's distortion, which mixed with pragmatism and consumerism. 'The evangelical establishment has enjoyed worldly success: numbers, press coverage, political power, and material prosperity.'

<sup>9</sup> Regarding the interest of Campbell's homiletics in the Korean church, see the second footnote in Chapter 5.

He emphasises 'preaching Jesus' and 'building up the Church', which is based on the postliberal theology, especially its cultural-linguistic approach.

The researcher, however, still has a question about the theological background of Campbell's homiletic. Can Campbell's homiletic be the alternative for the evangelical Korean church? The research begins with the questions the researcher mentioned above. What is the relationship between theology and homiletics? What is the homiletical point of view of an evangelical church? Postliberal homiletics also has some limits and insufficiencies. It puts the authority of the Bible below that of the church (McGrath 1996b:155), passes lightly over the historicity of the biblical narrative and does not concern itself with the propositional-cognitive aspect of religion (McGrath 1996a:41). In addition, the postliberal theology as background for evangelical preaching faces some difficult problems.<sup>10</sup>

This research will scrutinise Vanhoozer's canonical linguistic approach, comparing it with Campbell's cultural-linguistic approach. Vanhoozer is a reformer as well as a post-conservative who tries to overcome the limitations of evangelicalism. Vanhoozer advocates the canonical-linguistic model, and his book *The Drama of Doctrine* (2005) was written to suggest a canonical-linguistic approach as strategy to recover the authority of the Bible as God's Word.

Vanhoozer' view of theology as drama may be useful in formulating sermons that will be acceptable in contemporary society, because Christianity is dramatic (Vanhoozer 2014:244) and drama includes all genres: narrative, rhetoric, aria, poetry, monological drama (Vanhoozer 2005:273-274). It is suitable for use in the postmodern culture. He is of the opinion that the Bible is the drama of God's speech-act (Vanhoozer 2005:272). He thinks God wants to participate as well as communicate with us in the drama (Vanhoozer 2005:37). He emphasises the performative function of language (Vanhoozer 1998:209).

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<sup>10</sup> Chapter 5 will examine the background of postliberal homiletics and present a critical evaluation of it.



The methodology of Vanhoozer helps a preacher to interpret and understand the Bible and helps the congregations to know how to act in contemporary culture. It shows a balance between what to preach and how to perform and prepares a base for theological preaching. Therefore the position of Vanhoozer will be followed in this research.

The goal of this research is to suggest a strategy for an evangelical sermon in the Korean church based on Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic approach. Therefore this study will follow a new kind of homiletics with the theology of Vanhoozer, his canonical-linguistic approach, the concept of drama and his speech-act theory.

## 2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study has three objectives:

- 1) To reveal the background of the New Homiletic and the Korean church's reality of the New Homiletic, which is in vogue in the Korean church.
- 2) To evaluate the Campbell's homiletic based on Hans Frei's postliberal theology in order to overcome the failings of the New Homiletic.
- 3) To suggest a new homiletical approach based on Kevin Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic approach as an alternative to Campbell's homiletic.

## 3. RESEARCH QUESTION

- 1) The question of the main proposition is:

How can Kevin Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic approach be applied to homiletics for the evangelical church in present-day South Korea?

## 2) Key aspects of the research question

A. Why did the New Homiletic not change the congregation of the Korean churches and bring the vitality that was hoped for?

B. What are the contributions and limitations of the postliberal homiletics, as seen from the cultural-linguistic viewpoint?

C. The reason for the application of the canonical-linguistic model of Vanhoozer to homiletics.

D. The homiletical route markers for the future of preaching in South Korea need to be formulated, based on the insights gained from the previous chapters.

## 4. WORKING HYPOTHESIS

The development of homiletics is deeply related to the comprehension of doctrine. Allen (1993:21) said: 'Preaching is preeminently a theological act'.

The cognitive-propositional approach, the experiential-expressive approach and the cultural-linguistic approach to doctrine have a perfect symmetry with traditional homiletics, the New Homiletic and postliberal homiletics.

This dissertation foresees that Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic approach, which appears to cope with the problems of the cultural-linguistic approach, will become the foundation of the evangelical preaching in South Korea.

## 5. METHODOLOGY AND PLAN OF THE STUDY

Until 1950 practical theology was regarded as the discipline that applies doctrine to the pastoral situations (Miller-McLemore 2012:1). Systematic and historical theology was only concerned with theory, not with practice. Miller-

McLemore (2012:4) said this point of view could distort theology and lead the people of faith outside the academy to think that they do not need to consider theology and practice. This view caused indifference towards public life.

Osmer (2008: ix, x), however, takes a stance opposite to this view. Practical theology in the present does not only deal with the affairs of ministers in the church and the life of the community, but also brings an academic contribution to theology through a variety of research programmes as well as public matters beyond the church. It is concerned with all spheres of life. This characteristic opens up the possibility of conversation between practical theology and other disciplines. In this aspect, interdisciplinary studies are essential in practical theology:

‘Practical theology as an academic field has its own distinctive research program. It makes its own constructive contribution to the theological enterprise as a whole and to the ongoing conversation of humankind in its quest for intelligibility. It carries out four mutually related intellectual operations: the descriptive-empirical, interpretive, normative, and pragmatic. This distinguishes practical theology from other forms of theology and from the social sciences, even as it overlaps these fields in certain ways.’ (Osmer 2008:240)

Osmer suggests his methodology for practical theology as consisting of four tasks.

The first is the descriptive-empirical task. This stage asks the question: ‘What is going on?’ (Osmer 2008:4). It gathers all episodes, patterns and dynamics that occur in particular situations. But it is not simply a collecting of information. Osmer (2008:28) calls it ‘priestly listening’ because this stage is based on ‘a spirituality of presence’.<sup>11</sup>

The second is the interpretive task. This stage asks: ‘Why is this going on?’ It looks for the reason why this incident is taking place. In other words, this is the stage of analysis of the information that has been gathered through the

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<sup>11</sup> McClure (2012:283) calls it congregational study.

descriptive-empirical task (Osmer 2008:4). This stage brings in other disciplines to understand and explain the patterns and dynamics. Osmer (2008:29) said: 'The interpretive task is a form of wise judgment, grounded in a spirituality of sagely wisdom: guiding others in how to live within God's royal rule.'

The third is the normative task. It asks the question 'What ought to be going on?' Osmer (2008:136) call this stage a spirituality of prophetic discernment. This stage focuses on using theological concepts to interpret the particular event, situation and contexts (Osmer 2008:4, 8). There are three approaches to normativity (Osmer 2008:161). The first is theological interpretation. It utilises the theological concepts, which originate in a theory of divine and human action, to interpret the situations. The second is ethical reflection, which utilises the ethical norm and rule, to coach the behaviour toward moral ends. The third is good practice. To explore a good practical model in the past and present is to facilitate the opening of a new understanding as opposed to traditional understanding and suggest a good practical model (Osmer 2008:152).

The fourth is the pragmatic task. This stage asks the question: 'How might we respond?' This stage focuses on the establishment of strategies for our actions, for how we should respond (Osmer 2008:10). Osmer (2008:175) called it 'servant leadership'.

The four tasks have the characteristic of interaction. Each task has an independent role, but at the same time they all need each other. Osmer (2008:10) uses the term 'interpenetration.' He said: 'it is helpful to think of practical theological interpretation as more like a spiral than a circle' (Osmer 2008:1). This idea is similar to Heitink's relationship between praxis and theory: 'Theory is in constant need of verification of falsification through praxis, while praxis must constantly be transcended by theory.' (Heitink 1999:152).

On the basis of Osmer's methodology mentioned above, more detailed methodological procedures will be followed for the purpose of finding a solution to the stated research problem.

In this research, chapter one defines the introductory matters: theme and statement of problem, purpose of study, research questions, hypothesis, structure and delimitation.

Chapter two performs Osmer's first stage (the descriptive-empirical task); it determines what is going on. The researcher examines the reality of the Korean church and the influence of the social contexts of South Korea on the changes in homiletics through literature. It will be the starting point of this study.

Chapter three performs empirical research for priestly listening about preaching through pastors and laypeople, listening to their experience of the New Homiletic in vogue in the Korean church and attempting to understand it.

In chapter four the researcher examines the New Homiletic, which was influenced by the New Hermeneutic, especially the theories of Craddock and Lowry. In order to examine these theories concretely, the relationship between the New Hermeneutic and the New Homiletic will be examined and how Craddock and Lowry's theories shape their sermons. The New Homiletic will be subjected to a critical evaluation, not only as regards the positive contributions but also its limitations.

Chapter five presents the postliberal homiletics theory, focused on Campbell's postliberal homiletics theory, which is in turn based on Lindbeck's and Frei's cultural-linguistics approaches. The researcher investigates postliberal theology as the basis of the postliberal homiletics and researches the central themes of postliberal theology. Not only of the positive contributions, but also the limitations of postliberal homiletics will be critically evaluated.

Chapter six suggests an alternative way to postliberal homiletics based on Kevin Vanhoozer's canonical linguistic model. First of all, the researcher will examine the validity of using the drama analogy in theology, especially in practical theology. Vanhoozer's canonical linguistic model will be explained and then applied to homiletics.

In chapter seven the researcher will unfold what he found in each chapter through two techniques: review and summary. He will suggest homiletical route markers for the evangelical Korean church. Finally he will present a reflective conversation and ‘talkback’ for the future.

## 6. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This dissertation prioritises hermeneutics as the background for the study of the New Homiletic and postliberal homiletics. Representative scholars of each school will be investigated.

As this dissertation aims to find a homiletical strategy for the evangelical church in South Korea, the researcher will examine the relationship between homiletics and theology as its background.

For the evangelical homiletics, the post-conservative Kevin Vanhoozer’s theory will be applied to homiletics. This research will not examine his whole extensive theology; it will focus on Vanhoozer’s canonical-linguistic model against Campbell’s homiletic, which is related to the cultural-linguistic model.

This scope of the study is limited to the Protestant church in South Korea. It is done from the researcher’s own theological standpoint, which is the Korean evangelical theological perspective. This perspective might need to be explained. South Korea has many denominations. Nevertheless most call themselves evangelical churches. GS Han, JJ Han, and AE Kim (2009:34) said ‘95% of Protestants in Korea are evangelical in their belief’. There are a number of different opinions about evangelicalism, and these do not correspond to denominations, individuals and organisations. For this reason, the view of the research of evangelicalism follows McGrath. He suggests six common features of evangelicalism (McGrath 1994:49-79): the supreme authority of Scripture, the majesty of Jesus Christ, the lordship of the Holy Spirit, the need for personal

conversion, the priority of evangelism and the importance of the Christian Community.

As a footnote, the Korean church began when Bibles arrived from China; this occurred before any missionaries came to Korea. YK Park (2004:58) said 'Korea is the first nation in the world in which churches were built through receiving Bibles translated into their own language. In its early years the Korean converts risked their lives to distribute the Bible and to teach from the Bible.' Under these conditions, the Korean church realised that the Bible is God's word and put emphasis on the authority of the Bible above everything else.

## 7. ABBREVIATIONS

The Korean church: The South Korean protestant church.

KACP: The Korean National Association of Christian Pastors.

MHS: Title of journal 'Mokhoe wa sinhak'. Literally: Ministers and theology.

KOSIS: Korean Statistical information service.

WCC: World Council of Churches.

## **Chapter 2 An investigation of the context and preaching in the Korean church**

Osmer (2008:33-35) said the descriptive-empirical task, i.e. the first step of the four tasks of practical theological interpretation, is based on 'a spirituality of presence' and needs priestly listening. Priestly listening differs from other ways of listening because it is broader than simply gathering information about others' lives (Osmer 2008:33). The leader of a church community should carefully attend to people in their particular situation in the presence of God (Osmer 2008:28). For this reason, Osmer (2008:34-35) required the leader to focus on dialogue with others rather than on his/her thinking, and he/she should attend to what is going on in their lives rather than jumping to conclusions or making snap decisions about others.

In this chapter his methodology for practical theology is followed by attending<sup>12</sup> with empathy to the particular situation faced by the Korean church. The researcher will listen carefully to the variety of voices about the Korean church and classify them in three tones of voice. The first tone of voice reflects the opinions on the Korean church as expressed by insiders and outsiders. The second is the tone of the actual conditions of its sermons. The third tone reflects the pastors and laymembers of the Korean church. For a detailed observation, this chapter will carefully listen to the first and second voices. The third voice will be listened to attentively through personal contact and will be reported in the descriptive-empirical part of this research in chapter 3.

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<sup>12</sup> Osmer (2008:34) defines it as 'relating to others with openness, attentiveness, and prayerfulness'



## 1. VOICES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE KOREAN CHURCH

The University of Rochester and Zogby International conducted a global poll of the religious beliefs, practices and priorities of 11 religious groups in seven countries from January 2003 through March 2003. The surveys made several observations. One is that 'the South Korean Christians polled as the most religious'.<sup>13</sup> The religious enthusiasm of Koreans (including Christians) increases every year; the population of religious men was 43.8% in 1984, increasing sharply to 52.8% in 1998 and 57% in 2004. Although the 2012 survey shows a lull in the increase at 55.1%, the religious zeal of Koreans is very high (KACP<sup>14</sup> 2013:20).

From the two surveys it could be assumed that the population of Korean Christians would increase every year. But the result is quite the opposite; the number of Korean Christians is on a downward trend. The 2005 national census of Korea shows the percentage of Korean Christians as 34.5%. As the percentage of Christians in Korea was 37.7% in 1985 and 38.8% in 1995,<sup>15</sup> the 2005 survey was a big shock to the Korean church, which previously had experienced rapid growth.

There is also significant opposition to the Korean church. It has become the focus of criticism, and the voices of criticism are getting louder year by year. An anti-Christianity movement has been founded and is continuously spreading in South Korean society.<sup>16</sup> One of the stabs at the church is the comparison of

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2003/oct/16/20031016-110331-7476r/#ixzz2t0Nw4wBZ>. <http://www.rochester.edu/news/show.php?id=23> visited Jan in 2014.

<sup>14</sup> The full name of KACP is 'The Korean National Association of Christian Pastors', which pursues the unity of the Korean church, renewal of the ministries and the church and their diakonia for Korean society.

<sup>15</sup> [http://world.kbs.co.kr/english/korea/korea\\_aboutreligion.htm](http://world.kbs.co.kr/english/korea/korea_aboutreligion.htm). These statistics are of men who acknowledge that they are religious. Visited Jan in 2014.

<sup>16</sup> For the movement, go to [www.antichrist.or.kr](http://www.antichrist.or.kr) or [www.antiyesu.net](http://www.antiyesu.net)

Christianity to a dog. In Korean, Christ is 'Kidok', so they changed the first letters 'Ki' to 'Gae' (dog) and call Christianity 'Gae dok kyo', which means Christianity is like a dog that is making a mess, or a Christian is like a dog. It is severe criticism. For the correct diagnosis of the Korean church, opinions from outside the church will first be studied. Most of the opinions are negative to start with.

## 1.1 The voice of criticism from outside the church of South Korea

Anti-Christians say this about the Korean Christian.

'They are filling their bellies under name of religion, They are persons who are armed with an aggressive mission that has no consideration for other cultures. Men who pray for the collapse of a Buddhist temple and draw a cross on the statue of a Buddha have no common sense. They have lost their brains, persons who do not accept people with views different from their own. A smooth talker is a cancer or a bad apple.' (JH Jeong 2010:50)

This severe criticism of the Korean church will be considered carefully in order to provide some understanding of the Korean church.

### 1.1.1 The Korean church followed the way of power

The Korean church is accused of standing on the side of men in power rather than siding with the weak. In 2008, the Korean church helped an elder of a church to become president of the nation. President Lee filled important posts in the government with many Christians, and the Korean church expected new revival and growth. But the Christians who held major posts in government acted immorally and committed corruption. Their behaviour was exposed and it caused ill feelings in the mind of the nation, because the immorality was worse than under any previous administration (YD Park, 2013a:263).

There is serious disappointment with the Korean church because of its silence and uncritical attitude toward the Yong-san accident,<sup>17</sup> the four-river refurbishment project<sup>18</sup> and the gap between rich and poor. Christianity stands on the side of government and the rich, rather than on the side of the poor and the powerless (EK Kim 2013:185).

### 1.1.2 The Korean church is rude

One of the criticisms of the Korean church is its rudeness. Under the guise of evangelism it has acted rudely and fanatically, has been armed with an aggressive mission and has been harshly criticised (JH Kim 2012:19).

A few years ago, the young men of a mission group entered a Buddhist temple, Bongunsa, in Gangnam, Seoul. They praised as they stepped on the temple grounds and prayed in loud voices for the collapse of the temple. They called the action a spiritual battle. This incident became known through the media, raised an uproar and was the talk of the town (YD Park 2013a:255). The survey of subway users in 2012 by Seoul Metro shows similar results as the above-mentioned incident. The most unpleasant experience in the subway was religious evangelism (YD Park 2013a:255).

The nation's critical view of the Korean church was revealed in the abduction cases in 2007 in Afghanistan<sup>19</sup> (KK Shin 2013:371) and again in 2014 when a Muslim terrorist organisation attacked a Korean tour bus with Jinchun Junang church members who were going to Egypt on a pilgrimage. One of the blogs

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<sup>17</sup> 'Five dispossessed people and one policeman were killed in the accident while the government tore down a unlicensed building with a brutal crackdown in a redevelopment district in 2009.'

<sup>18</sup> President Lee designed this project, but the Buddhist community was opposed to it because the project would lead to the destruction of the ecosystem.

<sup>19</sup> 'Twenty-three South Koreans were abducted by the Taliban while doing missionary work in Afghanistan and two of them were killed in 2007.'

explained why the nation gave the victims a cold shoulder, with no consolation nor comforting words:

‘It exhibits a cold public sentiment and scathing criticism from the nation against the Korean church of being rude and is filled with themselves. They also do not communicate with others’<sup>20</sup>

### 1.1.3 The Korean church is in conflict and is fighting

An interesting survey was done in 2005 among non-believers to hear their angle on free association. In the question what image they associated with the Korean church, the top answer was a cross (MHS 2011:298).

It is not so difficult to see the cross in South Korea. All churches have a cross in the form of a red neon light at the top of the church. Red neon lights are normally used in South Korea for the cross or for bars. Recently, too many lighted red neon crosses have been branded as ‘milieu pollution’. Churches have been asked to pull down the sharp-pointed cross from the roof of the church for safety reasons and because of the wind.

A strange phenomenon can be seen in a new development district where one building accommodates four churches. The first floor is the Presbyterian church, the second floor the Methodist church, the third floor the Holiness church and the basement the Baptist church (KE Shin 2013:234). In this situation the churches are fighting and competing. The first goal of the churches is survival and to build their chapel. Growth-oriented churches have a deep interest in swelling their population of believers rather than to build the universal Kingdom of God. Sometimes a church lures a believer who attends another church into their church with an inducement strategy and will do anything necessary to get more members (KE Shin 2013:234). It is very common these days to see such cut-throat competitive evangelism, stealing sheep and church quarrels (KE Shin 2013:236).

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<sup>20</sup> <http://tsori.net/m/post/view/id/5694> Visited Jan in 2014.

The survey in 2004 asked about conflict levels in the Korean church. Sixty-seven percent of the respondents answered the question as ‘very serious’ (MHS 2011:188). In the survey of 2003, respondents to the question: ‘Have you switched churches and why have you switched churches?’ gave as their first reason a change of individual circumstances, for example moving or marriage. The second reason was conflict with the pastor and disappointment in the pastor (MHS 2011:220). In 2013 the conflict situation of pastors was revealed in the WCC, which was held in Pusan. Many pastors and congregations opposed the conference and congregated in front of the gate as the council was proceeding in the venue.

#### 1.1.4 The Korean church: the fallen pastor’s reputation

The Korean church is no longer trusted by non-Christians. One of the main reasons is related to pastors. They are at the main targets of the anti-Christianity campaign.

Highlights are ministers’ abuse of power and financial scandals in the church; vulgar, sexual, immoral conduct; corrupted ethical consciousness; nepotism by passing on his/her position as senior pastor to his son/daughter are some examples. These things show his/her duplicity as pastor.

Rev C., who is well known as the pastor of the biggest church in the world, was sentenced to a three-year term in prison suspended for five years for embezzlement on 20 February 2014. He ordered his church to buy his son’s stocks for more than twice their market value. In this process he caused great damage to the church and evaded payment of taxes.<sup>21</sup>

In 2003, there was the problem of plagiarism in the doctor’s thesis of Rev Oh, who was recognised as a leader of the next generation of the Korean church.

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<sup>21</sup> <http://news.donga.com/Main/3/all/20140221/61070598/1> Visited Feb in 2014.

The case caused quite a stir throughout the Korean church as well as in South Korean society.

In 2011 the case of sexual abuse committed by Rev J, who was well known as a famous preacher and best-selling writer among young people, had a large impact on the Korean church and society (JW Park 2012:10-22).

Park (2013a:141) commented that 'while revealing the criminal activities of pastors who are involved in corruption in the media, they become suspected as a group which has a high probability of easily falling into crime.'

#### 1.1.5 The Korean church is locked in the chapel

In a survey in 2010 asking about people's confidence in the Korean church, the respondents answered 17.6% trust, 33.8% neutral, 48.4% no trust. The question which religion you do trust was answered as the Roman Catholic Church (first with 41.4%), Buddhism (second with 33.5%) and Protestant Christianity (last with 20.0%) (KS Park 2012:15-16).

In another survey among non-Christians about the honesty of the Korean church in 2008 by Global Research, 22.7% of the respondents answered 'is honest' and 71.4% 'is not honest' (MHS 2011:166).

JH Kim (2012:143-154) thought about the reason for these phenomena: Christianity, and Protestant churches in particular, is a verbal religion with preaching at the centre of its religious life. But the people have lost trust in religion because religion has been unfaithful in preaching the Word of God. Christianity has become an untruthful verbal religion.

The disappointment with the Korean church appears in the words of a poet. 'I unconditionally press 'unfollow' when I see the term 'Bible' or 'God' in Twitter or FaceBook. How long have they deceived with these terms?' (EK Kim 2013:184).

The rejection of and antipathy toward the Korean church come from the failure to see all of life as sacred<sup>22</sup>. In other words, their lives are separated from the chapel, and once outside the chapel their passion for God stays in the chapel. They are eager to serve God during the services every day at dawn to an all-night service on Friday. They attend all Bible studies, including the discipleship training. But it is difficult to find ‘the aroma of Christ’ in their lives (NIV, 2 Corinthians 2:15)<sup>23</sup>.

A restaurant near the Samil church has put this notice on the window: ‘Church groups not welcome.’ The reason is that church members order just one meal and hold a cell meeting in the restaurant with guitar play and sing songs that last for a long time. Latecomers to the meeting do not even order anything (EK Kim 2013:184).

The Korean church tends to think of its religious worship in the chapel as the only piety needed. The influence of their piety in real life is insignificant and very slight. Joo (2013:419) sees this as the reason why the Korean church is called ‘Gae dok kyo’ (explained earlier).

Another view of the Korean church is that it does not give direction in times of crisis on where we go, nor does it give hope to endure. YS Choi (2013:83) indicated that in these days of rapid and revolutionary change the Korean church refuses to change. Instead, it remains in its old familiar ways, which are not the way of the Bible.

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<sup>22</sup> For more information, see Lee, HJ 2011. *한국교회 패러다임을 바꿔야 산다* [The Korean church can live when they change the paradigm]. Seoul:New Wave Plus.

<sup>23</sup> ‘For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing’

### 1.1.6 The Korean church is increasingly becoming bankrupt

On the first of July 2013, one church building was put up for sale at an auction with the highest bids ever at 526 hundred million Won<sup>24</sup>, and this news became the talk of the town. Recently, many church buildings have been put on sale with price tags geared for quick sales. A new website has even appeared that professionally sells church buildings. In the financial sector, the total amount of loans for the construction of church buildings is estimated at nearly 9 trillion Won, three times the operating funds of the entire Korean church for one year. The offerings go toward payment of the debt (YD Park 2013a:57). In July of 2013, the magazine *Sisa In Live* commented that 'money is ruling the church' (YD Park 2013a:57). YD Park (2013a:57) warned that in future there would be more bankruptcy sales of churches. The buildings would be changed into bars or mosques, like churches in Europe.

## 1.2 The voice of reflection from inside the church of South Korea

The current trends in the Korean churches reflect their misfortune. For example, the declining trend of its membership; the young generation of 20 to 40 years of age is leaving the church, anti-Christianism increases continuously, heresies seriously threaten the church (KACP 2013:12). There are a lot of self-reflective voices inside the church, which must be listened to closely in order to know a little more about the Korean church's situation.

### 1.2.1 Misapprehension of justification and soteriology

SY Kim (2013:19) said the problem of the Korean church was related to misapprehension and the distortion of justification and soteriology. He said that similarly to Buddhism, Korean Christians understand the salvation of God as meant for the next life where the soul will live.

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<sup>24</sup> This converts to approximately \$ 48 million.



The ministers of the Korean church do not see the possibility of losing your salvation, neither that saints must 'continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling' (NIV, Philippians 2:12). Instead they emphasise the certainty of salvation through the doctrine of perseverance (SY Kim 2013:20). They only concentrate on justification through grace and faith, and believe that once salvation is obtained it will be guaranteed throughout our lives (SY Kim 2013:21). It is true that salvation is obtained through faith in Christ (justification), but the Korean church understands salvation as an event rather than a relationship and a journey with Christ (sanctification).

Kwun (2013:80) indicated another error of the Korean church: it encourages members to devote themselves to the work inside the church, such as prayer and evangelism, in order to find consolation for their uncomfortable conscience.

The Korean church is seen to have the lowest levels of ethical consciousness. It is in its nature to disregard ethics. Kwun (2013:78) called this phenomenon the disastrous failure of the Korean church's ethics. He sees it as the reason for the Korean church being called 'Gae dok kyo'.

One result of their misunderstanding of theology is their loss of influence in the world. It is very rare that their faith's ardour is directed at South Korean society, or for Christians to take a leading position in areas of economics, society, culture and politics. Therefore Christians do not impact on their areas of life. The basic reason is the Christian's low views of culture and ethics (SY Kim 2013:22).

The fundamental reason for their aggressive mission and evangelism is their deviation from the original. They understand the mission of Jesus as to make converts of non-Christians and to attend church rather than to serve God in every sphere. They limit the territory in which Christians have to practise God's will. They are not interested in and neglect the areas of liberation, care for the alienated, justice in society, the peace movement, social and political participation, the environmental movement, etc. (SY Kim 2013:27). It has not

guided saints to obey and respond to a missionary calling in society (SY Kim 2013:19-20).

A more serious problem is that the Korean church is not sensitive to its problems. It is spiritually complacent (Kwun 2013:79). They understand Christian ethics as only a few do's and don't's. For example: attend Sunday service, make an offering, do evangelism, do not drink alcohol or smoke, do not worship an idol, etc. It is the sum of what they do, and they are satisfied with their behaviour (SY Kim 2013:24).

### 1.2.2 A wrong sense of ecclesiology and a mistaken paradigm of the supreme principle of church growth

Misconceptions about the church have produced many problems in the Korean church. For example, ministers have a vision of a megachurch. In a 2002 survey that asked the wives of the ministers which part was the most difficult for their husbands in the church, 41.5% chose church growth, and only 4.6% preaching (MHS 2011:76).

The elders want their ministers to increase the membership of the church, with the secular idea that the church must also prosper like a flourishing business. Under great pressure from the elders, pastors have suffered from an obsession with the growth of the church (YD Park 2013a:65). They often choose reconstruction of the church building for rapid growth as the focus of the church members' attention. Growth is widely known as a fundamental part of the church strategy and necessary for the survival of the pastors (YD Park 2013a:64).

KE Shin (2013:229) explained this phenomenon with the megachurch theory. He defined the megachurch as a church with an attendance of over 2000 members per week. He suggested two characteristics of a megachurch. The first is an obsession with unlimited growth. In the view of the megachurch, if it cannot grow it means a decline (KE Shin 2013:233). The amount of growth

never satisfies; all church members, including pastors, are mobilised to promote growth. The church is not driven by the Holy Spirit, but by growth; if there is an activity that does not promote growth, it avoids that activity. It's like a business in the capitalist system. The second characteristic of the megachurch is that only about 1% of churches are megachurches, while the other 99% aim to become megachurches (KE Shin 2013:229).

In the Korean church, the pastors who have formed megachurches are recognised as pastors who are much more experienced in the grace and power of God. Pastors whose churches do not grow are branded as incompetent and failures (YD Park 2013a:38).

Yonggi Cho, who started a tent church with 5 people and built a megachurch with 780 000 members within 50 years, said that 'the church must bear many fruits. Do not believe that the small church is beautiful, because it is a poor excuse of failed ministry. A big church is beautiful in Jesus' eyes.' (YD Park 2013a:38, Kim 2012:144).

The Korean church has made development to keep in step with the economic development and modernisation of South Korea a top priority (YD Park 2013a:37). The greatest preoccupation of ministers is to find a novel strategy for church growth and the know-how to gather members. They attend conferences on this theme and try to apply their learning. But most pastors do not achieve what they desire, and again look around for the key (YD Park 2013a:69).

This distortion of the church can be found in the development districts. In the early days of a new town, small churches spring up everywhere. There are quarrels over members. But after some time, the megachurch comes along with a large amount of capital. The small churches do not last long and disappear one by one (YS Choi 2013:73-76). To non-Christians, the Korean churches are seen as not cooperating with each other and fighting among themselves (Kwan 2013:100)

Misunderstanding of the ecclesiology brings along other issues. The pastor who has accomplished the task of growing a big church wants to pass the church to his/her children and to enjoy the fruits of their labours. That desire leads to saving money illegally, abuse of power and sexual violence (KE Shin 2013:229).

The Holy Spirit has become an instrument for church growth. Park (2013b:106) used the word 'holy shyness' to express the face of the Holy Spirit, because all the work and various aspects of the Holy Spirit show the character of Christ. However, the Korean church's movement by the Holy Spirit does not display Christ, and the movement has lost its focus (YD Park 2013b:107). Some pastors say the church needs a movement by the Holy Spirit, since with preaching alone our ministry cannot achieve success nowadays. They try to find a breakthrough, a movement by the Holy Spirit, to overcome their weak preaching (YD Park 2013b:114). They seek miracles or supernatural power rather than focusing on Christ or their relationship with God and his word (YD Park 2013b:111).

### 1.2.3 Anti-intellectualism in the church

Anti-intellectualism was very useful for growth in the Korean church. It ignored constructive criticism and urged its members to work intensely in the church, achieving surprising and even unprecedented successes. However, it is criticised from outside the church for having no common sense. Kang (2013:44) pointed to one of the reasons why the church lost people's confidence: it is because of 'the behaviors, which defied common sense'. Kang (2013:45) wrote: 'The Korean Christians were trained that when they enter the church, they have to remove their head before going into the church and to place it outside the church'. The anti-intellectualism that is rampant in the church comes from the pastors. They learned to use their intelligence and rationality outside the church, but to use 'only faith' without intelligence and rationality inside the church. The misunderstanding of intelligence made the church community what it is today, especially the churches that adopted Evangelicalism that was taught in this way

(Kang 2013:45). This trend makes Christianity a religion that appears strange to society.

Anti-intellectualism influenced Bible interpretation. The church interpreted the Biblical text literally and primitively. As an outcome of this tendency, churches step into the world with prayer as in a spiritual battle, and the 'generational curses' theory of Yoonho Lee appeared, which is the direct opposite of God's love and the forgiveness of Jesus Christ (SY Kim 2013:31).

#### 1.2.4 The wrong direction of ministers

Many scholars find that the main reason for the Korean church's issues is the mistaken understanding of the church by the pastors. A seminary professor assessed this behaviour as follows:

'There are pastors in the center of verbal attacks and condemnation. It is not an exaggeration to say that the condemnation of the Korean church is really blamed on the pastors. In the Korean church it is on every body's lips that the pastors are a real pain in the neck and the church is a fatal obstacle.'  
(Jeong 2012:7).

Jeong (2010:50) indicated and bemoaned the cause of the Korean church's problem as the pastors who are the leaders of the church. He pointed to a few of the shameful actions of pastors (Jeong 2010:49-78). First, they did not teach the essence of faith nor did they show it in their lives. Second, they taught a distorted faith. Third, they acted as dictators in the church. Fourth, they were not the light and the salt in and outside the church. Fifth, they did not follow reformed teaching even though they said they were descended from reformers.

HK Kim (2013:250) also criticised pastors, saying that one of the problems of the Korean church is the dictatorship of the senior pastor. They have a power close to that of the Pope and pretend to be a 'Jesus'. Religious passion and brilliant sermons, spiritual charisma and powerful leadership are instruments to reinforce the power of the senior pastor. He said there is no end to the problems

around these ministers and described this phenomenon as Sacerdotalism (HK Kim 2013:251).

DH Park (2013:153) insisted that Mammon worship was at the root of the problems and that the first step toward renewal of the Korean church was to get rid of this. He indicated the reasons for it: a false interpretation of the Bible, which has distorted the original meaning of the text; the prosperity gospel, in which God is said to want Christians to become very rich (DH Park 2013:157-165), and lastly a distorted triumphalism in which we can have victory over secular society by faith because Jesus Christ had victory over death.

Other problems with the church arise from the number of seminaries, each overflowing with pastoral candidates and the issue of over-ordination. YD Park (2013a:253) mentioned that there are 80 000 churches in South Korea, while there are only 20 000 convenience stores. YD Park (2013a:123) noted that in the course of history, people who wanted to become clergy increased when the church was corrupt. Unfortunately, in the Korean church this phenomenon is repeating itself.

A futurologist, YS Choi (2013:72), considered different perspectives of the problem. He explained that our parents' generations respected and trusted ministers. But as the consciousness and educational level of church members increased, their expectations of ministers also increased. With the development of internet technology, the higher expectation is especially focused on preaching, spirituality and the personality of the pastor.

YD Park (2013a:75-76) indicated yet another problem and risks for a pastor. It is linked to his/her experience of failure in the ministry, which could return to the listeners as a negative message. He saw that the pastors are exhausted by ministry failure and have lost faith and hope in the church because of the unchanged reality of the ministry. They are like the soldier who has lost his/her fighting spirit; they are sometimes depressed, and their message is then changed by their sense of defeat. The pastor vents his/her wrath and rebukes

members with an aggressive attitude. The message is filled with blame and jealousy toward the church at large, including the megachurches.

## 2 INVESTIGATION OF THE KOREAN CHURCH'S PREACHING

According to the criticism from outside and inside the Korean church, the core problem lies mainly with the pastors and their preaching, with their influence especially through their messages. Cilliers (2004:19) said, 'Preaching is a display window' and 'a kind of barometer' to show the condition of church's health; 'as the preaching, so the church; as the church, so the preaching'. Besides that, a sermon is also a mirror of society, with the spirit of the times in the message (SK Jeong 1986:19).

Therefore the study of the Korean church's preaching is the study of the Korean church. Section 2 will carefully listen to the voices about the Korean church's preaching.

### 2.1 The cultural landscape of preaching in South Korea

#### 2.1.1 The Korean preacher is working under a heavy schedule

The strength of the Korean church and its pastors lies in their passion, which was achieved in a short period of time. However, their passion and the issues of preaching are criticised.

Chung (1999:4), the first-generation scholar of homiletics in South Korea, quoted Rycroft's writing as aptly mirroring the reality of Korean pastors:

'most Korean pastors have three sermons and seven sermonettes weekly. I know nowhere in the world where so much sermonizing is done. Annually this could mean 150 sermons and 365 sermonettes. ... The overtones here

are manifold.’<sup>25</sup>

Because the report was written in 1967, it could be argued that the reality is different in the 21st century. But actually the number of times and the burden of preaching have increased. Most churches have a prayer meeting on Friday, which was not the case in 1967. Pastors have to visit members’ houses, where they worship informally whenever they have time. Then there are many meetings held in the church according to members’ age, gender and events. A pastor seldom attends all the meetings, but should from time to time preach at those meetings. It is important to visit church members at family events, and it is essential for a pastor to visit and preach after a loss and at funerals. A pastor normally leads at least five services in the process, and each time preaching is an indispensable duty (JH Kim 2012:146).

Korean pastors have to lead all meetings, they must get involved in mission work, manage members, spend time on administrative duties, make project proposals and then finish the projects. If there is a conflict between the members, the pastor should be the mediator. If a member is depressed, a pastor should be the counsellor. Pastors also have to attend meetings outside the church. Under such conditions, pastors prepare their messages extemporaneously from their own ideas rather than from thorough exegesis of the Bible. The word ‘study’ is far removed from a pastor’s profession. He/ She is not given to reading or studying the Bible. KACP held the 27th conference on 2 September 2014 with the theme ‘plagiarism of sermon.’ Rev. Han, who is a subject speaker described the reality of the ministers of the Korean church as follows: ‘According to a survey, ministers preach sermons 7.5 times a week and they spend only 4 hours and 4 min preparing for the sermon. It would be natural for them, who are desperately lacking the time to prepare, to fall into the temptation of plagiarism.’<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Wilson, 1967, p54.

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.dangdangnews.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=23417>. Visited on 30 January 2015.



Forty percent of the pastors responded to the question 'what is your compulsive need as a minister?' with 'the study of the Bible and preaching'. This surpassed the 31% who responded: 'growing a membership' (MHS 2011:65), although in section 1.2.2 the wives of the ministers indicated that the primary concern of pastors was not preaching, but growing the church.

For the Korean church, the major element of the service is the sermon rather than the rest of the ritual (JH Kim 2012:149). The intellectual level and critical thinking of members has grown. Since they began listening to famous preachers' sermons on the internet or Christian TV channels, the expectation of good preaching has been raised and the evaluation has been sharp.

Crafty pastors who are aware of these changes approach this challenge in two ways. The first is to engage in many programmes as substitute for the anticipation of preaching. They design and develop many programmes to hold the members' attention and to increase their participation and loyalty to the activities of the church. This is the reason why pastors manage maximal service (JH Kim 2012:150). The second way is to adopt expedients for preaching. The preachers use a sermon book, a collection of published sermons or they copy sermons from the web. This practice is nothing new. Changbok Chung mentioned that

'Plagiarism of sermon material is a serious problem among many preachers. Since Korean pastors are pressed by their heavy schedule, they prefer to copy other people's sermons without putting in their own effort. Therefore, the creativity and freshness of the message in the pulpit is not experienced as much' (Nhiwatiwa 2012:13).<sup>27</sup>

Then came the development of the expedients for preaching. On the internet, there are many sites that supply materials for preparing a sermon or manuscripts for a complete Sunday sermon. Pastors of large churches hire a

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<sup>27</sup> This source comes from 'Preaching in the African Context: How We Preach'. The author indicated the source as 'Preaching Situation in Korean Church' in Tsuneaki Kato, ed., *Preaching as God's Mission*, pp. 136-41. However, I could not find the original source in his article because he did not publish the article in Korean. Chung confirmed this fact to me directly.

secretary to collect illustrations or hire a part-time pastor who has a Th. M or a doctoral degree to write a sermon manuscript for them (JH Kim 2012:152).

### 2.1.2 The anticipation of sermon is disappearing from the Korean church

Although preaching used to be the centre of worship in the Korean church, the interest in preaching is rapidly giving way to an interest in praise. Preaching is gradually losing its primary position (HM Yoo 2013:51).

The tendency to neglect preaching in the Korean church is widespread, not only by the congregation that does not listen, but also by the pastors, who should preach the Word of God. The biggest example would be the service where devotion is pledged to God. Pastors used to preach sermons in the services, but nowadays preaching is substituted with all kinds of lectures such as special lectures about the gospel propagation, church education, Christian education, Christian ethics and the exchange between South and North Korea. These lectures usually are delivered by laypeople and not by the pastors (HM Yoo 2013:51).

HM Yoo (2013:52) saw the root cause of this decline in the disappearance of the Korean church's love of the Bible. Bible ministries to teach the Bible were replaced by revival meetings, which mainly appeal to human emotions and sentiments. The new trend in the Korean church is that praise is more important than preaching. It has become the mainstream.

JC Kim (2013:262) said the main reason for the tendency to neglect preaching is doubt or disbelief in the preaching and the incapability of the preachers. Doubt about preachers brings an awareness that laypeople can also preach. Ultimately, preachers provided the grounds for these views by their low standard of preaching. Kim analysed a famous preacher's sermon books to reveal the fundamental problem of many preachers in the Korean church. His main conclusion is that the level of exegesis, interpretation and application of

the biblical text of the sermon is at the level of the layperson's 'Quiet Time' (JC Kim 2013:290).

While the Korean church was already drifting farther and farther apart from its concern over the preaching, a new aggravating phenomenon has recently emerged in the relationship between the Korean pastor and the members of his church, namely a passionate critique of the preaching. The disappointed members no longer keep silent about the preacher and his preaching; they criticise the sermon. Yongsub Jeong started the critique of the preaching and created a sensation (JH Kim 2012:153). The vast and fast internet environment and the anonymity in cyberspace not only promoted anti-Christianism, but also encouraged listeners to express their discontent with a sermon and created a structure for discussion of the sermon between preacher and listeners (JH Kim 2012:153). The dilemma is that the critique also produces adverse effects that open the way for violent discourse.

The highest response to the 2004 'The Hope for Preaching' survey question 'What is your church's biggest strength?' was 32.1% for merciful preaching, compared with 4.5% for a convenient facility (MHS 2011:252). Another survey in 2012 showed similar results. To the question: 'Why do you go to the church?' 33.0% answered the nearness of the church, 29.6% the good preaching, 16.7% attendance with my family, 10.1% to get to know many people, 3.7% the fame of the church. In the detailed analogy, it reported that as people grow in faith, they think highly of the preaching (KACP 2013:135-136).

These surveys showed that firstly members are not concerned about having convenient facilities and secondly that Korean Christians regard the sermon as more important than all other ministries.

### 2.1.3 The appearance of a new type of preacher

Many Korean churches often called Sunday morning service 'a big service',<sup>28</sup> and place importance on the service. Even though preachers are busy with administrative and other work, they cannot disregard the Sunday sermon. There are many preachers in the Korean church who do make an effort to preach a good sermon in the pulpit.

The recent trend in preaching in the Korean church is changing from the traditional preaching, where a preacher did not consider the audience's situation and delivered a doctrinal message to the listeners, to a new preaching, which places the audience in the centre. It is called the New Homiletic with storytelling and inductive preaching (see chapter 4 of this dissertation). This transition has created new star preachers (YS Jeong 2011:34).

The new sermons are clearly intended to be popular with the listeners. The star preachers think their preaching must be funny and should often raise laughter (YS Jeong 2011:40-41). The preachers who imitate the popularity of star preachers use many illustrations in the sermon to make it funny and cause laughter. Few of their illustrations are relevant to the text. They are old-fashioned and stale stories (YS Jeong 2011:45). The preacher uses particular incendiary testimonies, not universal ones, to satisfy their listeners. These illustrations create an illusion that if the same thing does not happen to us, we are not really loved by God. YS Jeong (2011:46) said the use of these particular episodes makes a believer lose the universal validity of Christianity. BS Choi (2013:404) mentioned the danger of inauthentic success stories: they stimulate the desire of believers.

There is another type of populist preaching, which is an attitude of sentimentalism (YS Jeong 2011:47). Preachers who employ sentimentalism aim to exploit the feelings and emotions of their listeners rather than studying and

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<sup>28</sup> KPAS (2013:85) shows that the attendance rate at the services is 95.8% for the Sunday morning service, 32.9% for the Sunday evening service and 29.4% for the Wednesday service.

exposing the Bible text. Sentimentalism in sermons appears in the content as well as in the method of delivery. Preachers change their voices to a different tone, preach in a more touching way and even become tearful.

Another form of populist preaching is moral preaching. Moral preaching, which emphasises ethics, morality and judgment of the values of people's activities, comes from a reflection on the way a Christian should follow with the focus on the right way to live rather than focusing on God's ontological power (CK Jeong 2012:50). This style does not put the fundamental value of the kingdom of God at the centre of the gospel kerygma. Instead it concentrates on the ability to change behaviour depending on the time and social situation. It is like the legalism of the Pharisees. These sermons do not aim to be popular, but have the same principle – to stimulate a sense of guilt or to give a sense of superiority, that we are different from the corrupt world. They are concerned with seriousness and pursue seriousness as more biblical and fresh than the preaching that aims to cause laughter.

#### 2.1.4 Privatisation of the Korean church's preaching

Korean preaching aims to evoke emotions, wanting to make the congregation laugh or weep. This kind of preaching becomes the instrument for church growth. YS Choi (2013:70) diagnosed the state of the Korean church as looking nice, but malnourished inside because it has lost the roots of the gospel.

South Korean society changed under the influence of individualism and consumerism; the preaching is changing toward a private type of sermon that emphasises consolation and comfort (SJ Lee 2013:31-32). 'Privatisation' of preaching on subjects such as individual happiness, peace of mind, success and prosperity is diminishing the public character and communal spirit in the Korean church (JY Jeong 2013:364-365). In order to win the fight with other churches, to retain or recruit members, pastors have 'invented grace' (YS Choi 2013:352). SJ Lee (2013:72) said of these phenomena:

‘Contemporary Korean churches’ preaching does not concentrate on the essence of the Christian gospel proclamation, and puts value on spreading prosperity theology, or secular blessing perspectives.’

In his analysis, JC Kim (2013:282) related the issue to many preachers who are often mistaken because they misunderstand the interpretation of the Bible:

‘Many modern Korean preachers have privatizing and psychologizing tendencies in their exegesis of biblical texts, and their uniform religious applications in their sermon making it at the level of the layman’s ‘Quiet Time’.

This kind of preaching tries to link the text directly to the life of the listeners without interpreting the text with ‘the grammatical-historical-theological methods’. For this reason the application of the preaching ends in a rut of religious encouragement such as worship, obedience, prayer, etc. (JC Kim 2013:263-264).

YS Jeong (2011:35) agrees with JC Kim. His concern is the communication between the preacher and the Bible text. The core of his assertion is that the level of Korean church preaching has fallen to that of a light sermon because the preacher does not have a deep understanding of the Bible text.

Privatisation preaching does not fill the deep need, the unexpected difficulty or the gap between our troubled reality and our life of the faith (YD Park 2013a:232).

#### 2.1.5 Theology has disappeared from preaching in the Korean church

Stott (1982b:92) said: ‘If our theology is right, then we have all the basic insights we need into what we ought to be doing, and all the incentives we need to induce to do it faithfully.’ He emphasised the importance of theology as the basis of our preaching, that ‘theology is more important than methodology’ (Stott 1982b:92); so if a preacher relies on technique for preaching without a solid theological foundation, he/she will be a mere orator.

The reality of the Korean church differs from the teaching of sound theologians such as Stott. It is mired in methodology rather than theology. The Korean church lacks theology in its preaching. Since the 1980s every denomination in South Korean theology has reduced its theology to its homiletical view (SJ Lee 2006).<sup>29</sup> All pastors and denominations have absorbed the subjects of the Pentecostals embraced by the Yoido Full Gospel Church, preaching about a good God, a God that makes our life abundant. The Korean church's theology in its preaching combines the pragmatic aspects and the Kibok faith.<sup>30</sup> This tendency has not changed during the 1990s and 2000s. As long as the preaching causes the church to grow and attracts listeners, the preacher does not care about the danger of its content or theology. For these reasons, SJ Lee (2006) said there is no biblical theology in the Korean church's preaching. That is the biggest problem in the Korean church.

YS Choi (2013:82) expressed his genuine concern about the preaching in the Korean church. He said there is a growing tendency in the level of general knowledge of the preachers and congregations, but the boundary of theology has collapsed and the theology has become indistinct; the colour of denominations has been integrated into one.

JS Cha (2013:69-70) said that preachers had lost their theological point of view, which had been established over a long period of time for interpreting and application to the Bible.

#### 2.1.6. The preaching is not led by the Holy Spirit

There are many factors that make a good sermon, but the core element is the gospel explained by the Holy Spirit. The apostle Paul suggested these inextricable elements in his sermon in 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 as 'Jesus Christ and

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<sup>29</sup> This article was published serially on the internet newspaper 'Newsjoy' from 15 June 2006 to 7 July 2006. <http://www.newsjoy.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=17485>. Visited Jan 2014.

<sup>30</sup> It is pursuing blessing and fortune. This belief is mixed with Korean traditional shamanism.

him crucified' with the power of the Spirit. Modern homiletics scholars also emphasise these elements. South African homiletician Cilliers (2004:28) said:

‘Without doubt, the mystery of preaching lies in the working of the Spirit. The secret of preaching – the theological integration of the voices – is profoundly a *pneumatological mystery*. The Spirit links the voices of the preacher, the text and of the congregation to become God’s voice.’

One of the features of the Korean church’s preaching used to be the sermon that was based on prayer and spirituality. Although the preachers did not have sufficient training in theology, they begged for the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Nowadays sermons are not based on spirituality, but on an extensive knowledge. While it is advisable to have an interest in a new homiletic and abundant theological knowledge, preachers relied less on the Holy Spirit for their life and message as their knowledge advanced. YD Park (2013a:210) explained that the preacher no longer becomes a tool of the Holy Spirit, therefore the Holy Spirit rarely works through preaching today. He sees two reasons for this phenomenon. The first reason is that preachers are more interested in attracting listeners’ interest than in delivering the word of God correctly to the listeners. The result of the preachers’ efforts are, paradoxically, leading the preachers’ interest in the Holy Spirit far away (YD Park 2013a:209). Another reason is the error of instrumentalisation of the Holy Spirit. While the first reason is lack of interest in the Holy Spirit, the second is that the Holy Spirit is instrumentalised (YD Park 2013a:211). They desire the Holy Spirit to achieve their ambition or their vision, not God’s. Occasionally someone makes a greater effort to generate amazing phenomenon of the Holy Spirit by their preaching of successes, because they think success will make a big church. That is why the preachers in Korea really need the Holy Spirit to lead them in their exposition and application of Scripture (YD Park 2013a:211).

### 2.1.7 Disgracing aspects of Korean preaching

There are other shameful aspects to preaching in South Korea. JS Cha (2013:59) mentioned some of these disgraceful features. The first is the below-



average language usage. Christianity is a verbal religion; speech is crucial for the preaching. But some preachers use violent or abusive words in the pulpit, claiming that as preachers they can do anything they want. They do not consider the Bible as a work of literature and they are not able to read it, because they have no time, but they express a false dichotomy between humanism and a God-centred attitude. They ignore and neglect the humanities without knowledge of the difference. Some preachers, who have a fundamentalist tendency, prohibit themselves and their members from reading all general books, including Christian books, except the Bible. Of course this is an exceptional case, but numerous pastors avoid reading humanities either intentionally or for lack of time. What is apparent from this erroneous dichotomous view is that it creates an antagonistic relationship to literature or that pastors become desensitised to the communication of the humanities (JS Cha 2013:61).

These preachers do not have a correct understanding of being created by God and the amazing gifts God has given humans, such as rationality, intellect, sensitivity, volition, spirituality and the five senses (JS Cha 2013:64). Their careless attitude and rejection of the humanities raises the problem that their sermons become uninteresting and an empty echo, because they did not consider the richness of understanding humans (JS Cha 2013:64).

### 3. CONCLUSION

As the first stage of this study, Chapter 2 listened carefully to the variety of voices responding to this question: What has been going on in the Korean church since 1997? (Osmer 2008:4). The results reflected a situation that differs substantially from the situation that prevailed during the times of rapid growth of the Korean church. The answers exposed the embarrassing aspects of the situation behind the rapid growth of the Korean church. About 100 to 40 years ago, the Korean church had a constructive influence on society through building

schools and hospitals, moving toward enlightenment, breaking down feudalism and improving human rights (SK Lee 2007:446-454). However, it has lately become an object of criticism and scorn by society.

In section 1, the variety of external voices critical of the Korean church was recorded. As some surveys show, the membership of the Korean Protestant church has declined, while that of the Roman Catholic church has grown. The research shows the reasons. The first reason is disappointment in the church because it stands on the side of the powerful and the rich, not the poor and the powerless. Second is its cultural insensitivity and aggressive evangelism. As regards evangelism, the church has been criticised because it is armed with an aggressive mission without communicating with others. The third reason is that the church is no longer seen as a peacemaker, but as a generator of conflict. The fourth reason is related to the fallen pastors. Well-known pastors' faults, such as financial scandals, sexual abuse and moral laxity have given rise to widespread anti-Christianism. The fifth reason is the loss of influence and confidence in the Korean church because its members' passion for God is locked up in the chapel. It is unable to cope with the spirit of the times or to give direction to the disciples of Jesus. The sixth reason is that money rules the church; it focuses on external growth, not inner maturity. That ambition creates competition with other churches to construct buildings, resulting in financial crisis and finally bankruptcy.

The voice of reflection from inside the church was also researched. First is the misapprehension of justification and soteriology. The Korean church focuses on individual salvation and church activities without a missionary calling in society. Second is a wrong sense of ecclesiology and a mistaken paradigm in which church growth is the supreme principle. The Korean church suffers from the disease that its only desire is to be a megachurch; it believes that the pastor who has formed a megachurch is blessed and is more experienced in the grace and power of God. The wrong sense of ecclesiology causes some pastors to think that the church is the private property of the ministers. The megachurch regards the Holy Spirit as a tool to gather people. The third problem is anti-

intellectualism in the church. As YA Kang (2013:45) put it, 'the Korean Christians were taught that when they enter the church, they have to remove their head before going into the church and to place it outside the church'. Fourth is the wrong direction taken by ministers in leadership. They have not shown the essence of faith, but act like dictators. Another problem is related to depressed pastors who are exhausted by ministry failure and have lost faith in the church. They are filled with thoughts of failure and show aggressive attitudes.

In Section 2, the researcher studied the preachers' preaching as a display window of the Korean church. The pastors, who have the heaviest preaching schedule in the world, have no time to prepare their sermons because of many activities. The qualitative depreciation causes the congregations to become disappointed with the preaching. In response, the ministers drive the congregations toward many programmes and activities in the church in order to retain their members. However, the congregation increasingly recognises unprepared preaching, criticizing it and adding fuel to the movement of anti-Christianism in cyberspace. In this situation new types of preachers have appeared; focusing on popularity, touching the feelings of the listeners and going for moral preaching. The new types of preachers have the common point of privatisation and individualism. Privatisation of preaching is diminishing the public character and communal spirit in the Korean church and stirs up an ecclesiastical competition. The competitive pastors pay attention to their methodology rather than to the theology of the preaching; they are dreaming of church growth and have lost their theological point of view. Each pastor belongs to his/her own denomination, but their preaching styles are absorbing the general pragmatic aspects and the Kibok faith. The pursuit of the methodology of preaching leads to indifference to the role of the Holy Spirit. While one of the features of the Korean church's preaching in the past was the sermon that was based on prayer and spirituality, nowadays sermons are based on extensive knowledge – but this tends to be knowledge focused on the trends of society and not on theological knowledge. Finally, Korean preachers are short on

knowledge of the liberal arts because they either do not value it or lack time for it. Some pastors remain stuck in a dichotomous way of thinking that has become a fundamentalist tendency. A careless attitude and neglect of the humanities raises the problem that their sermons become uninteresting and an empty echo.

The literature about the conditions and phenomena in the Korean church and the Korean church's preaching were researched in this chapter by indirect listening. It is not sufficient only to read the criticisms of the sermon and the story of Korean church to understand the phenomena and the situations and to grasp the core of the problems; the matter is more complicated because of the layers of meaningful compositions that interact with each other. Osmer (2008:39) also suggested qualitative research, which 'allows leaders to deepen their understanding of what is going on in particular episodes, situations, and contexts and is a genuine expression of a spirituality of presence'.

Chapter 3 will try to develop a better understanding of the Korean church and the preaching with first-hand observation of the facts and careful interviews to listen directly to the voices of the pastors and members.

## **Chapter 3 Empirical research on the Korean church's preaching**

Chapter 3 is a part of the descriptive-empirical task. In Chapter 2, in order to find the reality of the Korean church, the researcher heard a variety of voices from inside and outside the church. But these are not sufficient for fully understanding the Korean church's preaching. For this reason, Chapter 3 will try to listen carefully to the voices of the Korean pastors and laypeople. This chapter will be research to find the reality of the New Homiletic, which has been in vogue in the Korean church, and to examine the church's understanding of the New Homiletic.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Campbell (1997:xi) said that the New Homiletic was intended to stimulate the interest of the listeners and to bring new vitality to the pulpit of the American church, but after 25 years of New Homiletic the expectation was not fulfilled. It became individualised because it lost the social and public characteristic of Christianity essential for the church. He emphasised 'building up the church' based on a postliberal theology to overcome the limitations of the New Homiletic (Campbell 1997:21).

The Korean churches, which have been influenced by the American church, have followed the way of the American churches by discarding the restrictions of traditional preaching. The Korean churches also expected the preaching to be full of energy through the New Homiletic, to change churchgoers' lack of attention into positive attention; instead of tiresome sermons there would be lively sermons; instead of boring, they would be funny, and from sermons that ignored the need of the listeners the church would move to sermons that cater

for these needs. With these expectations many Korean pastors adopted the New Homiletic with listener-oriented sermons, sermons that pay attention to listeners and to solving their problems. However, like the American churches, the Korean churches are being criticised by scholars for the tendencies of the New Homiletic. Scholars such as SJ Lee (2013:31-32) and JY Jeong (2013:364-365) expressed concern that the Korean churches' sermons are increasingly leading toward privatisation and individualisation. Recently, some scholars have endorsed public theology and emphasised the communal character of preaching against the person-focused sermons of the New Homiletic.

Through some dissertations and articles of scholars,<sup>31</sup> concerns have been raised how pastors follow the New Homiletic and how laypeople experience the preaching. But these are only opinions of some theological scholars who have developed a theory even though they have no experience or practice in the field. This would be like a doctor making a diagnosis and decision without having examined and consulted the patient. Empirical research is called for here. Immink & Pleizier (2005:284) said: 'We can...also consider practical theology as empirical theology, that is, as a theological theory that describes and analyses empirical phenomenon with theological concepts.'

Referring to the issue the researcher mentioned in Chapter 2, there are criticisms of the preaching that focus on the content of the message through an analysis of a manuscript or a note to see the preacher's exegesis, interpretation and application. But the researcher could not find a study on the preacher's perception of preaching, the experience of the sermon by the preacher and his audience or the preacher's agony about the direction of his/her sermon. In the literature investigation, the researcher found some quantitative research done

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<sup>31</sup> The concern about the public theology in the preaching was raised at the Presbyterian College and Theological Seminary. For example, 'A study on secure for public functions of the Korean church pulpit' (Ph.D. dissertation by Dong Ug Yang, 2013) and the article 'A practical theological search of homiletical theology for the contemporary Korean church in transition' by Un-Yong Kim 2009.

by means of questionnaires on the importance of preaching. But there is no qualitative study in South Korea except for the study conducted by YH Jang<sup>32</sup> in 2013.

Creswell (2009:98-99) quoted Morse (1991:120) on qualitative research:

Characteristics of a qualitative research problem are: (a) the concept is 'immature' due to a conspicuous lack of theory and previous research; (b) a notion that the available theory may be inaccurate, inappropriate, incorrect, or biased; (c) a need exists to explore and describe the phenomena and to develop theory; or (d) the nature of the phenomenon may not be suited to quantitative measures.

It is not easy to measure the hidden aspects of human behaviour with quantitative measures of belief and the inner experience of humans – their thinking, feeling and motivation. For this reason a qualitative research methodology is chosen for this research to find the hidden elements which are referred to in the previous sentence rather than focusing on the content of the message of the sermon itself.

Another problem the researcher encountered in the preliminary research is that laypeople do not comment on the preaching, and there is no study on laypeople's listening to the sermon in South Korea either<sup>33</sup>. The reason is probably that a sermon belongs in the preacher's sphere, not in the sphere of the laypeople. Laypeople think that commenting on the sermon is evidence of an irreverent attitude. When I met laypersons for an interview, they agreed with this statement. All participating laypeople said: 'We have never heard about this kind of research that asks for comments about the sermon.' But it is important to know their opinions and ask for their thoughts, because preaching is communication and it is possible to get feedback on the preaching through its listeners. The laypeople's feedback on the preaching became the clue to

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<sup>32</sup> The title of his dissertation is Phenomenal Research on Healing Experience through Preaching: Counseling Preaching with Qualitative Research.

<sup>33</sup> Pleizier (2010:9) said the turn of empirical research in homiletic toward the listeners and preaching reception is in accord with the New Homiletic's appearance.

understand more objectively the direction of the mainstream Korean preachers. At the same time, this effort helps to overcome the one-way effect of the sermon, so that preaching becomes a partnership of preacher and hearers cooperating in the preaching.

The purpose of this empirical research is to reveal the awareness of the pastors and laypeople of the New Homiletic, which caused the pastors of the Korean churches to prepare listener-orientated sermons, listener-considering sermons and listener-centred sermons. The researcher adopted this phenomenological study to uncover meaning and researched 7 pastors' experience and 8 laypeople's experience of the sermons. This research stands on 'the Social Constructivist Worldview' that 'They (meaning) are not simply imprinted on individuals but are formed through interaction with others (hence social constructivism) and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals' lives' (Creswell 2009:8). This worldview opens up the possibility to see how individual pastors and laypeople apprehend the New Homiletic and the tendency revealed in the Korean church sermons. The researcher selected the semistructured interview method to listen to them at first hand and investigated two matters: the opinions of pastors and of laypeople on the New Homiletic and the public and social characteristics of Christian preaching, which Campbell emphasises. This research will reveal the reality of the New Homiletic in South Korea.

## 2. STANDARDS FOR SELECTING PARTICIPANTS IN THIS RESEARCH

Creswell (2007:39) said one of the characteristics of qualitative research is an emergent design:

'This means that the initial plan for research cannot be tightly prescribed, and that all phases of the process may change or shift after the researchers enter the field and begin to collect data. For example, the questions may



change, the forms of data, the forms of data collection may shift, and the individuals studied and the sites visited may be modified.’

The researcher also experienced an emergent situation in the research. The researcher contacted the 3 pastors, who promised to take part in the research when the researcher made the proposal and asked to have an interview with members of their congregations. One of them, who is over 60 years old, politely refused to have the interview, saying ‘sorry, I have no time’, but the researcher felt that he had another reason, such as worrying about the results of the interview and that the process would be annoying. He finally asked to be excused from the research. Another person also said that he was not able to take part in the research because of his scheduled trip to America. And the last person could not be contacted.

While attempting to make a selection of participants for the research, the researcher found some meaningful information for this research. Firstly, the older pastor evaded being involved in the research more than the younger pastor. The researcher contacted another pastor over 60 years old and gained same impression as he had of the first pastor.

Secondly, it is more difficult to have an interview with the pastor of a mega-church. The pastors of these churches, who have over 1000 attendants at a Sunday service, declined to be involved in the research because of their busy schedules. The researcher also tried to have an interview with a preacher who is well known through his Christian TV broadcasts. He also responded negatively because of a lack of time.

Thirdly, preachers seemed unhappy about having members of their congregation interviewed about their sermons. They seemed to think that the interview would be an evaluation of their sermon by the laypeople.

For this reason the researcher set another standard for selecting participants.

Firstly, the researcher limited the age of pastors of an evangelical church who would participate in the research to 40-59 years. This not only resolved the problem of participation, but these pastors were also more enthusiastic about their work.

Secondly, the researcher restricted the participants to the senior pastor of the church. Most of the pastors that preach the Sunday morning sermon are senior pastors of a church in South Korea. The researcher thinks that the senior pastors agonise more over their sermons than assistant pastors because they are responsible for preaching more sermons.

Thirdly, the researcher limited the number of interviews to one interview per church. In other words, it was only the senior pastor or one layperson at each church. Although the aim of the research was to examine the perception of the pastor and the layperson of the sermon, in the atmosphere of the Korean church interviewing one pastor and a layperson at the same church about the sermon can be seen as an assessment of the sermon.

Fourthly, the researcher limited the research area to the capital city, Seoul, and its metropolitan area. According to the South Korean statistical information service, the population of South Korea was 47 990 761 and the population of Seoul and its metropolitan area was 23 459 570 in 2010.<sup>34</sup> The percentage of the 20-59 age group is 63% (14 843 582) of the residents in this area. Half of South Korea resides in this area. The population is concentrated in and around the capital. The aim of the limitation of the area was to gain a more complete understanding of the present-day and future situation of the Korean church.

Fifthly, the researcher tried to select laypeople who also met the above standard: the preachers had to be evangelical senior pastors in the age group between 40 and 59 residing in Seoul and its metropolitan area. Where a pastor

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<sup>34</sup> See more information at [http://kosis.kr/statisticsList/statisticsList\\_01List.jsp?vwcd=MT\\_ZTITLE&parmTabId=M\\_01\\_01#SubCont](http://kosis.kr/statisticsList/statisticsList_01List.jsp?vwcd=MT_ZTITLE&parmTabId=M_01_01#SubCont). Visited Jan 2014.

was interviewed, a layperson was not selected. The age of the lay-participants was limited to between 20 and 59.

### 3. SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS AND RESEARCH PERIOD

The researcher worked with an informant<sup>35</sup> who is close to the researcher and is well known by the preachers and the laypeople who are interested in preaching. He greatly assisted the researcher in recruiting the participants who had ‘the more pertinent data, keeping in mind the possible diversity of opinions’ (Thumma 1998:205).<sup>36</sup> The researcher contacted the participants for the research through e-mail or phone.

The interviews took approximately 1 hour, the maximum was 1½ hours and the minimum was 45 minutes.

Before starting the interview, the researcher explained the purpose of the research, the procedures and the rights of the participant (Creswell 2007:123, Louw, Taljard & Hinch 2002). For example, the participant’s identity and the congregation would be strictly anonymous, the research data would only be used for the researcher’s study, the participant could withdraw from the research at any time. The data would be kept for 10 years. They were also informed of the necessity of recording the interview and that he would transcribe the recording. As for the benefits, he informed them that there would be no financial gain, but he promised to share the information of the research and explained the indirect benefit when this research was released to the Korean pastors. The participants agreed that after receiving and confirming their

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<sup>35</sup> For more information about the Informant, See Babbie, E & Mouton, J 2001:298. *The Practice of Social Research*; With contributions by Payze Vorster, Boshoff Prozesky. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

<sup>36</sup> To recruit the participants who have pertinent data, the researcher did not select the participants randomly.

transcribed interview, they would sign the consent form and return it to the researcher.

The interviews were conducted over 3 weeks, from 24 March to 1 April 2014. The researcher arranged the interview for a time and place convenient for the interviewee.

One of the difficulties that the researcher faced in the research was that he could not do 'member checking' to ensure the accuracy of the report (Creswell 2009:191). Koreans do not use English in daily life, they strain to read the report in English. The researcher used two strategies to check his report. The first was to examine the report with his supervisor. The second was to show the participants their transcribed interview to confirm that there were no mistakes in the transcription (Creswell 2009:190).

In the process of receiving the participants' signature on the consent form, L6 expressed her desire to withdraw from the research and asked the researcher to delete her transcription. She did not state the reason precisely, but wrote 'I did not feel that I had criticised the pastors and their preaching that much, but when I read the transcript I felt uncomfortable at what I had said.' She was concerned about the content of the interview. L6 took an active part in the interview and revealed her thoughts. She expressed strong criticism of the preacher's preaching and their ministries. In Korean culture and society, it is regarded as a virtue to not comment on ministers and their preaching; a written transcription, given this culture, might be a big burden to her. The researcher showed that in the final report the participant and the congregation remained anonymous. Nevertheless, L6 expressed her wish to withdraw from the research. The researcher accepted the request and deleted the codings from L6 from the final report.

## 4. PARTICIPANTS

The participants were the following: <sup>37</sup>

Participant P1: He is the senior pastor of a Presbyterian church in Paju City: male, 41. He founded the church 1 year ago. The 40 church members are all over 20 years of age.

Participant P2: He is the senior pastor of a Presbyterian church in Seoul: male, 47. He founded the church 6 years ago. The 150 church members are over 20 years of age.

Participant P3: He is the senior pastor of a Presbyterian church in Seoul: male, 48. He became the senior pastor of his present church 6 years ago. The 350 church members are over 20 years of age.

Participant P4: He is the senior pastor of a Presbyterian church in Ansan City: male, 52. He founded the church 20 years ago. The 400 church members are over 20 years of age.

Participant P5: He is the senior pastor of a Presbyterian church in Hwasung City: male, 50. He founded the church 9 years ago. The 800 church members are over 20 years of age.

Participant P6: He is the senior pastor of a Presbyterian church in Suwon City: male, 51. He founded the church 11 years ago. The 2500 church members are over 20 years of age.

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<sup>37</sup> Regarding data saturation, the researcher has three reasons for selecting only 7 pastors and 8 laypeople. First, the purpose of this empirical research is listening to the experience of the Korean church's pastors and its laypeople directly as the starting point for this thesis. Second, the researcher wanted to learn if the responses from the participants would differ because of age, gender and size of the church the pastor leads or the laypeople attend. However the researcher discovered that the responses did not differ do due age, gender and the size of the church. Third, the researcher visited South Korea for only 1 month. It was too short a time to have more interviews.

Participant P7: He is the senior pastor of a Presbyterian church<sup>38</sup> in Seoul: male, 58. He became the senior pastor of his present church 2 years ago. The 14 400 church members are over 20 years of age.

Participant L1: male, 22. He is an undergraduate student. He goes to an evangelical church in Sungnam city and the senior pastor is 46 years old.

Participant L2: female, 27. She is an office worker. She goes to a Presbyterian church in Sungnam city and the senior pastor is 42 years old.

Participant L3: male, 36. He is a bank official. He goes to a Presbyterian church in Goyang city and the senior pastor is 58 years old.

Participant L4: female, 34. She is an after-school instructor. She goes to a Holiness church in Kwangmyung city and the senior pastor is 48 years old.

Participant L5: male, 46. He is a car dealer. He goes to a Presbyterian church in Seoul and the senior pastor is 48 years old.

Participant L7: male, 54. He is a government employee. He goes to a Baptist church in Sungnam city and the senior pastor is 51 years old.

Participant L8: female, 50. She is a housewife. She goes to a Presbyterian church in Sungnam city and the senior pastor is 52 years old.

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<sup>38</sup> The Presbyterian Church is the largest denomination in South Korea. Although there are other denominations in South Korea, the researcher chosen to listen to the opinions of pastors who take a similar theological stand to the researcher. Another reason is that it is not easy to get the participations of pastors because Korean pastors are unfamiliar to talk about the view of their sermons.

## 1) Pastors

	Region	Sex <sup>39</sup>	Age	Number of church members (over 20 years old)
P1	Paju city	Male	41	40
P2	Seoul	Male	47	150
P3	Seoul	Male	48	350
P4	Ansan City	Male	52	400
P5	Hwasung City	Male	50	800
P6	Suwon City	Male	51	1200
P7	Seoul	Male	58	14000

## 2) Laypeople

	Region	Sex	Age	Number of church members (over 20 years old)
L1	Sungnam City	Male	22	3000
L2	Sungnam City	Female	27	1400
L3	Goyang City	Male	36	7000
L4	Kwangmyung City	Female	34	50
L5	Seoul City	Male	46	400
L7	Sungnam City	Male	54	12000
L8	Sungnam City	Female	50	18000

The researcher phoned the participants to make an appointment and visited them at a time and place convenient for them with the questions below.

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<sup>39</sup> The researcher targeted senior pastors between the ages of 40-60. There are very few female senior pastors in South Korea. The one female senior pastor the researcher did know was over 60 years of age.

## 5. SURVEY QUESTIONS

The researcher formulated a semistructured interview schedule for the interview. He started with a broad orienting question to build rapport with the sensitive participants. He asked follow-up questions to cover their experience and meaning (Thumma 1998:206). The researcher tried to be sympathetic while listening to the participants, refraining from speaking, but sometimes asked for clarification for better understanding. It is priestly listening as part of the descriptive-empirical task of Practical Theology (Osmer 2008:31-78).

The questions put to the pastors:

- 1) When did you begin preaching? What difference is there between your past and present preaching?
- 2) There are probably many church members who say that they are blessed by the pastor's sermons. By which aspect of the sermons did they say they were blessed?
- 3) Have you ever talked or chatted about preaching with laypeople or other pastors? What did they say?
- 4) What do you think of the New Homiletic<sup>40</sup>: preaching by communicating with the listener (rather than one-way preaching with 3 points); narrative preaching; including many experiences of the preacher in the preaching; preaching that answers to the listener's individual problems; and open-ended application preaching?

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<sup>40</sup> Cf. Chapter 4, where the concept is discussed. In general the pastors interviewed did not know the term but after explanation replied almost without exception that it was in fact their current praxis.



5) How do you rate the balance of your sermons between individual faith and the problems of listeners versus the social and public aspects, such as church community, a local community and the state of the community?

6) The Korean church's growth has entered a decline. The young generation, between the age of 20 to 40 especially, is reluctant to join a church. At a time like this, what kind of preaching do you think will appeal to them?

7) Recently, a survey<sup>41</sup> revealed that the problem of the Korean church is the pastor. Respondents pointed to a gap between the words and the actions of the pastors. In this situation, what would you change in your preaching and in your lifestyle?

8) What message do you think your church members want to hear?

The questions put to the laymembers:

1) Since when have you attended this church? What difference is there in your pastor's past preaching compared with the present?

2) If you were blessed by the pastor's sermon, what aspects of the sermon blessed you?

3) Have you ever talked or chatted about preaching with laypeople or other pastors? What did they say?

4) What do you think of the trend of changing the preaching from one-way preaching with 3 points to preaching that communicates with the listeners, namely narrative preaching, including many experiences of the preacher, and providing answers to the listener's individual problems? What do you think of open-ended application preaching?

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<sup>41</sup> The results of the survey of the social trust of the Korean church released by the Christian Ethics Movement on 5 February 2014. See the source at <http://cemk.org>

- 5) How would you rate the balance of your pastor's sermons between individual faith and problems of the listeners on the one hand and social and public aspects, such as church community, a local community and the state of the community on the other hand?
- 6) The growth of the Korean church has entered a decline. The young generation, aged between 20 and 40, is reluctant to join a church. At a time like this, what kind of preaching do you expect from your pastor?
- 7) Recently a survey revealed that the problem of the Korean church is the pastor. Respondents pointed to a gap between the words and the actions of the pastors. What do you think of these results?
- 8) What kind of message do you want to hear from your pastor?

## 6. DATA ANALYSIS

This study used the phenomenological approach with semistructured interviews to explore the experience of the sermon by the pastors and the laymembers in the Korean church.

Creswell (2007:57, 63) explained phenomenological research as follows: Phenomenological research is used to describe and to find the meanings of the experience of numerous individuals about a concept or a phenomenon. The researcher focuses on describing the common point the participants of the research have experienced. Summarizing the individuals' experience of the universal phenomenon is the basic purpose of phenomenology. To achieve this purpose, the researcher confirms the phenomenon. After that, the researcher collects the data from the people who experienced the phenomenon and finds the real nature of the experience showed by all individual persons. The description is composed of 'what they experienced' and 'how they experienced it' (Creswell 2007:58).

The researcher, who looks for the essence of the experience of the New Homiletic of pastors and of laymembers of the Korean church, chose Pieterse's methodology of analysing the data. The analysis is 'based on an interpretative philosophy that is aimed at examining the meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data' (Nieuwenhuis 2007:99). Although this research is not a grounded theory study, Pieterse's methodology (2010:113-129; 2011:95-112), which is often used as a grounded theory approach, is appropriate and effective to identify central themes for this research. The researcher borrowed the first cycle of Pieterse's methodology, which is an inductive analysis called open coding. There are three cycles: open coding, selective coding and theoretical coding (Pieterse 2010:121-125; 2011:96). Open coding is a method of inductive analysis of what pastors and laypeople at present experience and think about the sermon.

The researcher completed the transcription himself in order to avoid problems and especially to protect the participants' personal information, and tried to look at the interview material objectively (Nieuwenhuis 2007:104). It took one and a half months, with over 200 pages. The transcribed data was sent to the participants to confirm and to obtain their signatures on the informed consent form. The signed participants' consent forms were received and the numbers of the young generation in the congregation of participant L7 were revised as requested, because this participant was uncertain during his interview.

The researcher read the transcribed data with an open mind. Sometimes he tried to empathise with what the participants expressed. He tried to avoid prejudice and presumption. He listened three times to the recordings of the interviews while transcribing, and read the transcribed data twice to grasp the contents and to get a sense of the interview as a whole before breaking all of the transcribed material down into parts (Creswell 2007:150).

Bearing the research questions in mind, the researcher manually coded all data with colour pens and highlighters and rearranged the coded data by dividing it into meaningful segments and naming the segments (Nieuwenhuis 2007:100;

Pieterse 2011:99). Thereafter the data was combined into broader categories (Creswell 2007:148).<sup>42</sup>

## 6.1 Analysis of the pastors' interview data

The researcher analysed the raw data of each pastor's and layperson's interview. In the analysis of the pastors' interviews, open coding produced 105 codes, and 27 subcategories and 6 main categories emerged from the data.

The main categories with their sub-categories and the codes are displayed below with the contents of each interview.

### Category 1. New Homiletical methods used by preachers

When the researcher mentioned the term 'the New Homiletic' to the pastors, none of them knew it, but some knew the term 'narrative preaching'. After explaining the term all the preachers replied that they already knew it and that it was their current practice. Their experience of the New Homiletic is as follows:

#### A. Being very interested in their listeners

The pastors expressed their great interest in the concerns of their listeners. They begin the sermon with the life of a listener or with current issues, and bring the listener toward the text. Pastors think deeply about the listeners' concerns and try to preach at their level. Understanding the congregation becomes one of the important elements.

(P1) 'I begin with what people are worrying about, such as existence, in order to get them interested in the sermon. Then I bring them toward the text.'

(P3) 'Because I speak of their concerns, the listeners pay careful attention to the preaching.'

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<sup>42</sup> The transcript of the interview will be kept by University of Pretoria for 10 years.

(P4) 'A variety of people are gathered in the church. Hence, I think speaking below the average level is the best way ... adjusting to the responsive level of the listeners.'

(P6) 'This is the reason for my extended sermon... I should be careful with the content of the text, but the position of the listeners cannot be ignored.'

(P7) 'Of course it is important to understand the listeners. I do not deny it. However, I think it should not be the starting point and foundation of the sermon.'

#### B. Pastors' efforts to understand their listeners

Pastors make an effort to understand the listeners in many ways, such as reading bestseller books, watching TV programmes, newspapers, movies, visiting congregants with counselling and spending time with them.

(P1) 'I often cite from a bestseller that speaks to the mind of ordinary people... I begin a sermon with things that are not directly connected to the Bible... For the conceptual shift, I like to watch comedy programmes such as "Gag Concert."

(P2) 'The sermon that is heard should not be an easy sermon, but it should come from the culture and (the thoughts) of our church members in area A, in the middle of the city... My sermons adapt to them while playing, eating, reading and discussing with them.'

(P2) 'For 2 years I adapted my language for better understanding by non-Christians. I read the sports newspaper every day. That's how I became familiar with speaking the non-Christians' language...'

(P3) 'I was changed by watching a movie every week. I never watched them before.'

(P5) 'By visiting and counselling individuals, the pastor's understanding of the congregation has broadened. I am fully aware of the difficulties in their lives.'

(P6) 'In spite of myself, I follow the trend, because I am observing the hearers'

### C. The great importance of sympathy in preaching

Preachers realised the importance of sympathy in preaching. They tried to create mutual sympathy with the listeners and they responded that they were touched.

(P4) 'When the church members felt sympathetic toward the story told, they said 'the sermon was wonderful'.

(P5) 'I think it is not the content of text, but sympathy with the actors that touches the hearts of church members. They are not impressed with a well-known story, but when the Word sympathises with them, they weep and return with much feedback.'

(P5) 'I make an attempt to create more sympathy during the sermons. For example, speaking from my perspective, if I can incorporate my daily procedures such as at sunrise, sunset, eating and waking up. In my view, a good illustration raises sympathy.'

### D. Asking the listeners to apply the sermon

The preachers give the listeners the opportunity to apply the sermon, but guide them with categories of application. Sometimes the preachers give their story or testimony not as a direct application, but to guide them in their own application. One of the preachers thinks a cell meeting is the opportunity for an application. Only P7, who rejects the method of the New Homiletic, adopts the method of the New Homiletic for an open-ended application. That is because his predecessor often gave strong applications in his sermons and the listeners did not think about the text itself. The present preacher wants his congregation to be close to the Bible.

(P1) 'While I do ministry, I realise that I think if I say 'A', they would understand 'A', but the listeners often do not understand what I say. For this reason I guide the people who cannot decide on it.'

(P2) 'The Korean congregation cannot have open-ended sermons because they cannot create new categories for themselves. Therefore, when an open-ended sermon is applied to the Korean congregation, categories are presented to them to select from.'

(P4) 'I do not order particular things to be done in particular ways. However, as a matter of fact, there are cases where I seldom mention the application during my sermons. Yet I prefer to first illustrate my own ways of doing things before asking for theirs.'

(P5) 'I try not to emphasise the application during the sermon. Instead, I hand it over to the cell meeting.'

(P7) 'Application often becomes a principle. Sometimes, it may seem more important than the Bible's principle. It is even more dangerous. There is a trap within the application.'

#### E. Consideration of the sermon that is heard

A preacher pursues a sermon that is easy. He thinks that a sermon heard is better than a rational logical sermon.

(P3) 'Preaching must be clearly heard.'

#### F. High regard for the emotional touch

A preacher wants to touch the listeners' emotions. He always sings praises to God at the end of his sermons to raise feelings.

(P1) 'I do not think that knowledge and emotion are separated from each other. I think that if the interpretation, which interprets the text, is in contact with the life of the listeners, it should touch their feelings.'

(P1) 'Many people weep when they sing praises to God. As a result, people return with feedback like 'I was sincerely touched by the songs which corresponded with the content of the sermon'. It is not possible to sing the same songs every Sunday or sing a song that is even slightly off the point of the sermon. I try to find songs with lyrics precisely matching the sermon, and if there is none, I modify the existing lyrics.'

#### G. Using the preacher's story to make the listeners understand

Pastors who use the New Homiletical methods frequently tell their own story. The pastors who participated in this research (except for P7) use their story to make the listeners understand, to draw out the concern of the listeners or to connect the listeners to the text.

(P1) 'My preaching includes storytelling and I often tell my own stories. Yet, I do not order them directly to live like I have lived. Instead, I stand in a position where we share the same viewpoint.'

(P2) 'When I consider telling my stories, I analyse my success-to-failure ratio as 6:4.'

(P3) 'In order to draw out listeners' concerns, I have to tell my stories like 'As a pastor, I have problems that correspond to your concerns'. Therefore my stories, which reflect my mind, have to be revealed. I mostly use them as the introduction of a sermon.'

(P4) 'For better understanding of the listeners, I use simpler words to explain the meaning and I tell my story to reinforce the concrete application.'



(P5) 'I tell my story during the sermon. Its strength includes the touching of the listener's hearts. They are touched as they hear about my own worries and concerns.'

(P6) 'My sermon became longer for a reason. ... I bring in my story, a good testimony, to connect the listeners to the text. That is why my sermon is longer.'

#### H. Using a word to awaken imagination

Korean preachers use language that captures the imagination of the congregation. This method is often used by storytelling to let the listeners experience the event (Troeger 1990:13-30; Campbell 1997:121; Craddock 2001:63-78). One of the pastors said it is 'reading between the lines.'

(P1) 'I begin with David. I imagine the difficulty and fear he had to go through considering his situation. Although this is not found in the Bible, I use words that stimulate the imagination of the congregation in my introduction.'

(P3) 'I extended the story of Zacchaeus to the church members via imagination. I try to imagine the parts that are not mentioned between the lines of the Bible. It encourages empathy and understanding among the listeners.'

#### I. Making the text ambiguous

The result of a preacher using storytelling to create anticipation for the sermon in their congregation is that the congregation cannot guess the content of the sermon. They like to use the strategy of unfamiliarity. This method is found in Lowry's strategy. (Lowry 2001:23, 31, 32)

(P1) 'This is the reason why the listeners have expectations. The content of the sermon is obvious. However, the context becomes less obvious as more of the context is heard. The conclusion, nevertheless, is the same. Although the conclusion is the same, the listeners find it fresh. I consider it a failure if the sermon is familiar.'

(P3) 'The congregation will be curious about the conclusion of the sermon. I will preach the story of Jonah next Sunday, but they will not be able to predict the direction and the application of the sermon.'

(P3) 'The church members, who have believed in Jesus for 20 years, can predict what the preachers will say just by looking at the text or the title of the sermon. It needs the content to be unfamiliar to them to appreciate its newness.'

J. Rev Chansoo Lee mentioned as an example of a preacher using the New Homiletical methods.

While the researcher explained the term the New Homiletic to the participants, Rev Chansoo Lee was mentioned by them.

(P1) 'Pastor Chansoo Lee preaches with it (the New Homiletical preaching methods). I have not learned this method, but I found myself unintentionally preaching with this method... Pastor Lee deliberately makes the listeners weep with his preaching.'

(P6) 'I heard that Pastor Chansoo Lee prepares for sermons in a different way compared with mine. He focuses 20% on what to preach and 80% how to preach.'

#### K. Variety of ways to get feedback from listeners

Pastors receive feedback on their sermon from the congregation in a variety of ways. Traditionally, direct communication, at counselling or visiting church members, has been the only possible method to receive feedback. However, technology has developed, and methods of receiving feedback have been expanded. Now it also consists of electronic methods such as SMSs and SNSs. Likewise, there is an increase in the number of listeners who are listening through the internet or Christian broadcasting. It leads listeners not to be defensive, but rather offensive in their criticism of the sermon.

(P1) 'Indirect experience is the only possible way. By asking relevant questions, I come to know their own concerns and worries, questions that draw out their story from their hearts. I think there is no other way.'

(P1) 'Many church members frequently tell me about the preaching of other pastors as they listen to sermons through the internet or the Christian broadcasting.'

(P2) 'The congregation of my church returns many comments on the sermon. They criticise my sermon. 'Pastor, you realise that the preaching for today was pointless.' They criticise because they became Christians recently.'

(P4) 'I have received passive messages through KaKaoTalk (kind of SMS like WhatsApp) such as: 'Pastor, I was touched today'. Sometimes they upload a post on KaKaoStory (kind of SNS like Facebook) about the blessings they have received from the sermon.'

(P5) 'Feedback is received through counselling sessions: with the members who requested it or by visiting them as the cell leaders respond to the problems. In these cases, I mainly listen without speaking.'

(P6) 'The comments are often returned through the cell leaders or other pastors among the congregation or through the sharing of the testimony when I visit the members.'

## Category 2. Feedback on their sermon heard from the listeners

The researcher tried to hear the pastors' focus in their preaching with the question: 'What aspect of the sermons did they say they were blessed by?' They responded as follows:

### A. When their concern and their life were touched by the Word

Pastors are sensitive to the response of the listeners, especially weeping. They used the words 'sympathy', 'touch' and 'life' in the interview.

(P1) 'Many people shed copious tears almost every Sunday, during the service. I think the sermon is closely related to the problems in their lives – which they are concerned about.'

(P3) 'In the past, my preaching did not touch the congregation. Nowadays, they seem to like it because their hearts are touched. So they like it.'

(P4) 'When the concrete application of life is given to them'

(P5) 'When they sympathise with the Word, they say 'I am blessed' or shed tears.'

(P6) 'People who are suffering experience God's touch when they hear the sermon. People who visit the church for the first time also shed many tears because they were touched.'

B. When they were given concrete guidelines of life by the Word

(P2) 'I receive positive feedback after my sermon when I share detailed practical guidelines for the congregation to live as a Christian and a member of society.'

C. When they understood the Word of God

(P6) 'When they understand the Word of God, especially when they gain a clearer comprehension of the text, which they did not understand, they say they were blessed.'

(P7) 'Generally, they like my sermons because I preach only from the Bible, not other matters. I often received this comment: 'I like your sermon because you disclose the real meaning of the Word.'"

Category 3. The preaching of messages that pastors think church members want to hear

Many pastors think the congregation wants to hear the message of consolation because the economic situation in South Korea is worsening. On the other hand, P6 said something very significant: pastors have a problem because they cannot give a message of consolation all the time.

#### A. The message of consolation and being moved

Pastors think the congregation wants to hear the consolation message and to be touched in their hearts in the church because they live a fierce, hard life during the week.

(P1) 'I recently talked with a head of a household. He wanted to hear that God hears his prayers and will fulfil his desires. Yet he said that it was difficult and painful that the pastors' sermons did not meet his need to his satisfaction.

(P2) 'I think they expect a sermon that will considerably console their lives with God's love.'

(P4) 'I think the majority of my church members want to be consoled, as they live a tough life through the week. They would like to hear a message of consolation in church that allays their concerns.'

(P5) 'What they want most would be consolation. They want to be touched.'

(P7) 'The congregation wants an impressive sermon that touches their heart with warmth. I verified this over the past 10 years.'

#### B. The thoughtful want the word of God

P3 said that they expect a sermon that guides their life practically, not theologically. P6 confessed: 'I underestimated the congregation in the past.' He thinks what they really want is preaching from the Word of God.

(P3) 'I think they wonder if the pastor lives as he preached. They will also expect the sermon to guide their life in a practical way rather than theoretically, since the pastor is the teacher of the Bible.'

(P6) 'I thought the congregation wanted to hear the message that is consoling and pleases them. Perhaps many pastors think the same. Of course there are some who like to hear it. But during the 11 years of my life with the congregation, I realised that I have underestimated them and did not trust them. I now trust them. They truly do want me to preach according to the Word of God.'

#### C. The preacher's inner conflicts about the expectation of the listeners

Pastors responded that although the congregation wants to hear a consoling message, pastors cannot give it because they have to grow in faith. Pastors also think it is the gospel that must be preached rather than words of consolation.

(P1) 'I also want to give them what they want to hear. Of course, there are some stories in the Bible. But one specific member wants to hear how God will help him. So I am distressed because the Bible does not specifically say what he says he needs.'

(P4) 'I cannot say that. Instead I tell them that I know you want to hear the message of consolation from the Word, but you cannot hear only that message. We must hear what God tells us and understand as well as experience the power of the gospel.'

(P6) 'I think the Korean church should adhere more closely to the Word of God rather than preach what is popular with the people.'

(P7) 'I could not give them the message. It is my deep worry. They want to hear heart-warming stories from the preacher. So I am always sorry for the congregation.'

#### Category 4. The evaluation of the New Homiletical methods of pastors

Five of the seven pastors who participated in this research responded positively to the New Homiletical methods, but in the case of P6, although he has used the methods to a certain degree, he expressed a negative attitude toward it. P7, who use the typical herald image (Long 1989a:24-30), rejected the methods. The five pastors who used these methods disclosed their worries and concerns about the methods. Through the interview, the researcher found that Korean pastors still want only to deliver the word of God to the listeners; however, they do not spend much time preparing their sermon or doing Bible study. It is because they pay more attention to the ministry and the growth of the church than to preaching.

##### A. Positive evaluations of the New Homiletical methods

Five pastors responded positively to the question whether they accept the direction of the New Homiletic.

(P1) 'I preach in a form of storytelling.'

(P2) 'I fully agree with the direction of the New Homiletic.'

(P3) 'I am learning the methods at so-called sermon school.'

(P4) 'Nowadays, the majority of the pastors use these methods for preaching: I am one of them.'

(P5) 'I frequently merge the inductive method into my preaching pattern. I prolong the concerned issues, then resolve them with a conclusion.'

##### B. The opponents' thoughts about the methods

Two pastors expressed their negative thoughts on the New Homiletical methods. Their issues are related to the weakness of the power of its preaching the Word. They presented some issues caused by the New Homiletical methods.

(P6) 'I know that storytelling is an effective way of preaching, but Korean churches will have problems if it is the only method used. Storytelling is needed to catch the listeners' mind and to bring the message into direct contact with their lives. If the pastor focuses mainly on the proclamation, the listeners will not be interested in the sermon. However, if they preach in favour of the listeners, they will lose their respect and faith in the Word of God. It will also undermine the Korean Church.'

(P6) 'I believe people's feelings should be touched in order to change them. However, it is more important to change their thoughts and reasoning. Therefore, if a preacher tries to touch only their emotions, without changing their thoughts and minds, the preaching will be meaningless.'

(P6) 'Pastors Ok, Ha, Hong and Lee, these four evangelical pastors, were ministers to university students. They were the best preachers. Today's famous preachers were previous youth ministers. I perceived that the congregation in olden days had the standard of university students to listen to the Word. But the present congregation has the ability of middle school students to concentrate. I have to provide an illustration to draw their attention during my sermon.'

(P6) 'People expect the living Word from the pastor, but the pastor does not give what they want. I understand why. It is because they do not like to study the Bible...They talk about other issues, leaving the Bible open aside on the pulpit. They do not like to study it and therefore their knowledge of the Bible is deficient. They fail to recognise the authority of the Word and neglect their time with the Bible. Their preaching mainly depends on their mood or on certain books.'

(P7) 'I stand on the opposite side (of the New Homiletic). I cannot agree with it. Where should our starting point for the preaching be? Is it the need of the listeners or the need of God? When seeing a broad outline of the whole Bible, ultimately, it is not the need felt by the people but the real need of God. God



gave His message to the prophets and priests to instruct, teach and proclaim it to the people. This is the general pattern revealed throughout the Bible.'

#### C. The worry and concern of pastors who use the New Homiletic methods

P1 is a pastor who uses the New Homiletical methods. But he has concerns about using the methods. His first concern is that he found himself trying to touch the listeners' hearts. His second concern is that after preaching, the listeners just have the testimony or the illustration in the sermon, without the text itself. His third concern is that he could not stop using these methods in the sermon because they had a great attraction for him as the preacher.

(P1) 'I have something in my heart that desires to touch and move the congregation. So when I prepare a sermon, I already expect some points to have an impact on listeners' minds. The point that is expected to thrill them can become a huge stress.'

(P1) 'The New Homiletical methods you mentioned are big with the listeners. The sermon that is made by this method is highly in favour with the congregation. The temptation to use this method is really, really difficult to resist.'

#### D. The trend of the pastors regarding the sermon

Pastors said that they did not have lessons on homiletics at the seminary in the old days. They satisfied their desire to know how to construct a message at a Bible study meeting for the pastors. Recently many pastors have been learning how to preach at private institutions that teach the methods of the New Homiletic. The researcher's hypothesis that Korean pastors are more interested in the ministry and church growth than in preaching and Bible study was confirmed.

(P3) 'There are several institutes besides the one I attended that teach preaching skills. Some are more expensive than the others...We did not study preaching skills at the seminary.'

(P4) 'Recently, we don't talk about the sermon at the pastors' meeting. In fact, we just eat and talk a little about our ministry. We all are busy, you know...'

(P5) 'I, in fact, did not learn preaching skills at the seminary. In our days, the main instructor was Pastor Park, who told us 'Just preach from the Bible, do not speak about other matters.'

(P5) 'In the cell meeting of the pastors, they don't talk about the trend of the sermon but more about the mission field. We stopped studying the Bible together a few years ago. We just discuss the concerns of the pastors that take place in the church.'

#### Category 5. The directing point of pastors' preaching

Although the Korean church's pastors are excited by New Homiletical methods, they still set their sights on preaching the gospel of Jesus. They unanimously agree that it is the only way to break through these difficult situations in the Korean church, such as the decline in the growth of the Korean church; especially the young generation, aged between 20-40, is reluctant to join the church. The pastors' conscience states that only the gospel of Jesus and the Word of God should be preached, as it has been since the early days of a pastor's preaching career to this day.

A. In the early days of a pastor's preaching career they wanted to expose the meaning of the text.

In the early days of the pastors' preaching, they focused on transmitting the meaning of the Bible text. They concentrated on explanation, interpretation and application of the Bible message.

(P2) 'At that time, the explanation of the Bible was regarded as the most important factor for a sermon. I expected a better explanation and application of the Bible.'

(P4) 'I am not sure whether you know it. I studied the Bible inductively at the Precept institute, and prepared resources for sermons there.'

(P5) 'The first task of the sermon, as always, was to disclose the meaning of the text through careful study.'

(P6) 'If I think of it now, I think I did an exegesis of the text.'

B. They think only the gospel can fascinate the young generation

Preaching the gospel is the main aim of the Korean evangelical church's pastors. Some pastors give an example of what they experience by the expository preaching of the book of Romans. They speak with one voice about the great importance of evangelical preaching more than any other technique.

(P2) 'I did expository preaching on the book of Romans for about 8 months. The young generation showed interest in the gospel and thereby gained assurance of faith. In the same way I also gained assurance of faith.'

(P4) 'If the young generation has truly experienced the power of the gospel, would they criticise the church? They will rather risk their life for Jesus Christ...'

(P5) 'Although I follow the methodology of the New Homiletic as you mentioned before, I think the core of the message should not pursue the need of the people but rather emphasise what the text says in its context.'

(P5) 'What I figured out about the 20s to 40s is that they adapt when the pastor gives them the clear gospel. They adapt even more when the non-substantial things of the church are not important.'

(P6) 'I once preached on the book of Romans for a year. At that time, it was very difficult and I just wanted to stop preaching....I preached for dear life. It felt like reaching the summit of a huge mountain. In hindsight, it was helpful to form the structure of faith of the congregation.'

(P6) 'I am confident that there is no solution without Jesus Christ, the relationship with him, and living according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. At all times, the sermon should be based on the gospel.'

(P7) 'When you listen to the young generation, you know what they want. They are not fascinated with the culture in the church, but with the gospel. They want to hear about the gospel of Jesus Christ and the truth about Him; according to the Bible. They come to the church for the gospel. When the gospel is proclaimed, they are fascinated.'

Category 6. Increasing the interest of the communal and public aspects in the sermon

Campbell (1997:142-144) points out that one of the weaknesses of the New Homiletic is the loss of the social and public character of Christianity in the sermon because it pays too much attention to the individual. The researcher examined the social and public aspects in the sermons of the Korean evangelical pastors who follow the methods.

A. Increasing the interest of the social and public aspects in the sermon

Traditionally, the evangelical pastors were classified as conservatives who were interested in the individual faith and their congregation. They have been criticised by various sectors, including social activists, and naturally the message developed toward the social aspects.

(P2) 'I give a ratio of 7:3 for the balance between individual faith and communal aspects in my sermon. I am trying to raise the ratio to 6:4'

(P3) 'I preach on themes such as faith, the church community, life of the individuals, life at work, life at home, and the life involving your neighbours... I even thought about poverty and the year of Jubilee as themes, but I could not preach on these as my thoughts had not reached them yet.'

(P4) 'I do not preach much about the responsibility of society. This theme weighs less than the other subjects.'

(P5) 'The number of subjects in which an evangelical church was interested was too narrow; for example, the subject of protecting the environment. It was dealt with at the University of Hansin, but we are now preaching on it.'

(P6) 'I am interested in the responsibility of the present local community to the next generation and to the people man of this age. I give it the rate of 7:3 or 6:4, not more, in my preaching.'

(P7) 'I have altered my preaching. The earlier sermons focused on the faith of individuals. After I reached the age of 50, my perspective broadened and became comprehensive. I attached significance to the kingdom of God and the communal aspects of the gospel.'

(P7) 'The young generation pays more attention to the public aspects of the gospel than to the individual aspects. I discovered that the interest in individuals increases with age. Conversely, the altruistic view dominates in the younger generation. People think the young generation of today is engrossed in pursuing their career and job hunting. However, they are interested in the public aspects of society.'

(P7) 'God's kingdom does not emphasise one side. It is the unity of the two domains and what the gospel speaks about. That is why I repeatedly spoke about its balance and changed the direction of my sermon.'

## B. The emphasis on the communal aspects in the church

The communal aspects pastors emphasise are not aggressive, but moderate. The researcher examined the areas of the pastors' interest. Pastors emphasise the interest of the local community around the congregation, the disabled and the poor. Some pastors acknowledge the need to expand into the social domains the evangelical church has not attended to, such as the protection of the environment and the concern of justice.

(P1) 'The congregation's motto in our church is 'A believer should shine brighter outside than inside of the church'... The reasons for the absence of an afternoon service in my church are to allow the members time to be with their families during the afternoon, as they were blessed in the morning. They should also rest to be able to work on Monday. Hence, 'live for God's kingdom from Monday onward' is the other motto of our church.'

(P2) 'Every April has the special period of Easter, like Islam's Ramadan. During this period, topical sermons that focus mainly on the ministry are also preached at cell meetings. We also contributed donations during this period. Last year, the theme of the sermon was justice, and poverty, wealth and various other matters were related to this theme.'

(P2) 'After watching a good video on the impropriety of the social structure, we had a discussion. I focused on the matter of living as a Christian among the members of society.'

(P4) 'Our church has a department for disabled people and a welfare centre....I often preach about taking an interest in and caring for neglected groups, e.g disabled people, the poor and vulnerable members of society.'

(P5) 'I think, in the broad sense, all of these can be themes for the sermon; such as the thoughts about the conservation of and care for the environment. We even changed our lamp to LED...We are trying to deal with domains we did not handle before. No one else can be more powerful than us (church) in this

area. None are stronger than the church, not necessarily our church only, but including others.'

### C. Avoiding political issues

Pastors do not handle issues concerning public aspects aggressively, but with moderation. They do not touch on the issues of politics because the issue is very sensitive in South Korea.

(P1) 'I always begin with the life of individuals...but I seldom mention the political issues.'

(P2) 'I think it is a problem if a pastor does not mention societal issues because he thinks that the church is separate from the society. The church should point the way for society, but the rest should be left as a choice. However, I do not speak about politics.'

(P4) 'I am apt to exclude political issues from my sermon and do not preach about social responsibility, because many parts of it are related to political issues.'

### D. Concerns of the pastor pursuing community aspects

Pastors are considering the balance between the interests of the individual and public aspects. But almost all pastors who are interested in public affairs place the importance of the individual above that of such matters.

(P2) 'I especially liked Rev Cho. He consoled suffering church members with the Word of God without scolding them for their selfishness. I think it was the right thing to do, until he mistook his next step. However, nowadays it is done in an inverted way. Pastors do not touch or console the hearts of their church members who are hurt by the aspects of the public sphere.'

(P6) 'I believe that the health of our church thoroughly depends on a person's faith. Gathering up every individual forms a big cogwheel. When the history is

seen as a big cogwheel, the church turns the wheel and the church engages with each individual, leads the enormous cogwheel of God. Since it is so, the problem of justice, ethics, education, politics, and justice can naturally not be neglected.'

## 6.2 Analysis of laypeople's interviews

In analysing the laypeople's interviews, the open coding produced 69 codes, 23 sub-categories and the following 5 main categories.

### Category 1. On the preachers' methods used for preaching

Preachers often bear the listeners in mind and use their own stories, testimonies and experiences as illustration to help the listeners to understand the sermon. They put special stress on the emotional touch and on preaching to get sympathy. As regards to the application of the preaching, preachers leave the right to choose the application of the sermon to the listeners. Laypeople listen to the sermons of famous preachers mainly through the internet and apps on smartphones. They listen enthusiastically to the sermons, especially to those of Pastor Chansoo Lee, which are mentioned by all of those who are over 40 years of age.

#### A. Respecting the listeners

In the interviews with the laypeople the researcher learned that the preachers no longer preach in an authoritative manner, but try to share the same viewpoint with the listeners.

(L1) 'In the first place, the distinctive change of attitude was noticed. He tried to make it entertaining by telling some jokes, hoping this would make the sermon sound easier and more comfortable for us to understand.'

(L3) 'The pastor formally prepares his sermon with 3 points, but he uses a story line during his interpretation. He does not emphasise the academic or



charismatic aspect. When he shares the message, he considers the level of the church members.'

(L5) 'As you know, the old pastors preached from the position of a herald for God rather than the position of a sinner. Nowadays the pastor preaches from the same position as the listeners: as sinners. The pastor links our life and the Word in order to guide our life in righteousness.'

#### B. Using the preacher's own story and testimony as illustration

Preachers tell their story and testimony rather than others' stories and testimonies.

(L1) 'It touches them better when illustrations are given rather than a command or an order. Even I do not remember the entire sermon. But those remain in my mind.'

(L2) 'The pastor often shares his testimony and experiences during his sermon. He repeatedly talks about his children and also shares a story of his first acquaintance with his wife. Now it is a well-known story among the congregation.'

(L3) 'He applies many illustrations and also shares his testimonies and experiences during his sermon.'

(L4) 'Yes, he frequently talks about it. He talks about his experiences and illustrations during the previous week.'

(L5) 'When he tries to share something about a Christian's life, he tends to share his own stories rather than the stories of other people.'

(L5) 'That is right. Illustrations and story lines soften the sermon and make the sermon more impressive.'

(L7) 'I do not have an aversion to the illustrations and the stories told by the preacher.'

#### C. The emotional touch

Preachers are interested in touching the hearts of the church members as they are influenced by the trends of the times.

(L5) 'He touches the hearts of the thirties and the forties through preaching. He also shares their concerns.'

(L7) 'The pastor has some aspects of susceptibility. The Wednesday service, led by him, is a so-called nostalgia service. Through this emotional service, the listeners' hearts are touched. Women especially tend to like his sermon. This seems to be a change from the past.'

#### D. Preaching with sympathy

The method that raises sympathy is one of the vital techniques of the preacher.

(L5) 'In olden days the young generation could not find parts in a sermon that evoked their sympathy. Then came the pastor who is of the same age as us. His sermon is very simple and has a message directed toward us. In the beginning of the sermon, he includes illustrations.'

(L7) 'He frequently shares sympathetic messages.'

#### E. Giving the listeners the right to decide their application of the sermon

Although preachers guide the applications of the sermon, they leave it to the listeners to choose the applications rather than giving an order.

(L1) 'When the pastor makes an application during his sermon, it is better to give an illustration about someone else.'

(L7) 'Yes, he did it no matter what...The application is always related to a sermon so it can be shared by individuals in the cell meeting. We share the applications of the sermon of the earlier week in the cell meeting. It is done especially in this way.'

#### F. Listening to other sermons

Today's audience is very active. They listen to the famous preachers' sermons on the internet or on their smartphone apps.

(L3) 'There is flood of good sermons these days. I receive sermons from KaKaoTalk and see them on Facebook.'

(L4) 'I recommended the sermon of Missionary Kim Yonghee on the web (Godpeople) to church members when I had a chat with them.'

(L5) 'There are many good sermons on Christian radio and in the media these days... I, my wife and my sister-in-law listen to the sermons of famous preachers, including my senior pastor, on the website of the church or through apps on smart phones.'

#### G. Rev Chansoo Lee is mentioned as a representative preacher these days.

All of the participants who are in their 40s and 50s mentioned Pastor Chansoo Lee in the interview, the researcher confirmed that he is using the methods of the New Homiletic.

(L5) 'I think Pastor Lee's sermon touches the sensitive parts of the hearts very well.'

(L7) 'I often listen to the sermons of Pastor Lee, who is very emotional. He praises God during the sermon by singing songs. His sermon mainly consists of testimonies, and in a way it touches and influences the congregation.'

(L8) 'The strongest point of pastor Lee's sermon is that it touches the pinpoint of their sufferings. He has an excellent way of knowing the heart of the suffering people. These points are different from those of the other pastors.'

## Category 2. Laypeople's comments on sermons

Five of the eight participants who answered the question: 'If you were blessed by your pastor's sermon, what aspects of the sermon were you blessed by?' said that they were touched by the clear preaching of the Word. Other responses (in order of importance) were the preacher's sincerity in preaching, a message that is applicable to life and a consolation message.

### A. Understanding the Word

The laypeople responded that they were blessed when they understood the Word or they knew the meaning of the Bible rather than when they were touched or received a consolation message.

(L1) 'I was glad. I knew the story from long ago, but he brought up new aspects of it that I was not aware of.'

(L2) 'There are many contexts of the Bible that I happen to know or that have changed my point of view through the pastor's preaching. As I listened to the sermon, I found new aspects of the Word. The pastor teaches the Bible in such a way that it is comprehensible. Furthermore, he provides an application for the way of living.'

(L3) 'I am impressed when the meaning of the text or the background has been expounded in an unfamiliar way. Similarly when the message is linked to today's situations and the times of the Bible, I am impressed.'

(L5) 'Young men like his message as it is easily arranged in a logical and rational way. Hence the messages are concise and clear... In addition, he preaches in a series for four or five weeks. This improves our memory.'

## B. Feeling the preacher's sincerity in his preaching

The incidents that recently took place in the lives of famous preachers disappointed the congregations, and they feel it is more important for their preachers to live a sincere life according to the message than using eloquent words.

(L3) 'When the pastor preaches in a simplified form, it usually impresses me because it looks as if it is part of his daily life. He is not an eloquent speaker nor does he use eloquent words. He just shares a few words.'

(L4) 'I am impressed because I feel that the pastor is sharing the truth rather than what the listeners want to hear.'

## C. Messages applicable to life

The congregation is blessed when they hear the message is applicable to life.

(L3) 'I can see an insight in his preaching which can be applicable to life.'

## D. Listening to consolation messages

The members who are afflicted by the economy want to listen to consolation messages.

(L8) 'After preaching, the church members said with one voice. 'How does the pastor know my situation? It seems like he is looking into my concerns.'

## Category 3. Expecting to hear from the preaching

Five of eight laypeople who responded to the question: 'What message do you want to hear from your pastor's preaching?' said, in order of preference: preaching that explains the message of the text in depth, preaching that coincides with the message and life of the pastor, preaching that touches the heart, and preaching that preaches only the gospel of Jesus.

## A. Preaching that explains the meaning of the text in depth

The message the congregation expects to listen to is not a message that can be understood outside the church, but a message that explains the Bible in depth from a theological view.

(L1) 'The present idea about preaching is that the sermon is focused on the individual's life, but the meaning of the text itself is seldom stated at special conferences. As the pastors study the Word, there are many things we are not familiar with. Therefore I want the sermon to interpret the context and the Bible for us.'

(L2) 'I expect the preachers to preach in such a way that we can easily understand the context of the Bible. I wish he can teach us more in depth about the Bible. I expect him to preach about a text that has not been preached about before.'

(L3) 'I expect to hear a sermon that is rooted in the Bible. This sermon should not refer to the one who preaches or be what the preacher wants to say. The method of preaching should be studied, e.g. consider the background of the text, the relationship with other books and the frame of the entire Bible... What I would like to hear from the pastor is sermons that are based on what they have learned at the seminary.'

(L3) 'I expect to hear the sermon that strongly challenges our life; for example, your life has a problem, what you are doing is wrong, God wants you to do this, you should be like this at work, etc... I think that if the sermon only says if you serve and attend the church you will be blessed, it is not good.'

(L4) 'I sincerely expect from the pastors to preach the Words from God. I want them to acknowledge God's mind and hear His voice about what God really wants his people to hear, like the prophets of the Old Testament. They heard God's Words and had a close relationship with Him. They also proclaimed the message of consolation and reproach to the people.'

(L7) 'Especially on the issue of money and finance, I think stronger words are necessary. Of course there will be some people who will be hurt by it. The preaching should be balanced.'

(L8) 'I personally long for a sermon that is preached only on the context of the Bible. The sermon that is focused only on the meaning of the Bible, the historical and cultural background rather than adding superfluous illustrations. I would like to hear more about the things that cannot be learned by self-study. I hope to be filled with it.'

#### B. Preaching that corresponds with the message and life of the pastor

The congregation wants to listen to a sincere sermon rather than a consolation message.

(L3) 'The key words of these days are sincerity and trustworthiness. Many people mention these words. I think it is the reason why pastors who take centre stage these days receive credit. They do not preach brilliantly, but they look as if they live according to what they preach.'

(L5) 'The congregation trusts the pastor when the pastor's words and his behaviour correspond.'

#### C. The preaching that touches the heart

The congregation expects to hear the message logically and affectively.

(L5) 'The message of the pastor is very good, but I wish the pastor would become more emotional. For example, when he shares his life, I expect a more sincere testimony that touches the heart.'

#### Category 4. Dissatisfaction with the preaching

When the researcher asked questions about the laypeople's opinions on their pastor's sermons and whether they hear opinions from others on sermons in

general, the laypeople began to share their complaints about their own church and of the church in general. The majority are disappointed with famous preachers. The laypeople who often listened to their sermons expressed deep disappointment at the bad behaviour of these famous preachers. They said the behaviour has become known through the media. It blocked the spreading of the gospel and has facilitated the movement of anti-Christianity. The laypeople criticised the use of the preacher's story and testimony as illustration, saying it is boring and it just leaves them without the main message in their memory. Some criticised the poor sermon content, consolation preaching without reproach, and dissatisfaction with the intent to touch the feelings mentioned.

#### A. Disappointment with preachers

All the pastors who were known to behave badly were once famous preachers. The loss of these preachers' reliability has a strong negative influence on the whole Korean church and has changed laypeople's view of pastors.

(L2) 'There were many incidents at the megachurches. The pastors seem to be cautious after those incidents. When their preaching does not correspond to their actions, the message they preach cannot be trusted by the congregation, even when they preach the gospel.'

(L3) 'I do not expect much of the preaching. It is true that preaching is important in the Protestant faith, but it is not all of it. Recently, there are many things that make you feel disappointed about the excellent preachers.'

(L7) 'I liked Rev J's sermons in particular. I listened to them on the way to work and on the way back. But as soon as the issue of his immorality was revealed, the messages were not in my ear.'

(L7) 'I think there are not many church leaders who are influential and respectable. It is a pitiful situation.'



## B. The preacher's own story and an illustration

A message that does not evoke sympathy and a preacher's story that is repeated too often annoy the congregation. One of the participants said that using too many illustrations disturbs concentration on the main message.

(L1) 'Yes, I think it is desirable for the pastor to share his own story with us during the sermon to apply it to our lives. However, the story often fails to touch our hearts or to gain sympathy.'

(L2) 'I like the fact that the pastor exposes his story about his family life, but he repeatedly speaks about it. I sometimes think that the story should no longer be told in the sermon. The visitor at the church who visits for the first time might feel intimacy, but to the church members it is a pain in the neck when they hear the story repeatedly.'

(L3) 'I went to listen to the Word of God, then the pastor spoon-fed the Word to us. I expected a more unrefined form of the Word. I think the pastor is underestimating the listeners.'

(L3) 'Today's sermons tend to be too easy. In some cases there is no content in it, but it is filled with illustrations and testimonies. In the end, no message was left.'

## C. Antipathy to the touching of feelings

One of the laypeople revealed apathy toward a preacher's touching of hearts on purpose.

(L3) 'I believed in Jesus for 20 years. I wept many times, but it did not change my life. There were some sermons that did not give me a restlessness of emotion but I still remember the message. It influenced my life.'

#### D. Poor sermon content

One of the laypeople expressed strong dissatisfaction with a sermon that is poor in content. He said pastors underestimate the listeners.

(L3) 'As we, human beings, are the spiritual beings, we are concerned about the problems and the meaning of our lives. However, the sermon is not about these concerns we have. The church seems to think that members will not come to church if the pastor preaches on issues that are serious and intense. The office workers come to church to listen to intense messages, but the pastor preaches about things we can hear outside the church.'

(L3) 'According to someone, the sermon does not have to be a theological lecture, but in many cases the sermon does not consist of theological ideas. People would like to know about the Word of God.'

#### E. Consolation preaching without reproach

The congregation wants to hear consolation messages but also messages that rebuke, correct and train in righteousness.

(L4) 'According to what others have said, there are many sermons that are pleasant to listen to, sermons that comfort and console without any reproof or blame.'

(L7) 'Korean churches do not preach about money anymore. Maybe once or twice a year...The recent problems of the megachurches are money, sex, succession and household problems. These kinds of problems occur because the value of the church has collapsed.'

#### Category 5. Public aspects revealed in the sermon

Six out of eight people who participated in this research responded that the sermons are concentrated on individual faith rather than on communal and public aspects. But the pastors emphasise social aspects in announcements or

at prayer meetings, not in the preaching. The domains in which the church practises social and public aspects are usually aid, sharing with the poor and the disabled, North Korean defectors and the local community.

A. The sermon's high regard for individual faith

Pastor's sermons focus on individual faith rather than on social, communal aspects.

(L1) 'It seems that the pastor regards praxis to be the most important. Yet, he seems to preach more about individual faith to prepare us. He does not apply it to its public aspects.'

(L2) 'The pastor preaches in a ratio of 6:4, with individual faith 6 and the public aspects 4.'

(L3) 'The message is related more to individual faith... He does not speak about social responsibility or public accountability. He rather preaches about individual faith.'

(L4) 'The pastor focuses about 30% on individual faith and 70% on nations and countries. The pastor mainly speaks about the direction of the progression that the church should take and the responsibility of society. He at least speaks about our responsibility towards our city, Gwangmyeong.'

(L5) 'Individual faith occupies about 70 or 80% of the sermon and the public aspects occupy about 20 or 30%. The pastor preaches more on individual faith rather than on public aspects.'

(L7) 'He focuses more on individuals. The ratio is about 6:4.'

(L8) 'The pastor does not speak about individual faith anymore. It is about 20 %... He focuses more on the responsibilities in society and what the church has to do.'

B. Emphasising the public aspects at prayer meetings or announcements rather than in the sermon

While pastors said they emphasise the public area, the laypeople said the sermons are focused on individual faith, but in announcements or at prayer meetings the emphasis is put on the social, public area.

(L1) 'The pastor barely preaches about the country or North Korea, but sometimes he mentions them in prayer meetings or during prayer.'

(L3) 'It is interesting. Although the church plays a huge role in society, the pastor does not emphasise social responsibility in the sermon. He does not mention communal and public aspects. He rather focuses on individual faith... However, the pastor emphasises it when he makes announcements or at some other times. So I do not think the emphasis on public aspects is insufficient.'

(L7) 'The public aspects are revealed in the ministry. But he preaches about them only a little from the pulpit.'

C. The sermon evades a political colour

Evangelical preachers do not mention political issues in their sermons.

(L3) 'The pastor does not reveal sensitive political issues or colours of it.'

D. Communal aspects performed in the church

The laypeople responded that the congregations are interested in aid, sharing with the poor, the disabled, North Korean defectors and the local community.

(L2) 'Our church serves disabled people, multicultural families and neglected classes of people. Recently we started to focus on children, foreigners and seniors.'

(L3) 'Our church is situated in Paju City, where there are many North Korean defectors. The church takes care of them as well as of disabled people and focuses on the education of our children.'

(L4) 'We visit elderly people who live alone. We started an after-school programme and a piano institute, as there is a gulf between the rich and poor and there are many broken families in this area. The church also opened a Recovery Centre with a vision for the next generation.'

(L5) 'Our pastor emphasises relief for the poor. The church helps them with its piggy bank. The church uses this money for scholarships. The church also helps its neighbours and supports their ministry abroad.'

(L7) 'The church is interested in the ministry to North Korea, social responsibility, voluntary service in prisons, etc.'

## 7. CONCLUSION

This research is a qualitative study to investigate the experience of the sermon in the Korean church by pastors and laypeople.

This research was conducted by means of semistructured interviews with seven pastors and eight laypeople of the evangelical faith, residing in Seoul and its metropolitan areas, within the age limits of 20 to 59 years.

The data was analysed according to the method of Pieterse. Six categories of answers of pastors and 5 categories of the laypeople emerged from the collected data. The categories were rearranged into 4 themes.

The first theme is the New Homiletical methods used by preachers. In the first category of two groups, he could determine the extent of the New Homiletic in the Korean church through the interviews with the pastors and the laypeople. The researcher found that the Korean preachers have already turned from the

traditional 'herald image' of the preacher to the 'pastor image'. They take great interest in the listeners and use methods of the New Homiletic such as evoking sympathy, where the sermon touches the listeners' emotion, by using the preacher's stories, imagination language, and by making the text ambiguous. Many participants mentioned Rev Chansoo Lee spontaneously as a representative preacher who uses the New Homiletic methods.

The two groups agree on many points in the first category, but there are differences. For example, laypeople like to listen to sermons of famous preachers on the internet or on an application on their smartphones, but pastors do not listen to others' sermons and are greatly interested in their own ministry and church growth rather than in preaching.

The second theme is feedback about sermons. The researcher asked the pastors: 'Which aspect of the sermons made the listeners say they were blessed?'. The laypeople were asked: 'By which aspects of the sermon were you blessed?' There was a difference between the two groups. The majority of the answers from the pastors were that it was the listeners' concerns and life that were touched by the Word. The majority of the answers of the laypeople were: when we understood the Word. The researcher asked the pastors another question: 'What message do you think your church members want to hear?' Many pastors answered that the church members wanted to hear a message of consolation. The majority of the laypeople answered the question: 'What kind of message do you want to hear from your pastor?' with 'preaching that explains the meaning of the text in depth'.<sup>43</sup>

There is a second perception gap about the sermon between the two groups. First, there is a difference in the perceptions of the Sunday sermon. Pastors put

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<sup>43</sup> It is an interesting result that laypeople want to listen to the gospel and the Bible. The results are similar to those of the American survey that researched with questions and interviewed 128 churchgoers in 2001 (Mulligan, Turner-Sharazz, Wilhelm and Allen 2005:1-5). The listeners in America also wanted to listen to sermons that respected the authority of Scripture and were based on Scripture. For more information, see *Believing in Preaching: What Listeners Hear in Sermons* (2005).

the focus on middle-level listeners to get their attention in the sermon, because there are a variety of levels among the people. But many of the laypeople who participated in this research wanted to listen to sermons that explain the meaning of the text in depth, at least in the Sunday service, because they have no time to attend other services. Second, laypeople's expectations of the sermon differ because of the level of their belief and the age of their faith. As L8 mentioned, in the beginning of her belief she expected a consolation message, but after experiencing healing by the Word, she is not satisfied with a consolation message, she wants to listen to a message that is rich in the Word. Therefore the expectation of the sermon is proportional to the maturity of the Christian faith of the listener.

The third theme is cognition of the sermon by the pastors and the laypeople. Although the pastors of the Korean church are accepting and using different methods, they feel the preacher's mission is still to bring God's word only. The laypeople of the Korean church look forward to sermons that preach the Bible in depth, delivered by a preacher whose life supports his/her message, rather than preaching that touches hearts and is focused on the listeners or is simplified for easy listening.

The fourth theme is the social and public responsibility of Christians expressed in the sermon. As Campbell (1997:142-143) pointed out, the weakness of the New Homiletic is that if the preaching focuses on the individual, the interest in the social and public aspects of Christianity will disappear from the sermon. This research shows that the Korean church focuses on the individual rather than on public aspects in the sermon. The pastors say they emphasise the communal and public aspects in the sermon, but according to the laypeople this emphasis occurs in announcements or at prayer meetings rather than in the preaching.

In Chapter 4, the researcher will examine the New Homiletic, which is mentioned in this research, in terms of its origin, features, background and central issues as well as a distinguished scholar's insistence. The researcher

will also examine the positive contributions and the negative effects of the New Homiletic.



## Chapter 4 The New Homiletic

The pulpit in South Korea looks forward to a change in preaching. The Korean church has not examined the reality of using the New Homiletic, nor its impact on the pulpit, yet it uses it. Fortunately, the time of Craddock's *As one without authority* (1971) is past. Since then many theories of the New Homiletic have been applied in the North American church with scarcely any resistance, but its positive and negative effects were revealed to the academic world (Thompson 2001:1).

As the interpretative task, this chapter will interpret the situation of the Korean church regarding the New Homiletic. It will be a guide for better understanding the Korean church's situation and its preaching.

This chapter will first research the background of the New Homiletic. Second, it will observe the central issues of the New Homiletic as well as the assertions of Craddock and Lowry on the New Homiletic. Third, it will attempt a critical evaluation of the New Homiletic.

### 1. WHAT IS THE NEW HOMILETIC?

Eslinger (1987:14) used the term 'the New Homiletic' because he wanted to contrast the form of the new sermons with the old orthodox topical preaching. Eslinger (1987:11-15) presented five types of New Homiletic preaching as story, narrative in the black tradition, narrative and the sermonic plot, the inductive method in preaching, and a phenomenological method of preaching. Lowry (1997:12) emphasised that 'the New Homiletic has evoked new images and new definitions.'

First a survey of the traditional homiletics will be conducted to exhibit the distinguishing features of the New Homiletic. Thereafter the social and theological background of the emergence of the New Homiletic will be researched.

## 1.1 Features and limitations of the traditional sermon

Generally, traditional sermons can be divided into three types, namely deductive, propositional and one-way sermons.

The deductive sermon, starting with the main theme, explains the general truth and applies it to particular situations (Allen, OW 2010:3). Rose (1997:20) says: 'The deductive sermon begins with a statement of truth and then seeks to convince the congregation of its validity, using illustrations and facts as proof. The movement is from the general to the particulars'. The deductive sermon is normally called the three-point sermon because it normally uses three sub-themes in the description of the main topic.

The second type is the propositional sermon. In the traditional sermon, rational logic and analytical thought in the sermon are considered to be important, because the goal of traditional preaching is to teach the lessons of the text and 'transmit the sermon's truth or message to the congregation' (Jensen 1980:28; Rose 1997:15). Revealed divine truth is understood to come basically in propositional form; therefore, in the traditional sermon, faith is to be created in the congregation when the ideas proposed are true and logical (Jensen 1980:27). To do this, logical thinking and a rational approach are essential. Jensen (1980:27) said 'the sermon (the traditional sermon) is developed in a logical, sequential and linear manner'. Meyers (2008:133) said the goal of the traditional sermon was transmission of the idea. In this way, the traditional

homiletics is related to the cognitive-propositional approach to doctrine as classified by Lindbeck<sup>44</sup>.

Another feature of the traditional sermon can be found in Cox's claims. 'Preaching is one-way communication. We have received a message, and we have to pass it on' (Cox 1985:51). The preacher, who receives the message or truth, is the sender, and the congregation is the receiver (Rose 1997:15). This relationship is like a baseball game, with the preacher as the pitcher and the congregation as the catcher (Cleland 1965:104; Freeman 1987:11).

As seen from the above descriptions, the preacher's role is more important than anything else in the traditional homiletics. The preacher is the channel of God's word, which has authority and is higher than the congregation. Sometimes the preacher is portrayed as 'the conduit between the word of God, the Bible, the ecclesiastical tradition, or the Spirit, on the one hand, and the congregation, on the other' (Rose 1997:15). According to Thomas Long's classification (1989a:24, 26) of images of the preacher in the traditional homiletics, the preacher is the model of the herald, who proclaims the message of the Bible.

The listener was excluded from the process of sermon-making and was simply a passive receiver. The listener easily lost interest in the sermon, and the preacher's attempt to persuade the audience failed. Van Hart (1992:14) says that the preacher's concern was "what is said" rather than "what is heard."

A traditional sermon, which does not have its chief focus on the listener, is unsuccessful in making the listener part of the sermon process.

## 1.2 Background of the New Homiletic

The New Homiletic did not occur in a vacuum. Its development was mainly influenced by two factors: first, the change in the social and ecclesiastical

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<sup>44</sup> Lindbeck's three classifications of doctrine are described in more detail in Chapter 5, section 1.2.

situation that took place during the 1960s and the 1970s; second, great changes occurred in theology and hermeneutics. Consequently, prior to the discussion of the New Homiletic, these two crucial factors are discussed in order to facilitate understanding of the New Homiletic.

### 1.2.1 The social and ecclesiastical background of the appearance of the New Homiletic

The emergence of the New Homiletic had profound implications on the situation in the United States during the 1960s, when that country experienced a tremendous change. Craddock (2010:41) reminisces about his first semester as a professor 'I was aware in 1965 of the revolution of the '60s – a social revolution, a sexual revolution, a drug revolution.' Bailey (1988:55) called this change a 'whirlwind'.

'Many foundational beliefs and ideas were discarded and a search for new answers began. A time of change most often brings about new ideas and new ways of expression. Churches all across America experienced significant change during this period. With the churches, preaching was also greatly changed.'

The causes of the whirlwind that blew in society and the church were the following:

#### 1.2.1.1 The growth of the electronic media technology

A new feature of the 1960s was the growth of media technology. Bailey (1988:58) says: 'Many new forms of media came into being and into increased usage' during this period. These changes occurred in the whole of society. For example, there were changes in printed publications; from the late 1960s, newspapers, magazines and books started to decline.

On the other hand, the electronic media were rapidly growing and were increasingly becoming the dominant source of information. The growth of the electronic media became a threat to direct verbal communication such as

preaching (Mehl 1970:206). Print logic was asked to change to oral discourse (Allen, OW 2010:6).

Stott (1982a:70) laid out the statistics in America: 'According to surveys conducted in 1970 and 1971, the weekly average (TV) viewing time for adults was 23.3 hours' and added that 'television makes it harder for people to listen attentively and responsively, and therefore for preachers to hold a congregation's attention' (Stott 1982a:70).

Many listeners accustomed to electronic media were bored by the sermon more easily than the previous generations. Preachers experienced difficulty in communicating the gospel to the congregation, which made preachers begin to re-evaluate the traditional sermon (Allen, OW 2010:7).

#### 1.2.1.2 The collapse of tradition and authority

The second significant change that occurred in the 1960s was a challenge to authority. According to Craddock (2010:41), the change of 1960s was 'an attack on tradition and authority, which included the pulpit.' Craddock's comment shows how much American society was in a chaotic state, because traditionally the church was trusted above other institutions in America (Whitfield 1991:153).

Bailey pointed out the problem of authority regarding preaching. 'At one point preaching and worship in the church went unquestioned, but during this time of change (the 1960s) the people were unwilling to accept the authority behind preaching' (Bailey 1988:59). It seriously shook the authority preaching had enjoyed previously.

The crisis of authority occurred among the better educated classes. However, 'this crisis of authority is a forward step in the process of faith,' said Bailey (1988:59). Simultaneously, the authority of the clergy, spiritual authority and the authority of the Scriptures were questioned (Mullin 2008:264-65).

### 1.2.1.3 The decrease in the numerical growth of church

After World War II, the church of the United States experienced continued growth due to economic growth and population increase. Mullin (2008:261) said 'the churches were filled, seminaries were bursting, and the place of religion seemed secure.' However, Kelley (1972:1) said a significant change then occurred in the United States church. 'In the latter years of the 1960s something remarkable happened in the United States: for the first time in the nation's history most of the major church groups stopped growing and began to shrink.'

### 1.2.1.4 A paradigm shift occurred in the traditional pulpit

The growth of the electronic media technology, the collapse of tradition and authority and the decrease in numerical growth of the church required a paradigm shift in the traditional pulpit to solve the issues facing the church in the new era (Howe 1967; Randolph 1969; Reid 1967).

Reid (1967:25-33) identified criticisms of preaching during the 1960's: preachers were using language the average person did not understand, most sermons were boring and irrelevant, the preaching lacked challenges, did not communicate, it did not lead to change in the congregation and preaching. Howe (1967:26-32) referred to complaints made by congregations against the preaching of that period: sermons contained too many complex ideas, too much analysis and too few answers; they were too formal, used too much theological vocabulary and were too propositional. Sermons gave no guidance how to apply the presented message to everyday life. Seminaries changed the curriculum to place more emphasis on psychotherapy and counselling than on preaching and homiletics (Turnbull 1974:318).

Besides the changes in society and the church, the request of the congregation for a change in sermons and preaching was an important reason for the emergence of the New Homiletic. However, hermeneutics and theology played an even more important role in the appearance of the New Homiletic.

## 1.2.2 The changes in hermeneutics and theology

In 1960 changes were coming to theology and hermeneutics. Historical criticism, which had been in fashion for nearly two hundred years, faced a critical phase after the resultant epistemology of the Enlightenment and the rise of science (Brueggmann 1993:1). Previously, homiletics was influenced by the movement of biblical studies, but at this point it was being affected by the radical shift in hermeneutics. The preacher hoped that two-way communication would be better than one-way communication (Bailey 1988:70). During this time, the New Hermeneutic appeared, and the New Homiletic has its roots in the New Hermeneutic (Gibson 2005:476; Allen, OW 2010:5). Therefore, the features and the insistence of the New Hermeneutic, which is directly connected with the New Homiletic, will be examined.

### 1.2.2.1 The beginning of the New Hermeneutic

The New Hermeneutic began during the slump in traditional hermeneutics. Interest in the traditional hermeneutics dwindled, resulting in its stagnation and downfall. Bultmann (1961:193) said: 'In the course of the nineteenth century, interest in hermeneutics continually diminished, and lectures on hermeneutics disappeared from the lecture lists.' During this time, the New Hermeneutic appeared. Robinson (1964:6) clarified the reason for the decline and the renewal centre of hermeneutics:

'The Greek noun *hermeneia* thus embraced the whole broad scope of 'interpretation', from 'speech' that brings the obscure into the clarity of linguistic expression, to 'translation' from an obscure, foreign language into the clarity of one's own language, and to 'commentary' that explicates the meaning of obscure language by means of clearer language. The profound implication that these functions belong together as interrelated aspects of a single hermeneutic was lost in traditional hermeneutic, which was the theory of but one aspect of *hermeneia*, exegesis.'

Thus traditional hermeneutics:

'...did not build upon *hermeneia* in its rich suggestiveness of the interpretive interrelatedness of language, translation, and exegesis, but

rather limited itself to but one dimension of interpretation, exegesis, ... It is his narrowing inherent in the term hermeneutics, set off on the one side from criticism and on the other from exegesis, that gave the discipline in recent times a specialized, technical connotation partly responsible for its neglect in theological education' (Robinson 1964:10-11).

Therefore, the New Hermeneutic separated itself from the current thought at that time. The New Hermeneutic, in contrast to the traditional hermeneutic, was distinguished by the 'rather explicit return to the breadth of *hermeneia*' as a 'new grasp of the proportions and nature' of the hermeneutical function (Robinson 1964:6).

## 1.2 The advocates of the New Hermeneutic

The name 'New Hermeneutic' is credited to the American scholars James M. Robinson and John B. Cobb in *The new hermeneutic*, published in the 2nd volume of *New frontiers in theology*. Robinson and Cobb agreed with the distinction between traditional hermeneutics and the New Hermeneutic as proposed by Fuchs and Ebeling. They omitted the 's' from hermeneutics, and added the word 'new' to hermeneutic (Robinson and Cobb 1964:X).

Known as the most important advocates of the New Hermeneutic, Ernest Fuchs (1903-1983) and Gerhard Ebeling (1912-2001) not only studied together in Tübingen (Ebeling 1963:15), but were influenced by their former teacher, Bultmann's existential interpretation as well as the work of Schleiermacher, Dilthey and Heidegger, who insisted on the important role of preliminary understanding, or pre-understanding (Gibson 2005:476).

Ebeling and Fuchs, who worked as pastors for a long time, considered the relevance and effectiveness of Christian preaching. They were interested in:

'How does language, especially the language of the Bible, strike home to the modern hearer? How may its words reach through the preacher's own understanding so that when they are repeated, they will be his words? How may the word of God become a living word which is heard anew?' (Thiselton 1986:78).



In the New Hermeneutic, the core issue is how the Bible may speak to us anew as well as come alive in the present (Thiselton 1977:309, 329). They did not see the Bible as 'a collection of eternal truths' or as 'history' but as a '*word event*' (Allen, OW 2010:5).

Ebeling (1973:15-80) asked why a sermon from the pulpit to a modern person sounded like an odd language. Ebeling (1967:4) added, 'Never before was there so great a gulf between the linguistic tradition of the Bible and the language that is actually spoken'. For him, the gulf between the preacher's theology and the listeners' reality was a problem threatening preaching (Gibson 2005:476). Fuchs's concern was also to fill the gap. One of his central questions is: 'What do we have to do at our desks if we want later to set the text in front of us in the pulpit?' (Fuchs 1964:8; Gibson 2005:476). Therefore advocates of the New Hermeneutic were interested in how the language, especially the New Testament, which was far from our reality and was destroyed in 'atoms of speech', could speak to us anew (Ebeling 1973:71; Gibson 2005:476).

### 1.3 The assertion of the New Hermeneutic

As seen in the name, 'the New Hermeneutic', it differs from the traditional hermeneutics. One aspect of the New Hermeneutic was new attention paid to the character of language. The linguistic turn was the biggest change in the twentieth century. The philosophers, including Ludwig Wittgenstein, claimed that 'language does not simply name reality; language constructs reality' (Allen, OW 2010:5).

The emphasis of the New Hermeneutic on language is related to the change of Heidegger's insights. Ott (1966:276) wrote, 'It is under the influence of Martin Heidegger that the problem of language has most recently entered into theological discussions.'

The idea of language held by the New Hermeneuticians differed radically from the previously accepted idea. For them language no longer served 'a secondary and purely pragmatic function'; rather it was the 'very quintessence of human

life' (Kysar 1969:216). Kysar (1969:215) described the New Hermeneutic as 'a movement to understand all of theology and indeed all of human life in terms of language and its interpretation'. Kay (2007:86) also mentioned that 'the New Hermeneutic no longer understands its task simply as the interpretation of texts, but more broadly as the interpretation of existence by means of texts':

'In some cases the same word can be said to another time only by being said differently' (Ebeling 1971:265).

Two aspects of the New Hermeneutic in relationship with the New Homiletic will be examined.

### 1.3.1 The language-event

In the New Hermeneutic, the first and most obvious motif' was 'the constant use of the category *word or language-event*' (Kysar 1969:217). Ebeling used the term 'word-event' (*Wortgeschehen*) and Fuchs used 'language-event' (*Sprachereignis*). The names were borrowed from Bultmann's characteristic term 'saving event' (*Heilsereignis* or *Heilsgeschehen*). Robinson commented that Fuchs's 'language-event' and Ebeling's 'word-event' were synonyms (Robinson & Cobb 1964:57).

Jensen (1980:62) explained:

'Hybrid German words were created to make the new understanding of language clear. Fuchs used the term language event (*sprachereignis*) and Ebeling spoke of word-happenings (*wortgeschehen*). In either case we see the oral character and power of language reasserting itself. Words do things. Words make things happen. Words have power over our lives.'

Words have the power to change the whole course of a day, a week and, for some, an entire life. Words do have creative power. They can turn life around for us. Thus the New Hermeneutic scholars viewed language as the key to man's understanding of his existence as man and of his world (Ebeling 1967:26).

To Ebeling, a language-event was not mere speech but an event in which God himself is communicated. 'The basic structure of word is therefore not statement – that is an abstract variety of the word-event – but appraisal, certainly not in the colourless sense of information, but in the pregnant sense of participation and communication' (Ebeling 1964:103). Ebeling (1963:331) argues that 'the sermon as a sermon is not exposition of the text as past proclamation, but is itself proclamation in the present - and that means, then, that the *sermon* is EXECUTION of the *text*'.

### 1.3.2 The reversal of the traditional subject-object approach to biblical interpretation

One of the 'distinguishing characteristics' of the New Hermeneutic was the view that language was itself interpretation (Robinson 1964:3). Traditional hermeneutics, in contrast, had viewed language as the object of interpretation. Until now, interpreters were the active subjects and the text was the passive object who passively responded to interpretive questions from the traditional angle. The New Hermeneutic understood language to be an actor rather than a label one attaches to passive objects.

McKnight (1978:77) shows the difference between the traditional and the New Hermeneutic angle through Bultmann's and Fuchs's hermeneutical approaches:

'Bultmann desires to interpret the text of the New Testament scientifically, and chooses the existential level of questioning. For Fuchs, however, the text wishes to interpret man.'

The relation was reversed: the New Hermeneutic presumes that the text is the subject and interpreters are the object. For example, when the reader reads the Bible, the biblical text interprets the reader. The reader is faced with the word of God at that moment. The text catches the reader rather than the reader's question and intention governing the text (Klein, Blomberg and Hubbard 1993:50). Robinson (1964:23-24) described the reversal:

'Thus the flow of the traditional relation between subject and object, in

which the subject interrogates the object, and, if he masters it, obtains from it his answer, has been significantly reversed. For it is now the object – which should henceforth be called the subject matter – that puts the subject in question.’

Understanding the biblical text was the goal of traditional hermeneutics. The New Hermeneutic theologians called for a shift to understanding through the text. Ebeling (1963:318) commented:

‘The primary phenomenon in the realm of understanding is not understanding of language, but understanding through language. The word is not really the object of understanding, and thus the thing that poses the problem of understanding.’

Funk (1966:59) elucidated it with the attitude to the New Testament as between Pharisee and sinner: ‘the Pharisee is the one who insists that he is the interpreter of the text, whereas the sinner allows himself to be interpreted by the text’. Funk (1966:58-59) cited from Fuchs to explain the position of the text by means of the master and servant relationship.

‘The text is therefore not only the servant which preserves kerygmatic formulations, but much more a master which initiates us into the linguistic context of our existence, the context in which we exist ‘before God.’”

The next section will deal with how the New Hermeneutic has influenced homiletics as regards language.

## 2. ANALYSIS OF THE NEW HOMILETIC

The New Homiletic was influenced by many things, such as social and ecclesiastical changes as well as changes in theology and hermeneutics. But the changes in theology and hermeneutics opened the way and served as a major breakthrough to homiletics, which was faced with a crisis. This section will investigate the central issues of the New Homiletic, which was influenced by the New Hermeneutic, and the assertions of the representatives of the New Homiletic.

## 2.1 Key issues of the New Homiletic

The influence of the New Homiletic was widespread in the later part of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century. Although the New Homiletic takes a variety of forms and a variety of features, at the centre of the New Homiletic is its single emphasis on the human experience (Gibson 2005:478). Campbell (1997:120) commented:

‘However, despite their difference, these authors share some significant common ground. All of them, in reaction against cognitive-propositional preaching, give a central place to human experience in preaching; at the heart of narrative preaching in its various forms is the ‘experiential event’ evoked by the sermon.’

In traditional homiletics, the responsibility to explain the word of God rested solely on the preacher; in the New Homiletic, the listeners work together with the preacher to experience the meaning of the text. The emphasis in sermons moved from sending the information of the text to evoking an experience in the hearer that was relevant to them and their world (Gibson 2005:478).

For this reason, the traditional sermonic model failed to reach the contemporary listeners, who are accustomed to visual technology. To them, the traditional discursive sermon and authoritative language are no longer effective. Therefore, it is important to experience the gospel. The New Homiletic has three central issues regarding the New Hermeneutic, which emphasises the experience of the sermon.

### 2.1.1 The sermon as cooperation between listener and preacher

Immink (2004:100) said that in the New Homiletic ‘the purpose of preaching is not to transmit cognitions, but to facilitate an event to be experienced’. Previously the interest of the listener was marginalised, but with the emergence of the New Homiletic, the interest of the listener has been greatly increased (Long 1993:167-188; Allen 2003:1).

The traditional sermon is a one-way sermon given by a sovereign preacher, and it is a cognitive–propositional sermon to convey information to the listener. The New Homiletic is concerned about the listener, and ‘the listeners and preacher together create the experience of meaning’ (Gibson 2005:479). Campbell (1997:120-121) insists that the New Homiletic is based on the experiential-expressive model instead of the cognitive-propositional model.<sup>45</sup>

Long and Allen also mentioned the feature of the New Homiletic that turned to the listener. Long (1993:169) observed that preachers and homileticians are paying attention to listeners. Allen (2003:168) said: ‘In the last forty years, many authorities on preaching speak of a turn to the listener.’

One of the characteristics of the traditional sermon is that the conclusion and application are presented mostly at the end. A preacher wants to reach a conclusion after he has proposed the word of God through the text, because what he/she wants to say is presented clearly in the conclusion.

The characteristic of the New Homiletic is related to the distinguishing characteristic of the New Hermeneutic, the reversal of the subject and object in biblical interpretation. The subject-object reversal in the biblical interpretation proposed by the New Hermeneutic led to the change in the relationship between the preacher and the listener in the traditional homiletics. Therefore the New Homileticians take other positions than the traditional preaching mode, where the preacher presents the conclusion of the sermon. They criticise the traditional sermon types that concentrate too much on the preacher and consequently ignore the listener. A sermon must communicate (Craddock 2001:14-15).

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<sup>45</sup> To understand the experiential-expressive model, see Chapter 5.

## 2.1.2 The recognition of the importance of language

The development of science and historical criticism has brought confusion and distrust about faith and religious language (Craddock 2001:7). For this reason, the New Homiletic realises the importance of language emphasised in the New Hermeneutic. Today studies on the nature and function of language are one of the energy centres in homiletics.

Language is crucial in the New Homiletic because language not only evokes, but also creates experience. Preaching is not conveying the meaning of the Bible, but experience for today. The New Homiletic in its relationship with language is qualified in different ways: poetic, narrative, imaginative, creative and transformational (Immink 2004:100).

Markquart (1985:175) states the three reasons why preachers need to take language seriously. First, the gospel comes through languages. Second, language is the foundation of all communication and is at the heart of all I-Thou relationships. Third, language is one of the crucial tools of our trade. He cited the writings of Luther to assert the dynamic and creative functions of language (Markquart 1985:175):

‘Although the Gospel came and comes every day through the Holy Spirit alone, nevertheless, it came by means of languages, spread through them, and must also be maintained through them... And let us realize that we shall scarcely be able to maintain the Gospel without languages.’

Rose also agreed that the emphasis on language is the greatest characteristic of the New Homiletic. She says language shapes human consciousness and words are events; ‘The sermon’s words continue to be the locus for an encounter or an event’ (Rose 1997:67).

### 2.1.2.1 Preaching as a speech-event

‘In line with the new Hermeneutic, a new homiletic would understand the uniqueness of the homily to lie in its character as *event*’ (Randolph 1969:24).

Homiletical literature did not show great interest in language as such until the generation of the New Hermeneutic. The traditional homiletics became ineffective, boring and obsolete with the changing context. Eslinger (1987:11-12) depicted this situation:

‘The blank stares and congregational inattention can be sensed by pastors who preach week in and week out. For most of us, the realization has long since occurred that the old conceptual preaching simply is not heard by most of those in attendance. It has ceased to be a ‘Word-event’; the words go out from the pulpit, but never even find their way into the consciousness of the hearers.’

Randolph (1969:1) gave a definite shape to the teaching of Ebeling and Fuchs and termed it the New Homiletic. He defines the New Homiletic as follows: ‘Preaching is the event in which the biblical text is interpreted in order that its meaning will come to expression in the concrete situation of the hearers.’ Randolph (1969:7) expands on the description of preaching as event:

‘The sermon is becoming understood as *event*, and event means encounter, engagement, and dialogue: the end of “monologue” in the pulpit. Preaching as a one-man affair is a thing of the past, to be replaced by that kind of participatory experience in which those present know themselves involved, even though only one man may be vocalizing at the time. The sermon is being understood as event, and the consequences of this are beginning to be understood in a new way.’

The New Homileticians accept the emphasis of the experience as an ‘existential Word-event’, as the New Hermeneutic insists. They understand that preaching is an event of creating and changing something in the experiencing view. Naturally, the preaching becomes the ‘Word-event’ of an ‘experience event’. Through the event, the change takes place by an individual’s experience (Campbell 1997:122). OW Allen (2010:6) explains the New Hermeneutics’ influence on homiletics: ‘Instead approaching Scripture as history or as a collection of eternal truths, or even as myths to be demythologised, they viewed Scripture as *word event*.’



The central concern of the New Homiletic is not what sermons say, but what they do (Randolph 1969:vii; Kay 2007:77). McFague (1975:78) also referred to this: 'They are not primarily concerned with knowing, but with doing'. There is a shift from traditional homiletics based on determining the original meaning of the text to the sermon as a speech-event that 'discloses its meaning through its relationship to its context, to the faith, and to us' (Randolph 1969:49). The sermon is seen as an event or experience.

#### 2.1.2.2 Preaching as narrative and story

In traditional preaching, story-oriented preaching has been replaced by propositional preaching. Since the primary goal of traditional preaching is to teach truth and transmit the knowledge of the Bible, the sermon points are extracted from the text in a rational manner of logical and analytical exposition.

By contrast, as the New Hermeneutic advocates, the New Homiletic has paid ample attention to the parables. The New Homileticians prefer the parables of Jesus and their plots rather than the wisdoms of the epistles of Paul, which carry on theological debates (Campbell 1997:120). Because the parable is in a nonpropositional form, it is one of the best vehicles for evoking change in the listeners by appealing to new feelings and experiences (Lowry 1985:79).

One of the excellent results of the New Homiletic is that it discovered that narrative configured three fourths of the Bible. This caused them to take note of the narratives and to count on them to create an experience of the gospel for the listener.

Story and narrative spur the listeners' imagination. Turner (2008:398) explained the relation: 'Through image, metaphor and story, imagination can be piqued and theological world views expanded.' 'Story provides visual imagery for a sermon'. Craddock (2001:63-78) laid the foundation for storytelling with imagination and image.

### 2.1.3 Recognising the importance of the movement of the sermon

Traditional sermons inevitably lose the flow of the sermon when structured in the three-point format. The listeners increasingly lost interest and became passive. The sermon was boring, the listeners closed their minds. To remedy this situation, the New Homiletic proposes three strategies.

First, the New Homiletic does not follow the three-point sermon style, which does not move: it emphasises a natural movement through which we experience the gospel. Craddock's inductive sermon form has movement; it is like a journey where the preacher and the listeners travel together to a particular destination (Campbell 1995:271; Turner 2008:397).

Second, the New Homiletic does not begin with conclusions; instead, preachers intentionally delay revealing a resolution 'by using the logics of mutual problem solving' (McClure 1995:45).

Third, the New Homiletic recognises the importance of changing from space to time (Lowry 1985:12).

## 2.2 An analysis of representatives of the New Homiletic

OW Allen (2010) mentioned the five pillars of the New Homiletic. Charles L. Rice, Fred B. Craddock, Henry H. Mitchell, Eugene L. Lowry and David Buttrick. Lowry (1997:15) portrayed the New Homiletician with metaphors: 'Davis' *tree* and Craddock's *trip*, but also R. E. C. Brawne's *gesture*, Tom Troeger's *music of speech*, David Buttrick's *move*, Henry Mitchell's *celebration*, Lucy Rose's *conversation*, David Schlafer's *play* and Paul Scott Wilson's *spark of imagination* - as well as my *plot*, of course.'

Their literature was introduced to South Korea from the latter half of the 1980s,<sup>46</sup> with Craddock and Lowry the best-known scholars there of the New

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<sup>46</sup> Buttrick's book *A captive voice* was translated in 2002. Bartow's book *The preaching moment*

Homiletic.<sup>47</sup> Three of Craddock's books have been translated into Korean.<sup>48</sup> The first volume, *As one without authority*, was prominent in 2003. The second volume, *The cherry log sermons*, was translated in 2006. The third volume, *Preaching*, was translated in 2007.<sup>49</sup>

Lowry was introduced earlier than Craddock. Three of Lowry's books have been translated into Korean. The first volume, *The homiletical plot*, was translated in 1996. The second volume, *How to preach a parable: Designs for narrative sermons* was translated in 1999. The third volume, *Sermon: Dancing the edge of mystery*, was translated in 2008.

The two New Homileticians who are well known to and had great influence on Korean preachers will be investigated.

### 2.2.1 The inductive sermon of Fred Craddock

Craddock's influence in the field of homiletics is vast. Many preachers were affected by his emphasis on induction, plot and movement (Gibson 2005: 478). Although Randolph (1969:17) coined the term 'New Homiletic' and stated that 'Preaching is understood not as the packaging of a product but as the evocation of an event' (Randolph 1969:19), according to Lowry (2001:122), Craddock actually opened a new preaching era with his book *As one without authority* in

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was translated in 1988. Buechner's book *The sacred journey* was translated in 2003, *Telling the truth* was translated in 1986. Davis's book *Why we worship* was translated in 1983, Troeger's book *Ten strategies for preaching in a multi media culture* in 1998 and Waznak's book *An introduction to the homily* in 2003.

<sup>47</sup> Un-Yong Kim of Presbyterian College and Theological Seminary is one of the homileticians who greatly influenced the Korean church with the New Homiletic. His doctoral dissertation's title was *Faith comes from hearing: A critical evaluation of the homiletical paradigm shift through the homiletical theories of Fred B. Craddock, Eugene L. Lowry, and David Buttrick, and its Application to the Korean Church in 1999*.

<sup>48</sup> A number of commentaries that he has authored have been translated in Korean. such as on Luke, John, Philippians, 1 and 2 Peter and Jude.

<sup>49</sup> This book was translated by Young-IL Kim in 1989 at Concordia Press, but retranslated by Woo-Jae Lee, who researched Craddock in 2007 at Dae-seo Press.

1971. Campbell (1997:119) also judged that contemporary homiletics had not exceeded many of Craddock's achievements.

#### 2.2.1.1 The inductive sermon raising listener's experience

Craddock (1979:vi), who was originally a New Testament scholar, began to lecture on homiletics from 1965 at the Graduate Seminary of Phillips University. Craddock's chief goal is to involve listeners actively in the whole sermon process and to effect a new hearing of the gospel (Craddock 1978:79; Campbell 1997:126). He wrote the book *As one without authority* (1971) at the Ebeling Institute at the University of Tübingen (Campbell 1997:131; Kay 2007:78; Meyers 2008:133). In the preface to the first edition (Craddock 1979:vi) he indicated that he was 'at the University of Tübingen, where the resources of the Institute for Hermeneutic contributed greatly to the orientation and content of this book.' This shows that his thoughts and work are based on Ebeling and the New Hermeneutic.

Craddock (2001:52) introduced his method, inductive preaching, as derived from the doctrine of the incarnation as well as the natural state of human beings: 'Everyone lives inductively, not deductively' (Craddock 2001:50). Craddock emphasised the experience of the listener in the sermon. He defined a good sermon as seeking the hearers' experience of the text and not simply their knowing what it says (Craddock 2001:55). For this reason, Long (1993:169) called his preaching 'listener-oriented preaching.' Craddock starts with human experience and finishes with human experience in the sermon (Campbell 1997:129). Craddock (2001:46) suggested the inductive sermon as an alternative to the deductive sermon, which to him was a failed method, because it did not consider the congregation and was undemocratic:

'There is no democracy here, no dialogue, no listening by the speaker, no contributing by the hearer.'

The image of his inductive preaching is a journey on which the preacher and the listeners set out for a destination together (Campbell 1995:271; McClure

2007:62). He strives to intentionally delay the conclusion. 'The conclusion does not come first any more than a trip starts at its destination, a story prematurely reveals its own climax, or a joke begins with the punch line.' (Craddock 2001:52). He creates suspense and tension in the early stage of the sermon, because both of them can hold the listeners' interest until the existing problem is resolved at the end (Allen, OW 2010:9).

His method began with this question: 'Why not re-create with the congregation the inductive experience of coming to an understanding of the message of the text?' (Craddock 2001:99). Craddock, as a biblical scholar, involved his listeners in the process of discovering the message of a biblical text, namely exegesis (Brothers 2008:391). He said 'Exegesis is inductive if it is healthy and honest' (Craddock 2001:99). The experience of the gospel, according to Craddock, must be created by both the preacher and listener equally.

a) The conclusion is open-ended

Participation in the sermon by the listener does not only mean involvement in the process of discovery of the message, but also gives the freedom to complete the sermon (Craddock 2001:53). The preacher is not a commander who gives a conclusion, but a helper and a guide who assists the listeners to reach their own conclusion in their own lives (McClure 2007:63).

Craddock (2001:35) insisted 'The Word of God is not interpreted; it interprets'. This idea is based on one of the principles of the New Hermeneutic relating to the reversal of the traditional subject-object approach to biblical interpretation. Campbell (1995:270) explained: 'Inductive movement encourages the listeners to think their own thoughts, feel their own feelings, draw their own conclusions, and make their own decisions so they will have ownership of the message.' No longer is the preacher a dictator; he/she becomes a sharer of the gospel.

## b) Emphasising the form of the sermon

Craddock (2001:38) questioned 'why the Gospel should be impaled upon the frame of Aristotelian logic, when his muscles twitch and his nerves tingle to mount the pulpit not with three points but with the Gospel as narrative or parable or poem or myth or song.' Craddock (1985:177) said 'No form is so good that it does not eventually become wearisome to both listener and speaker'. He emphasises the form of the sermon, insisting that the choice of sermon form should be influenced by the form of the text. Just as biblical genres are different, so sermon forms are various. The preacher should select the form of preaching suitable to the listeners' circumstances:

'An unnecessary monotony results, but more profoundly, there is an inner conflict between the content of the sermon and its form. The minister is seriously affected by the conflict. The content calls for singing but the form is quite prosaic; the message has wings but the structure is pedestrian.'  
(Craddock 2001:113-144)

### 2.2.1.2 The interest in language

Under the influence of Fuchs and Ebeling, Craddock emphasises the linguistic dimensions of the sermon. Like Ebeling and Fuchs, Craddock's (2001:35) concern was 'not understanding of language but understanding through language'. He further states:

'In this encounter with the text, the Word of God is not simply the content of the tradition, nor an application of that content to present issues, but rather the Word of God is the address of God to the hearer who sits before the text open to its becoming the Word of God. Most importantly, God's Word is God's Word to the reader/listener, not a word about God gleaned from the documents' (Craddock 2001:92).

Therefore, Craddock (2001:29) asserts that we understand through language and that words 'create and give meaning to human experience.' Within this experiential framework, Craddock states that the sermon becomes an 'experiential event', and evoking an 'experiential word event' in the listeners is his goal of preaching.

He argued that the language of Christian preaching was dynamic, creative and transforming (Craddock 2001:5, 35-36, 112-14), but the pastors turned the word, which has creative power, into a lifeless record (Craddock 2001:30, 37). As regards the language of the preacher, he pointed out that the words of many preachers – ‘must’, ‘should’ and ‘ought’ – are too authoritarian and commanding. Inductive sermons should be more ‘descriptive than hortatory and more marked by the affirmative than the imperative’ (Craddock 2001:49). For this reason he tried to recover the power and meaning in words in order to overcome the crisis of preaching (Craddock 2001:7-8).

### 2.2.1.3 To emphasise the sermon’s movement

When movement is absent from a sermon, the sermon loses flow and the appropriate use of imagination, which are the crucial factors of Craddock’s inductive preaching theories. Craddock (2001:80) explains the relation between the unity, the movement and imagination of the sermon:

‘If the point has been made that the primary characteristic of forceful and effective preaching is movement, then it should now be said that unity is essential to that movement. There can be no movement without unity, without singleness of theme.’

Craddock (2001:46) described the inductive method as ‘an interpretation of human existence today and then moves to the text’. Inductive preaching is totally different from traditional preaching, i.e. deductive logic, which has a persuasive purpose with rhetoric. Inductive preaching moves from the concrete experience toward a general truth (Craddock 2001:79-94; McClure 2007:62). The movement does not exclude the listeners; it invites them into the preaching and intentionally delays their arrival at the destination (McClure 2007:63). He shares the communal experience with the listeners.

## 2.2.2 The five stages plot of Eugene Lowry

### 2.2.2.1 The sermon as experience

Craddock is interested in the listeners' active participation as collaborators in the sermon; similarly, Lowry's (1997:31) major interest is evoking an experience of the listeners in the sermon. He asserts that a sermon must move from cognitive preaching to experiential preaching (Lowry 1985:11-28). Lowry (2001:8) understood that a sermon is not a logical assemblage, but an event-in-time. His starting point is that the Bible itself is non-propositional. To him, 'Propositional statements viewed formally can be no more than dead skeletons of what once was lived experience' (Lowry 1985:79) 'At worst, propositional thought by its very nature distorts and even reforms the experiential meaning so that it is scarcely recognizable' (Lowry 1985:80). Therefore, the understanding of Lowry's preaching that a sermon evokes an experiential event (Lowry 1997:32) shares its roots with the New Hermeneutic. To Lowry, the term 'event' is related to Fuchs's language-event and Ebeling's word-event.

Lowry is interested in the structure of the sermon. It differs from Craddock's; Lowry (2001:3) suggests a novel characteristic form, a more practical map for effective preaching than Craddock. For this practical map, Lowry uses the homiletical plot that keeps listeners in suspense during the sermon.

He dislikes writing the sermon on the bulletin, because it interrupts the experience of the gospel:

'In the context of preaching, focusing on memory retention is to rob the hearers of the immediacy of experiencing the gospel proclaimed. Memory retention is not the central focus of the sermonic goal. The focus is creative engagement with the Word. The goal is not communicating information' (Lowry 2010:91).



#### 2.2.2.2 Lowry's narrative sermon method

Lowry (2001:17) found that the existing sermon format is not appropriate to attract the listener. He suggested a more detailed method to achieve it by using narrative.<sup>50</sup> Lowry's five stages are well known as the Lowry Loop. Although the theory was revised to four steps in *The sermon: Dancing the edge of mystery* (1997): 1) conflict, 2) complication, 3) sudden shift and 4) unfolding, many people still like Lowry's clear and simple five stages: 1) Oops! 2) Ugh! 3) Aha! 4) Whee! 5) Yeah! He uses a metaphor for effective preaching, keeping the listeners tense: from 'itch' to a 'scratch' or from problem to solution (Lowry 2001:19).

The first stage is to upset the equilibrium of the listeners. To ensure active participation and interest of the listeners, he creates conflict and tension: 'In any case, the purpose of the opening stage of the presented sermon is to trigger ambiguity in the listener's mind' (Lowry 2001:35).

The second stage is analysing the discrepancy. This is the longest stage in the preaching process. The preacher analyses the discrepancy with the question 'Why'. 'Instead of description or illustration, what is needed in this second stage of sermon presentation is depth of analysis' (Lowry 2001:44). But in his later writing in *The sermon* (1997), he changed the name of this second step to 'complication'; because 'analyzing the discrepancy' looks like a logical and rational sort of sermon (Lowry 2010:92).

The third stage is disclosing the clue to the resolution. This stage reveals the missing link, allowing the listener to move from problem to solution, 'the one piece which allows the whole puzzle to come into sharp focus. Such a revelatory clue is experienced by the congregation rather than simply known' (Lowry 2001:54).

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<sup>50</sup> Lowry made clear that his narrative sermon is based on Craddock's inductive method (Lowry 1993:94)

The fourth stage is experiencing the gospel. Once we have gone through the diagnostic process and have found the clue, we are ready to experience the gospel. Therefore this stage is called the treatment stage (Allen, OW 2010:14). Lowry tries in this stage 'to view the gospel as continuous with human experience after human experience has been turned upside down' (Lowry 2001:79). In this stage Lowry's change in attitude is seen. He combines the third stage and the fourth stage and names them 'sudden shift', *peripeteia* (Lowry 1997:74-75).

The fifth stage is anticipating the consequences. The traditional sermon finishes with a conclusion or application to the life of the listeners in the final stage. But Lowry does not clearly conclude. His sermon is also open-ended, like Craddock's. 'This final phase of sermonic closure will suggest a new door opened, the new possibility occasioned by the gospel' (Lowry 2001:81). In *The sermon* (1997) he uses the term 'unfolding' instead of 'anticipating the consequences', because he wants to avoid negative associations and to ask the listeners to constantly consider 'now offered in Christ' (Eslinger 2008:80). Immink (2014:114) said his plot is 'a dramatic performance' that retains the tension by a grand finale.

His narrative plot resembles a television series plot rather than a movie plot. Both television series plots and movie plots begin with a discrepancy or an ambiguous attitude, but the plots of television series run to a known end while a movie plot goes to an unknown end (Lowry 2001:22-23;94). In this process, a television viewer wants to know how the plot will unfold. Lowry (2010:84-85) reminisces on why he chooses a particular television programme:

'It was enormously helpful because many of the most popular shows had the kind of simple narrative plot line that could be utilized in helping students unaccustomed to narrative categories discover how in fact to shape a sermonic plot.'

One issue Lowry mentions is that the sequence of his five stages can change in a new situation, for example in these days of a world of interconnected media

such as personal computers, smartphone and internet.<sup>51</sup> He says: 'Sometimes the plot goes 1-2-3-4-5, sometimes it goes 1-2-4-3-5, other times it may go 1- 2-3/4-5.' (Lowry 2010:93).

### 2.2.2.3 The sermon emphasising time rather than space

One of the features of Lowry's five steps is movement. In movement discrepancy is very important. Lowry (2010:81) said: 'No discrepancy, no movement from itch to scratch, probably a muted message!' Lowry (2010:82) emphasises time rather than space. He said 'a sermon is not an object in space but an event in time'. He even says 'timing is everything' (Meyers 2008:131). For this reason, he uses the intentional delay strategy to expose the meaning of the sermon. Lowry (1985:14) follows the principle of narrative preaching of the parables of Jesus Christ, because the parables of Jesus are the best example of ordering in time not in space. Lowry (1993:108) insists:

'Just as a parable seeks not to make a point but to be one, so narrative preaching seeks not simply to report some extrinsic gospel truth, but to be the truth. At the back of this concern is an understanding of revelation as event.'

According to Lowry (1985:17), 'those who order experience and whose task therefore is to shape will find their sermon form to be a process' and the sermonic process conveys movement and transition. Although events and themes are not contradictory, those who take Lowry's position emphasise events beyond themes.

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<sup>51</sup> Lowry suggests the revised four steps and the episodal sermon in *The sermon*. The emphasis of the episodal preaching, however, appears in *Narrative renewed* (2010). He explained episodal preaching as an updated narrative preaching model in postmodern ages because the television series is more complicated than before; 'The multiplicity of subplots running underneath a major plot in current television programming, described above, is clearly following episodal form' (Lowry 2010:96). But this chapter focuses on his plot rather than the episodal preaching in order to reveal the features of the New Homiletic.

### 3. CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE NEW HOMILETIC

The New Homiletic has changed a stream of homiletics and has made a valuable contribution to homiletics since 1960. This contribution will be examined below..

#### 3.1. Contributions of the New Homiletic

##### 3.1.1 Realising the significance of the listener in contemporary homiletics

The biggest contribution of the New Homiletic is to engage the listener in the sermon. In contemporary preaching, the experience of the listener is the significant issue of the sermon. In this way, the New Homiletic has pointed to the importance of the connection between preacher and listener (Gibson 2005:480).

The participation of the listener in the sermon appeared in two ways. The first was a change in the manner of communication. As Craddock and Lowry mentioned above, the New Homiletic has improved the communication mode from a one-way communication of the traditional sermon, which ignored the listener, to a two-way communication, which is the work of both preacher and listener. In the traditional sermon, the listeners were bored because the old sermon did not arouse interest in the listeners, but disregarded them. As a consequence, the listeners were alienated from the sermon. On the other hand, the New Homiletic, with such methods as the inductive sermon of Craddock that starts on the desk with listeners, and Lowry's five-step plot, which keeps the hearer listening to what the preacher is saying, has made the hearer listen to the sermon.

Contemporary homiletics considers the listeners. McClure (1995:59-72) suggested that when a preacher is making a sermon he/she should discuss it

with several members of his/her congregation in a round table setting. Robinson (2005:214) said that when he prepared a sermon, he imagined that six or seven specific people from his congregation were sitting around his desk. Wepener (2014b:8) suggests that when a preacher finishes writing a sermon, he/she should ask a friend, spouse or partner to read or listen to the prepared sermon and listen to their comments. These efforts are breakthroughs in closing the gap that separates the preacher from the congregation, which was the most fundamental problem of the traditional sermon (Rose 1997:21). As a result, the listeners are no longer observers, but collaborators with the preacher in contemporary homiletics.

The concern for the listeners brought a change of focus in the sermon and caused the preachers to be aware of the purpose of the sermon. The traditional sermon aimed to transmit information as a cognitive and propositional sermon, a sermon related to the head. The New Homiletic strives to experience the gospel as well as to effect 'a new hearing of the gospel' (Campbell 1997:126). It is closely related to the heart. This means that the homiletics changed from appealing to reason to appealing to emotion. It is clear that the New Homiletic caused a paradigm shift in homiletics.

### 3.1.2 Realising the necessity of sermon movement in contemporary homiletics

The other contribution of the New Homiletic is the necessity of movement in the sermon. Although the traditional sermon has been textual and theological, it has lost active movement and lost the concern and participation of the hearer. Buttrick (1994a:82, 83; 1994b:95) sees the traditional sermon as 'a still-life picture', 'older rational homiletics' and 'enlightenment homiletics'. A sermon that does not have movement cannot arouse the participation of the audience and is not creative. These sermons cannot overcome boredom and are unable to secure the involvement of the audience.

In this sense, the emphasis on movement in the sermon is a watershed that breaks with the traditional sermon, because the movement raises the experience and evokes the gospel (Lowry 2010:91). For this reason Lowry (2010:92) emphasises an oral method for preaching, not a printed method.

‘It sacrifices the way the mode of orality clusters ideas and images by association that engage the mind and heart by turning the sermon into literality-based organization. Unfortunately, ideas in oral form for the ear to hear are transposed into print on a page for the eye to follow.’

The New Homiletic emphasises movement, as can be seen in the preaching method of Craddock’s inductive sermon and Lowry’s five-step plot. They use movement in the sermon to retain the participation of the listeners. Cahill (2007:19) said:

‘The better preachers have always understood that a sermon needs to move. There must be progress in preaching. A sermon should never be static; it ought to go somewhere. A sermon is a journey toward a destination. Preachers must wrestle with questions of movement.’

The discovery of movement in the New Homiletic gives preachers an opportunity to study the various sermon forms to enhance the interest of the listeners (Gibson 2005:480).

### 3.1.3 Realising the significance of sermon form in contemporary homiletics

Prior to the emergence of the New Homiletic, the sermon form was not the prime concern in homiletics (Rottman 2008:65). The form of the sermon was mainly topical, deductive or three-point (Campbell 1997:121). The matter of form was ancillary; the focus was on explaining the meaning of the text and what the text said. Buttrick (1994b:97) said that the traditional sermon is deductive, convergent and focused on a premise that may be useful, but ignoring a creative form and style can be dangerous. In the New Homiletic, which highlights movement and creative style, the sermon form is considered chiefly as a reshaping of the textual form. Those who embrace the New

Homiletic are interested in how and what is to be preached, because they believe these cannot be separated. What is preached relates to how one preaches (Thompson 2001:4). They pursue the integral relationship between form and content in the sermon and insist that 'the literary forms of the Bible determine the sermon's own structures' (Kay 2007:78). Therefore the New Homiletic says 'do what the text does' (Thompson 2001:4). Craddock (2001:18) said: 'The method is (the) message; form and content are of a piece'. In his view, the separation between form and content in a sermon was a fatal mistake. Craddock argued as follows:

'If the text is narrative, then the sermon ought to exhibit the characteristics of narrative, if the text is a lament, then the sermon ought to set the tone and mood conveyed by a lament; if it is teaching, then the sermon ought to be didactic in character' (Greidanus 1988:154; cf, Craddock 1985:176-180).

The New Homiletic evokes interest in the genres of the Bible such as law, wisdom, prophecy, parables, apocalypse and narrative. Campbell (1997:121) said the greatest contribution of the New Homiletic is that it turns to narrative as well as Scripture. The turning to the Bible draws the attention to the external form of the sermon. The New Homiletic has persuaded many homileticians that the form is not subject to the content. Thompson (2001:18) compares the character of the New Homiletic to 'new wineskins'. Long (1989a:93) also agreed: 'Form is an essential part of the sermon's content and can itself support or undermine the communication of the gospel.' Pieterse says (1987:138): 'Meaning is constituted only through unity of form and content....the *form* of a sermon also has a *certain communicative value*.'

#### 3.1.4 Recovery of the story in contemporary homiletics

To modern people, who are familiar with visual technology resulting from the development of technology, the logical sermon was no longer effective. The two elements of the New Homiletic, using story and imagination, attract their attention and make them gaze at the sermon.

In the contemporary service, the story sermon has increasingly gained popularity, and the New Homiletic scholars (who were influenced by the New Hermeneutic) have preferred the parables of Jesus above the wisdom of the narrative in the Old Testament and of Paul's preaching, which includes religious discourse (Campbell 1997:173-74). The methods of narrative and storytelling have been utilised to overcome deductive, propositional sermons. This is a critical change in contemporary homiletics.

Eslinger (2002:11) called this 'a Copernican revolution in preaching.' Lischer (1984:26) says, 'Recent interest in story as a form of religious discourse has spread across the breadth of theology and church life, with the result that no discipline or activity remains untouched by the vocabulary of story, storytelling, the narrative, or narration.'

Buttrick (1994b:95) emphasised the narrative of the Bible while explaining its literary features:

'We are beginning to see that Scripture is made up of plotted stories rather than history. Even in non-narrative passages, the language of Scripture seems to involve a traveling 'scenario' of ideas.'

The New Homiletic has also influenced contemporary homiletics through the use of imagination. The New Homiletic's concern with language underlined poetic and metaphorical language as well as imagination. These were emphasised and recovered in the sermon (Campbell 1997:121). Troeger (1990:13-30) insisted that a change in style from 'idea-oriented' to 'image-oriented' was necessary to capture the attention and imagination of those used to the visuals of the electronic media. OW Allen (2010:9) said 'imagery is message' because imagery clarifies the main point.

The discovery of the story in the sermon was understood in terms of 'the holistic character of preaching' addressing the intellect and the emotions (Campbell 1997:121).



## 3.2 Limitations of the New Homiletic

While the New Homiletic contributed much to the contemporary homiletics, it has had negative impacts. Campbell (1997:XI, 121) claims 'mainline Protestant churches have been in decline' in the period the New Homiletic was fashioned and influential. This section will investigate the negative aspects of the New Homiletic.

### 3.2.1 The loss of community identity caused by individualism

The primary interest of the New Homiletic is the listener's experience of the sermon. Craddock and Lowry repeatedly emphasise that the purpose of the sermon is the experience of the listener. This conception, borrowed from the New Hermeneutic's emphasis on the 'word-event' or the 'language-event' contributed creatively and positively to contemporary homiletics.

But the emphasis on human experience is risky; the Christian's identity stays in the individual realm. The purpose of the sermon in the New Homiletic is not to identify the objective meaning of the text, but to convey its meaning to the listener. The purpose of preaching is to experience the claim of the text on the listener's life. According to Rose (1997:62-64), many of the New Homileticians take an interest in 'existential truth' in the sermon. It does not emphasise the objectivity of the Word, but has an interest in how the Word affects the listener. Therefore, preaching is not understood as confronting the community of God with the word of God, but has degenerated to satisfying the individual's needs and benefits (Campbell 1997:229).

This can be seen in Craddock. Despite his assertions of the importance of the church, Craddock's emphasis on experience results in an individualistic orientation of his homiletical thought. He pointed to the reason for the decline of the sermon as its relationship with individualism and current language: due to the development of civilisation, the effect of communication through voice and

sound has been reduced and individualism has increased (Craddock 2001:10). So he thought: if communication is recovered, community will be recovered.

‘The words community and communication must not lose sight of each other. In fact, the renewal of the preaching ministry is the rediscovery of its communal character.’ (Craddock 2001:26)

Ironically, despite his efforts to restore the community, the purpose of his sermon is experience by the listeners’ feelings and thoughts (Rose 1990:35). Campbell (1997:135) insists that though Craddock’s preaching emphasises the experiential event, it is still confined to an individualistic framework.

Campbell (1997:141) warns that the New Homiletic lapses into theological relationalism which ‘dares to make no claims for God apart from the experience of human beings.’ Long (1989a:41) said: ‘The storytelling preacher, on the other hand, recounts both God’s story and our stories, seeking to weave our stories, the narratives of contemporary life, into the framework of God’s story’.<sup>52</sup> For example, when we explain the love of God, we first tell of the love with which parents love their children. However, in the congregation there may be some people who did not receive the love of their parents, who experienced abuse from their parents or did not have parents. For them, the love of God cannot be compared with a parent’s love. Eventually, the New Homiletic, based on the existential human experience, dilutes the uniqueness and distinctiveness of the gospel.

### 3.2.2 The changing of the axis of the biblical interpretation

Campbell (1997:121) said that the positive contribution of the New Homiletic is its turning to narrative and Scripture. It actually draws attention to the genre of the biblical text as well as to the Bible. However, it is quite different from the assertions of Evangelical preachers, who see the Bible as having ultimate

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<sup>52</sup> Long mentioned that there is a theological danger when preaching is measured by its ability to create an experience for the listener. For more information on this, see (Long 1989a:40; Campbell 1997:141).

authority and argue that preachers should submit their opinions and thoughts to the Bible (Greidanus 1988:12).<sup>53</sup>

The New Homiletic, which was influenced by the New Hermeneutic, pays too much attention to the listener; this means that it moved the axis of interpretation from author and text to reader (Larsen 1995:78). Evidently, this was a mistake, and as a result the author of the Bible has suffered a loss of authority. The New Hermeneutic does not try to hear the voice of the author and the text of the Bible. David Larsen (1995:78) mentioned this:

‘The quest for eternal truth seems to have vaporized in our times. Interest in truth about the text or truth from the text may yet survive in some circles, but what about the truth of the text? We hear nowadays about ‘the simultaneous legitimacy of a number of meanings,’ and we are in chaos’.

Troeger (1990:122), who is a New Homiletician, insisted that sermons should be based on the actuality of the experience rather than appeal to the Bible or tradition, because if the pastors do not do that, the authority of preaching will be doubted.

This pattern can be seen in Craddock. He is a biblical scholar, but has shown a hostile attitude to authority in the title of his book *As one without authority* (Craddock 2001:14-15). He denied any authority of the preacher. ‘No longer can the preacher presuppose the general recognition of her authority as clergy, or the authority of her institution, or the authority of scripture’ (Craddock 2001:14). However, this does not mean that he directly denies the authority of the Bible in the sermon. Rather, in *As one without authority* and his later work *Preaching*, he emphasises the importance of the Bible in the sermon (Craddock 2001:95-112;

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<sup>53</sup> Haddon Robinson insists ‘the student of the Bible must try to get at the intent of the biblical writer’ (Robinson 2005:23).

Greidanus (1988:12-15) said that the preaching should be based on the certain faith that the Bible is the inspired word of God, and the only normative source to preach. Preaching must correctly reflect God’s will and intent discovered from the Bible. Preaching should be God-centred, not human-centred. He defined ‘Preaching is truly biblical when the Bible governs the content of the sermon and when the function of the sermon is analogous to that of the text’ (Greidanus 1988:10).

1985:27-28, 62-80). However, despite Craddock's point that the preacher should keep to the text, 'his inductive approach has led many preachers to emphasize the method of preaching rather than the message' (Howell 1999:185). Brothers (2008:391) quoted Campbell's warning, 'inductive preaching's emphasis on human experience and individual response creates the danger that the biblical text will become secondary'. Craddock's views have led to many of the New Homileticians becoming estranged from the text rather than drawn close to it (Greenhaw 1994:108).

The pattern continues with Lowry. To him the purpose of preaching is not the delivery of the message of the Bible. Lowry (2001:40) said, 'The question of the human condition is, I believe, the most fundamental and consequential question of all.' Even though Lowry begins his sermon with a text, his analysis is too subjective and has a psychological tendency which only focuses on internal motivation (Campbell 1997:163). Campbell (1997:163) cited Long's opinion of Lowry: 'When Lowry does not begin with a biblical text his approach becomes the old 'problem-solution' method in a new guise'.<sup>54</sup>

David Buttrick (1987:458) goes a step further about the authority of Bible:

'we must not say that preaching from scripture is requisite for sermons to be the Word of God. An authority model descending from God to Christ to scripture to sermon could lead to a terrifying arrogance that not only contradicts gospel but destroys preaching.'

This means that the interpretations of the Bible focus on the listener. Unlike what Greidanus said, contemporary preaching has been human-centred, not God-centred. The New Homiletic, which devotes an enormous amount of attention and entrusts autonomy to the listener, offers a different shape in the conclusion and application of the sermon. 'The listener completes the sermon' (Craddock 2001:53). Craddock's thinking is that it is tyrannical for the preacher to give an application and a conclusion to the listener (Craddock 2001:53-54).

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<sup>54</sup> For more detail of Long's opinion, see his *The witness of Preaching* (1989a:98-99)

Like Craddock, Lowry emphasised that the sermon should follow the plot. His homiletical plot does not give a conclusion. Instead, it suggests 'a new door opened, the new possibility occasioned by the gospel' (Lowry 2001:81).

Consequently, this interpretation of the Bible risks ignoring the intention of its author. Thompson (2001:13) stated that '[n]arrative preaching is reluctant to speak with authority or to make concrete demands for change in the listener's lives'. Campbell (1997:165) mentioned the New Homiletic's weakness that 'the world absorbs the Bible, rather than Scripture absorbing the world; Christology becomes the function of an independently generated soteriology.' McClure (2007:95) mentioned that '[i]n many respects, the New Homiletic represents the fruition of liberal theology and the idea that the Word of God is a response to the deepest problems and questions of human existence'.

### 3.2.3 The loss of balance between narrative and rational persuasion

One of the contributions of the New Homiletic is that it created interest in the moderns, who are accustomed to visual technology, by using story and narrative, without a 'discursive' or 'didactic nature' (Howell 1999:196). These results can be seen from the evaluation of the New Hermeneutic by Thiselton.<sup>55</sup> Similar to Thiselton's evaluation of the New Hermeneutic, the New Homiletic keeps away from propositional, argumentative and discourse sermons. Instead, it uses mainly narrative as a way of preaching. Craddock asserts 'overhearing' the gospel, because the listener has been too often and repeatedly taught and preached to. So it is better to elicit and stir up the truth that already exists rather than to cultivate new truth (Craddock 1978:91).

However, despite these contributions, postmodernism has influenced preaching both in substance and style (Breidenbaugh 2010:31).

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<sup>55</sup> Larsen (1995:78) briefly introduced Thiselton's evaluation of the New Hermeneutic: '1) We lose all emphasis on correct understanding. 2) The emphasis is on poetry and metaphor displacing straight argument or discourse. 3) We see the undervaluation of propositional truth and propositions. 4) What's true for me is what is true'.

Thomson pointed out weaknesses of the New Homiletic in the postmodern age. First, unlike in Craddock's era, postmodern listeners do not know the Christian truth and heritage. He insists that:

‘Now people have little knowledge of biblical content. The present culture is increasingly post-Christian and unacquainted with Christian proclamation. We preach to congregations that are largely shaped by the values of a new pagan culture ‘ (Thompson 2001:9-10).

Long (2009:9) also mentioned that although the New Homiletic has many strengths, the listeners in the post-modern age do not have the same basic knowledge, information and doctrine as the listeners in the 1970s, and they have no chance to learn through the New Homiletic. Kysar (1997:17) shows that preaching that teaches doctrine was abandoned and preachers do not preach doctrine in contemporary homiletics. Cho (2015:69) also mentioned a side effect of narrative:

‘It is evident that the general decline in biblical literacy nowadays is partly due to excessive interest in the various sermon forms that appeal to the listener and narrative preaching, and the lack of interest in the substance of the preaching.’

Second, the New Homiletic is interested mainly in narrative preaching and ignores the other genres in the Bible.<sup>56</sup> Even with the emphasis on the narrative sermon, preachers seek to find a way to create narrative preaching from the other genres, such as songs, proverbs, letters, apocalyptic visions and levitical codes (Thompson 2001:12). Ironically, it is the reversal of the merit of the New Homiletic that caused the significance of the various forms of sermons to be realised (Long 1989a:97).<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Thompson (2001:15) said that ‘Twenty-one of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament are not in narrative form, but are epistles that are addressed to Christian communities in a pagan culture.’

<sup>57</sup> Long (1989a:83) introduced Lowry's insistence ‘the Bible itself is largely “nonpropositional” and ... at its worst, propositional thought “distorts and even reforms the experiential meaning” of the gospel.’

Another issue with narrative preaching is the confusion between the gospel narrative and general anecdotes of human experience (Long 2009:9). Campbell (1997:169) criticised this tendency of the narrative homiletics with the following questions: Whose story? Which narrative? He commented: 'Homiletics has focused far more on narrative form than on the content and function of the biblical narrative.'

Third, the New Homiletic denied the necessity of a propositional sermon. Rational persuasion is not an enemy, nor is it an alien intrusion into communicating with a narrative (Thompson 2001:14). A narrative needs rational persuasion.<sup>58</sup> 'Stories, symbols, and metaphors are evocative, but ultimately they require reflection' (Thompson 2001:12). Jesus preached with parables, but he explained everything to the disciples (Mark 4:34). 'Stories can entertain and engender audience involvement, but ultimately they require interpretation and commentary' (Thompson 2001:13). Therefore, narrative and rational persuasion should offer aid to each other.

### 3.2.4 The loss of the Holy Spirit

In the postmodern age in which the authority of Scripture is lost and role of the author of Scripture is damaged, the efforts of the New Homiletic to adequately convey the living word of God should receive careful consideration. On the other hand, the New Homiletic has little concern for the Holy Spirit. It is hard to find mention of the role and work of the Holy Spirit in the literature of the New Homileticians (Gibson 2005:480). The New Homiletic is focused on the method of evoking an experience in the heart of the listener rather than on effectively applying the word of God in the heart and mind of the listener with the help of the Holy Spirit (Gibson 2005:480). It pursues the homiletical method, not the work of the Holy Spirit. The New Homiletic has placed the responsibility on the preacher, not on the Holy Spirit, to ensure that the text becomes the word of

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<sup>58</sup> Craddock (1978:135) commented that 'I do not mean that narrative is to replace rational argument in Christian discourse.' But rational argument was nevertheless replaced by narrative.

God in the new situation (Gibson 2005:480). In this process, there is intentionally a touching emotion, and at that time the anthem is used to arouse feelings (Long 1993:172).<sup>59</sup>

But without a clear understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit a preacher cannot make an effective, creative and powerful sermon. So the preacher should recognise that the most important factor for effective and creative preaching in a sermon is the Holy Spirit. Baumann (1990:282-83) quotes Whitesell:<sup>60</sup>

‘He (the Holy Spirit) can guide us in choosing the right Scripture passages for each occasion; guide us in the selection of books to buy and use in studying the Bible; give us illumination and insight in studying the passage; aid our memory to recall parallel passages and fitting illustrations; give us joy in concentrating on the text and the strength to push through the writing or verbalizing of the sermon; give us boldness and confidence at the time of delivery; inspire us with new thoughts during delivery and cause us to omit less appropriate ones. He can unify the audience, create attentiveness, open hearts and apply the Word in both expected and unexpected ways. The Holy Spirit can convict, convert, comfort, inspire, reprove, correct, and instruct in righteousness. He can fix the Word in the minds and memories of hearers so that it becomes fruitful like the seed on good soil. How foolish to try to prepare sermons and preach them apart from the power of the Spirit.’

The role of the Holy Spirit is not limited to the process of preparing a sermon, but also affects the process of effectively communicating it to the listeners. Heisler (2007:xii) mentioned two elements for effective preaching: one is ‘the hand of the human preacher,’ the other is ‘the hand of God through the Holy Spirit’. The Holy Spirit is the unique bridge across the gap, between the head and the heart, which the New Homiletician wanted to overcome. Robinson (2001:21) also asserted the role of Holy Spirit in the sermon: ‘The Holy Spirit first applies to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through the preacher, applies to the hearers.’ From this perspective, the big mistake of the

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<sup>59</sup> This tendency is seen in the Korean church’s preaching. For more information, see Chapter 3.6

<sup>60</sup> For the source, see *Power in Expository Preaching* (Whitesell, FD. 1963. Revell Co: Westwood), 144-145.



New Homiletic is forgetting the work of the Holy Spirit to communicate the living word of God. Chillers' comments clearly show the error in the New Homiletic's pursuit of creative preaching (Cilliers 2004:206):

'I must indeed again point out that the creative association of the preacher with the text will not necessarily guarantee a creative sermon. A sermon is a creative event in which the Holy Spirit plays a decisive role. The Spirit's work surrounds the text, congregation, minister, and all the creative processes that may play a part and takes it in its service – otherwise our creativity degenerates to being a mere tool of church manipulation.'

The New Homiletic neglects the role of Holy Spirit for the postmodern listener to receive the word of God, not as the word of men (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This chapter researched the New Homiletic as an interpretive way to understand the Korean church's preaching situation.

In section 1, it was found that the New Homiletic reacted against the traditional homiletics and made its paradigm shift with the help of the New Hermeneutic. The two essential elements of the New Hermeneutic taken up by the New Homiletic are the language-event and the reversal of the traditional subject-object approach to biblical interpretation.

Section 2 examined the central issues of the New Homiletic, which are the sermon as cooperation between listener and preacher, the recognition of the importance of language and recognising the importance of movement in the sermon. It showed that the New Homiletic is indebted to the assertions of the New Hermeneutic. Two great scholars, Craddock and Lowry, were presented as concrete examples.

Section 3 assessed the New Homiletic's effects, both positive and negative. The New Hermeneutic had many positive effects on contemporary homiletics. The

monologue sermon of traditional homiletics, which did not take the listeners into account, had no place in the New Homiletic. The New Homiletic broke away from the unified three-point sermon and sparked new expectations of participation in the sermon among the listeners. It opened up the possibility of various forms of sermons paying attention to the biblical text. The attention of the listeners, who live in a visual age, can be attracted by a sermon using narrative and imagination.

Despite the many advantages of the New Homiletic, its background was investigated and it was questioned how evangelicals could accept the theories of the New Homiletic without critique. The New Homiletic has elements that the preacher must carefully consider. The first cause for concern is that the New Homiletic, which focuses on the existential problems of the listener, is pushing the church toward individualisation rather than building the identity of the community. Preaching is not understood to set up the community of God with the word, but has misused the word for individual needs and benefits. The second is that it has moved its axis of interpretation from the Author and the text to the reader, causing a loss of the authority of the Bible. The third is the loss of balance between narrative and rational persuasion. The New Homiletic has abandoned the propositional sermon because it is mainly interested in narrative preaching. But we live in the postmodern age. Unlike churchgoers in Craddock's era, postmodern listeners do not know the Christian truth and heritage. The fourth is that the New Homiletic pursued a homiletical method aimed at evoking experience in the heart of the listener without the crucial role of the Holy Spirit.

Charles Campbell faced these problems and suggested a post-liberal homiletic to overcome it. The post-liberal homiletics will be researched in the next chapter together with the post-liberal theology, which is its background. In South Korea, some of the preachers have opened their eyes to Campbell's theory of homiletics and have been filled with admiration for his achievement. His preaching methodology is becoming increasingly known. Studying the

postliberal homiletics will be an important task for the future of the Korean church.

## Chapter 5 Postliberal homiletics

Long (2009:8-10) introduced the criticisms of the New Homiletic, called Narrative Homiletics, with three viewpoints: the theological right, middle and left. In his classification, Evangelicalism (which follows Thomson's *Preaching like Paul* (Thompson 2001) is situated on the right.

The Evangelical preachers in South Korea<sup>61</sup> gradually began to listen to Campbell's middle viewpoint and agreed with his theory<sup>62</sup>. Although it is different from the theological right, they are fascinated because his homiletic is similar to Evangelicalism.<sup>63</sup> On the surface, postliberalism also emphasises the Scripture and Jesus Christ (McGrath 1996a:39).<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Han, Gil-Soo, Joy J. Han and Andrew Eungi Kim in their article 'Serving two masters': Protestant Churches in Korea and Money (2009:334) say that 'nearly all, that is up to 95%, of Protestants in Korea are evangelical in their belief'. It was originally stated in *Christianity in Korea*: 'Timothy S Lee assumes that 95 percent of Korean Protestants are fundamentalists and evangelicals' (2006:383).

<sup>62</sup> The Presbyterian College and Theological Seminary, one of the schools representative of Evangelicalism in South Korea, invited Charles Campbell for a lecture on 17 and 19 October, 2007. Afterwards he lectured on his method of preaching in 2007 to over 500 pastors at a conference sponsored by the newspaper 'Mokhoeja'. Some theses regarding postliberal homiletics have been published recently.

<sup>63</sup> Larsen (2007:1) defined an evangelical as:

'1. An orthodox Protestant 2. Who stands in the tradition of the global Christian networks arising from the eighteenth-century revival movements associated with John Wesley and George Whitefield; 3. Who has a preeminent place for the Bible in her or his Christian life as the divinely inspired, final authority in matters of faith and practice; 4. Who stresses reconciliation with God through the atoning work of Jesus Christ on the cross; 5. And who stresses the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of an individual to bring conversion and ongoing life of fellowship with God and service to God and others, including the duty of all believers to participate in the task of proclaiming the gospel to all people'.

<sup>64</sup> McGrath points to postliberalism's strong sense of community and its three recommendations: '1. An emphasis on the distinctiveness of Christianity 2. An insistence upon Scripture as the supreme source of Christian ideas and values, 3. A reassertion of the centrality of the figure of Jesus Christ within the life and thought of the Christian church'.

By exploring some key points of the postliberal homiletics, the researcher hopes to show the validity and principal characteristics of the postliberal homiletics as the basis for the building up of an evangelical homiletic.

This thesis addresses the postliberal theology's connection with Campbell's homiletic with an overview of his postliberal homiletic.

## 1. PRELIMINARY RESEARCH OF POSTLIBERAL HOMILETICS: POSTLIBERAL THEOLOGY

Postliberal theology appeared on the theological stage to revive the neo-orthodox ideal that seeks a third way between conservatism and liberalism, long before the appearance of James Barr and Langdon Gilkey's claims during the 1960s<sup>65</sup>. About that time, Dorrien (2001:16) explained that 'the first currents of liberation theology emerged in Latin America and the U.S., making neo-orthodoxy seem stuffy, provincial and oppressive'.

Liberal theology relied on universal religious experience and accommodation to modern culture (Philips & Okholm 1996:11). Two approaches appeared to overcome the limit of the liberal theology in North America. The first is revisionism, which was derived from the liberal tradition of Schleiermacher and had been associated with the University of Chicago. The other is postliberalism, which opposes the approach of revisionism (Campbell 1997:3).<sup>66</sup> Postliberalism was founded by scholars and theologians who studied or taught at the Yale

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<sup>65</sup> James Barr dismantled the uniqueness of the biblical semantics of biblical theology, Langdon Gilkey exposed the incoherence of neo-orthodox God-language (Dorrien 2001:16).

<sup>66</sup> The 'Yaleys' and 'Chicagoans' also received several other titles, such as antifoundationalists and foundationalists respectively (Thiemann), experiential-expressivist and cultural-linguistic (Lindbeck). Comstock named the two types 'pure narrative theologians vs impure narrative theologians'. The reason why the Chicagoans were called impure narrative theologians is that they believed that narrative was infected with historical, philosophical and psychological concerns. For more information, see the article by Comstock (1987).

Divinity School. For this reason, they are generally called the ‘Yale School’ or ‘narrative theologians’ because they concentrate on a narrative in the Bible.<sup>67</sup>

Like neo-orthodoxy, postliberalism seeks a third way that is ‘neither conservative nor liberal, and to offer fresh approaches to Scripture and Christian life’ (Dorrien 2001:16). Postliberal theology, however, was affected more deeply by Barth than by American neo-orthodoxy and began to react to liberalism. It tried to reverse this tendency in modern Christianity. It started to criticise liberal theology’s view that ‘there is a point of contact between revelation and human experience and seek to find existential or philosophical correlations between biblical categories of thought and human reason or experience’ (McClure 2007:111).

In relation to these distinctions of postliberalism both from liberalism and from evangelicalism, postliberals oppose foundationalism’s view that all knowledge is grounded on solid foundations that cannot be doubted. In theology, foundationalism is linked with apologetics, which claims to correlate with some broader claims – ‘for example, those about Jesus Christ, in some broader claims that can be accepted universally and apart from faith’ (Kay 2007:106). Instead, postliberalism has been influenced by the linguistic philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein<sup>68</sup>, Karl Barth’s theology and the anthropologist Clifford Geertz (Philips and Okholm 1996:11). Hans Frei and George Lindbeck set the tone for the development of postliberal theology. Their students, including William Placher, Stanley Hauerwas and George Hunsinger, continued to develop this theology (Philips and Okholm 1996:11).

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<sup>67</sup> The term ‘postliberal theology’ was introduced in *The nature of doctrine: Religion and Theology in a postliberal age* by George Lindbeck, published in 1984. The term ‘narrative theology’ is connected with Frei, who emphasised the necessity to rediscover narrative.

<sup>68</sup> Wittgenstein’s philosophy is divided into his earlier and his later ideas. Postliberal theologians are influenced by his later philosophy, namely the language game that ‘the meaning of a word or sentence thus lies in the rules for its actual use in a real-life situation...We will only understand a particular sentence...when we see it in the context of its use’(Vanhoozer 1998:208).

The three postliberals Frei, Lindbeck and Hauerwas, who directed Campbell's dissertation will be discussed. The essential issues in postliberal theology will be explained by investigating these three theologians.

## 1.1. Three representative scholars of postliberal theology

### 1.1.1 Hans Frei

Frei, on whom Campbell based his homiletic, built up the structure of the postliberal theology according to the theology of Karl Barth. He laid the groundwork for narrative theology and was devoted to the rediscovery of the biblical narrative.

He was born in Germany in 1922 into a Jewish family. After fleeing from the power of the Nazis, he studied in Britain. Corresponding with H. Richard Niebuhr, he naturally was led to Yale Divinity School. Frei, as a New Testament theologian, was concerned about the liberal waves with 'contemporary human experience and tried to make connections with the biblical message' (Placher 1989:557). He wanted to set up the identity of Jesus Christ to oppose the trend of the times. His book *The identity of Jesus Christ* was published in 1975 for this reason. In his book, he emphasised Jesus' identity rather than His presence.

His ideas are normally evaluated on his early and latter periods. The works related to his early period are *The identity of Jesus: The hermeneutical bases of dogmatic theology* (1975)<sup>69</sup> and *The eclipse of biblical narrative: A study in eighteenth and nineteenth-century hermeneutics* (1974). The works of his later period, mostly essays, are 'David Friedrich Strauss' (1985) and 'The "literal reading" of biblical narrative in the Christian tradition: Does it stretch or will it break?' (1986).

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<sup>69</sup> Frei contributed to the original work 'The mystery of the presence of Jesus Christ' in *Crossroads* 1967, which is a magazine for Presbyterian adult education (Placher 1989:558)

### 1.1.2 George Lindbeck

Lindbeck was born in 1923 as the son of a Swedish-American missionary in China. He remained in China until he was 17 years old and received a strongly Lutheran education (B.A) from Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota. He continued his (BD) studies at Yale Divinity School in 1946. He earned a doctor's degree from the university in 1955 by researching Duns Scotus. He built up his career studying the Middle Ages, working at the Yale Divinity School as a professor between 1952 and 1993 until his retirement (Dulles 2003:57).

Attending Vatican II (the Roman Catholic Second Vatican Council 1962-1965) in Rome as the representative of the Lutheran World Federation was the turning point of his career (Pecknold 2005:17). He turned from a theologian studying the Middle Ages to a postliberal theologian. His book *The nature of doctrine* (1984) was published after the council. It focuses on the postliberal age with the concern for pluralism in the contemporary ecumenical context.

### 1.1.3 Stanley Hauerwas

Stanley Hauerwas is a well-known ethicist and Methodist, influenced by the Mennonite theologian John Howard Yoder (Werpehowski 1997:320). After he had graduated from Yale he taught at the University of Notre Dame and the University of Duke. As a postliberal, he emphasised that the community in the church is shaped by story; he uses the term 'story' rather than Frei's term 'narrative'. However, the meaning is the same (Placher 1997:349). Hauerwas is interested in medical ethics and is a famous pacifist that defied sending troops to the Gulf War.

## 1.2 The central themes of postliberal theology

Lose (1998:1) introduced the basis of Campbell's theology in three phrases: the ascriptive logic of the Gospel stories, the cultural-linguistic model of religion and intratextual and communal hermeneutic. As his analysis seems acceptable, the



concept of the cultural-linguistic model, intratextuality and the practice of Campbell's homiletic will be further explained.

### 1.2.1 The ascriptive logic of the gospel stories

Frei, who was influenced by the literary realism of Erich Auerbach, criticised the interpretation of the Bible during the eighteenth and nineteenth century in his book *The eclipse of biblical narrative* (Campbell 1997:37). He traced the changes that occurred in biblical interpretation during the 18th and 19th centuries. Before the 18th century, Christian preachers and theological commentators perceived the narrative in the Bible as realistic or history-like<sup>70</sup> (Frei 1974:1,10). Frei stated that 'Western Christian reading of the Bible in the days before the rise of historical criticism in the eighteenth century was usually strongly realistic, i.e. at once literal and historical, and not only doctrinal or edifying' (Frei 1974:1). History-like narrative is neither the instrument to explain the revelation of God nor to refer to its meaning. However, after the appearance of the Enlightenment, from which historical criticism and biblical theology emerged, narrative was not treated as the unity between meaning and history or between story and referent; but as a myth. It was not used to detect what is behind the narrative, for example the author's intention, eternal truths which narrative symbolises, moral lesson or religious truth that the narrative illustrates (Placher 1997:345). The literal meaning of the biblical story was distinguished with the historical reference:

'In the days before empirical philosophy, Deism, and historical criticism, the realistic feature had naturally been identified with the literal sense which in turn was automatically identical with reference to historical truth' (Frei 1974:11)

'Now the rise of historical criticism and of general (rather than special) principles of meaning in biblical hermeneutics had effectively sundered the dogmatic unity and authority of the canon. Each narrative therefore had now to be examined in its own historical context and its own right' (Frei 1974:64)

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<sup>70</sup> To Frei, history-like does not necessarily mean historical.

Frei insists on the recovery of a literal sense because it is related to the identity of Jesus Christ. The Christian church reads the biblical stories in the literal sense, focused on Jesus as the primary concern (Campbell 1997:39). But the reading which the Bible treated as the source of historical information or the ground for broaching philosophical ideas reduces the unsubstitutable identity of Jesus Christ and demotes the position of Jesus to a cipher for human existence (Campbell 1997:38). For this reason, Frei wanted to recover the biblical narrative by the literal reading so as to reveal the identity of Jesus.

### 1.2.2 The cultural–linguistic model

As the thoughts of thinkers and scholars can change and develop over time, Frei's theories – which were influenced by Barth's Anselmian theological method in his early period – turned to the postmodern linguistic under Wittgenstein's influence in his later period (Campbell 1997:54). His early 'narrative hermeneutic' developed into a communal hermeneutic, and his concern for the cultural-linguistic model emphasised the reading community and the community of interpretation in his later work (Campbell 1997:64).

In Frei's theology, the cultural-linguistic model is paramount (the term 'cultural-linguistic model' is intimately linked with Lindbeck). Campbell (1997:32, 68) insisted that Frei's concept of the public and social character of Christianity appeared in the Haverford lecture before Lindbeck published *The nature of doctrine* and increased the importance of Frei's later works<sup>71</sup>. His cultural-linguistic model; which exerted a strong influence on his later works, will be examined in the contexts of Lindbeck, postliberal theology and Campbell's homiletic.

After attending Vatican II, Lindbeck considered how to resolve the conflict between the denominations on the different doctrines without a doctrinal change, such as the doctrine of justification between the Roman Catholics and

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<sup>71</sup> Kay (2007:105) also said the 'cultural linguistic theory of religion and doctrine of Lindbeck...actually results in reinforcing Frei's longstanding narratological convictions'.

Lutherans (Vanhoozer 2005:28). On the ecumenical matrix, he observed an original theory of doctrine to know how doctrines work. After this observation, he suggested a new model of religion to overcome the problem. He identified three types: the propositional-cognitive model, the experiential-expressive model and the cultural-linguistic model.

The propositional-cognitive model 'emphasises the cognitive aspects of religion and stresses the way in which church doctrines function as informative propositions or truth-claims about objective realities' (Lindbeck 1984:16). This model was chiefly observed in the traditional orthodoxies and many heterodoxies (Lindbeck 1984:16; Dulles 2003:57).

The second is the experiential-expressive model. It was understood in the modern age that this model 'interprets doctrines as non-informative and non-discursive of inner feelings, attitudes, or existential orientations' (Lindbeck 1984:16). He recognised this model in the liberal theologies that were influenced by Schleiermacher.

However, in these models he could not find the possibility of doctrinal reconciliation without capitulation (Lindbeck 1984:16). He devised a new model, a cultural-linguistic model, to transcend both these models. Although religion includes elements of the cognitive and experience, it must be seen as a social phenomenon. In this viewpoint, the cultural-linguistic model appeared to be understood through the medium of the culture and language of the particular community (Lindbeck 1984:33).

The cultural-linguistic model focuses on the uses of doctrine, not as truth-claims or as expressive symbols, but 'as communally authoritative rules of discourse, attitude, and action' (Lindbeck 1984:18). He compared the model to grammar and idiom. He said: 'Religions resemble languages together with their correlative forms of life and are thus similar to cultures' (Lindbeck 1984:17). Thus this model understands the regulative or rule theory in a particular religious group. Pecknold (2005:5) said: 'Doctrine, like grammars, are second-

order reflections upon how this scriptural sign-system is used or performed in this community.’

‘to become religious - no less than to become culturally or linguistically competent - is to interiorize a set of skills by practice and training’ (Lindbeck 1984:35).

In this sense, becoming a Christian is related to learning the language and culture of the Christian community rather than going through the religious experience, as well as learning to make one’s own language like the community’s language (Frei 1992:54). Therefore, if one wants to know the term ‘God’ that the Christian uses, he/she must enter their language game by attending worship, ritual and prayer (Kay 2007:107).

### 1.2.3 The community of interpretation

Frei developed the narrative hermeneutic early in his life. He expanded his idea to communal hermeneutic that was related to the cultural-linguistic model (Campbell 1997:115). He attached great importance to the church in his later life. Therefore, his approach to interpreting Scripture changed from reality narrative to communal hermeneutic (Campbell 1997:80). Stiver (1996:144) highlighted this difference between Frei’s early theological situation and his later work.

‘We can therefore go in two different directions with Frei: one emphasizes the sufficiency of the immanent meaning of the text, the other emphasizes the community of faith as determining the meaning of the text.’

To Frei, the Christian community is a ‘community of interpretation’ and a ‘social, linguistic community’. To be an interpretative community means learning the Christian language and distinct biblical idioms to build up the people. The church fits the language as well as practises it (Campbell 1997:153-154). The importance of language on the public and social character of Christianity is emphasised:

‘To learn the language of the Christian community is not to undergo a

profound ‘experience’ of a privileged sort, but to learn to make that language one’s own, in faith, hope and, love’ (Frei 1992:54)

The focus of the Christian community’s learning is on Scripture. The postliberal view of Scripture is ‘the Bible is a book for the Christian community’ (Pruitt 2012:163). The Bible, which is formal language, leads and regulates the community of the church. Campbell (1997:84) said: ‘Within his cultural-linguistic model, Frei does not view Scripture as an autonomous text, but approaches it within the context of the rules and conventions of the community within which it functions as the sacred text’. For this reason, the correct interpretation of the Bible is not that of a professional, but that of the trained church community. The Bible is neither an objective statement nor an expression of universal religious experience. Postliberal theology regards the Bible as a text for the language game in the church. Pruitt (2012:163) said that ‘the function of the text is to shape, nurture, and reform the continuing self-identity of the church’

#### 1.2.4 Intratextual hermeneutic

The term ‘intratextuality’ means that the narrative in the text is not interpreted from outside the text, but obtains the meaning from the text, which is stated in the narrative. The legitimacy of truth is not outside, but inside a system. Postliberal theology emphasises that we do not go to the text with our experience; we let the text make us. The Christian community is made through the biblical text:

‘Intratextual theology redescribes reality within the scriptural framework rather than translating Scripture into extrascriptural categories. It is the text, so to speak, which absorbs the world, rather than the world the text’ (Lindbeck 1984:118).

Therefore, the meaning of the text lies in the language usage of the community; it is not obtained from outside the community. This concept came from George Lindbeck, who insisted on the notion of intratextuality as truth in the contemporary, ecumenical context. But it is also cardinal to Frei. He traced the process through history. In the tradition of the church, before the Enlightenment,

in the precritical age, the biblical reading was directed toward intratextuality, in which the situation or experience of the reader is drawn into the text to reflect on the text, not extratextuality, where the Bible is drawn to humanity's experience to apply it to the reader (Frei 1986:71-73). In that age the biblical narratives were the real world through which life was interpreted.

‘The direction in the flow of intratextual interpretation is that of absorbing the extratextual universe into the text, rather than the reverse (extratextual) direction. The literal sense is the paradigmatic form of such intratextual interpretation in the Christian community's use of its scripture’ (Frei 1986:72)

To Frei (1992:161) the narrative is: ‘this world is a world with its own linguistic integrity, much as a literary art work is a consistent world in its own right’, and ‘unlike any other depicted world it is the one common world in which we all live and move and have our being’.

Frei (1974:130) draws the following portrait of this great reversal of the interpretation of the Bible in the 18th and 19th century.

‘It is no exaggeration to say that all across the theological spectrum the great reversal had taken place; interpretation was a matter of fitting the biblical story into another world with another story rather than incorporating that world into the biblical story.’

Therefore, during those centuries, the Bible was read for historical information or for the philosophical ideas, without associating it with the entire message of the Bible (Campbell 1997:38). The purpose of postliberal theology is the recovery of the intratextual mode of reading the Scripture.

### 1.2.5 Practice-oriented theology

The emphasis on and practice in the postliberal theology is connected with the cultural-linguistic model, which emphasises the core practices that are linked with the life of the church, not the speculative theories (Vanhoozer 2005:13).<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> The cultural-linguistic approach is deeply related to Willgenstein's language game. Ackermann (1988:80) explained: ‘Language games involves an explicit awareness of the

Pecknold (2005:1) highlights the postliberalism emphasis on the return to the narrative of Scripture as well as the practical aspect of the church:

‘Postliberalism may also be understood through its constructive dimensions as a ‘return to scripture’ that seeks to describe ‘best practices’ for the enduring church in a complex and pluralist world’ (Pecknold 2005:2)

The importance of the practical aspect can be seen in Frei’s ideas. He also discussed the ‘pattern of exchange’ of Jesus, from power to powerless, and the resistance to violence and force in the narrative (Frei 1975:104). The importance of the practical, ethical dimension in postliberal theology that emphasises nonviolence and resistance to the power of the world is best seen in Stanley Hauerwas’ theories.

Like other postliberals, Hauerwas expands his idea with a story, which is a vehicle to build communities; and in the community shaped by a story moral decisions are made for life and behaviour. He brought stories into the realm of ethics, because he thought that a story, like the story of the Good Samaritan, is more useful in giving moral guidance than an abstract ethical principle (Placher 1997:349). Preserving a community is the most important task in postliberal ethics rather than establishing a moral principle (Placher 1997:349). Hauerwas (1981:18-22) said ‘the loss of narrative’ is ‘the loss of community’.

Hauerwas (1981:10) emphasised that ‘the primary social task of the church is to be itself’. He insists (1981:12) that the responsibility of the church is not to exist ‘to provide an ethos for democracy or any other form of social organisation, but to stand as a political alternative to every nation, witnessing to the kind of social life possible for those that have been formed by the story of Christ’.

‘The church is a people on a journey who insist on living consistently with the conviction that God is the lord of history. They thus refuse to resort to violence in order to secure their survival’ (Hauerwas 1981:10).

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linkage between language and practice. Where practice is sufficiently settled and agreed upon, criteria for applicability of terms of a language game may be available.’

On these assertions, he criticises the contemporary moral ethos based on the liberal tendency, especially in America, where individual freedom is prized with happiness, and satisfaction is limited not to infringe on the freedom of others (Placher 1997:320). Instead, he suggests the ethics of virtue for the Christian moral life based on the biblical stories. Therefore pacifism, which refuses violence, is a way of following Jesus Christ, who opposed power with nonresistance according to the Gospels as ‘the normative mode of witness to God’s reign in history’ (Werpehowski 1997:321). Pecknold (2005:5) said postliberal theology has the basic tendency of pacifism. Hauerwas’s concern for the practice of the church extended to the area of medicine and public theology.

## 2. THE FEATURES OF CAMPBELL’S HOMILETIC BASED ON POSTLIBERAL THEOLOGY

Postliberal homileticians argue that a preacher should retell the biblical story without any input from outside the Biblical text, which is a credible guide to the meaning of life. They try to narrate the biblical story to the listener, not to interpret it (Allen 2008:28). Campbell is a typical postliberal homiletician based on postliberal theology, especially of Frei’s. Lose (1998:7) mentioned Campbell’s focus:

‘Campbell seeks through his work to reverse the direction or flow of the sermon away from human experience, as in contemporary preaching, and toward the biblical reality rendered by the narrative’.

Campbell mainly spread his homiletic on the basis of Frei’s posthumous publication, which related to Lindbeck’s cultural-linguistic model of religion and doctrine (Kay 2007:109-110). Campbell (1997:55) formed his idea of the ‘New Testament narrative’ on the basis of Frei’s understanding, ‘which is to render the unique, unsubstitutable identity of Jesus Christ and to form the community of faith into a ‘distant’ embodiment of that identity’. According to his understanding, Campbell’s preaching is summarised as ‘building up the church



telling the story of the Jesus'. He has two concerns. The first is the identity of Jesus Christ, who cannot be substituted through realistic narrative. The second is the church, the Christian community, which decides on the realistic meaning. The former is related to Frei's early ideas, the latter with his later ideas.

This section will research the topics of postliberal homiletics through Campbell's homiletic.

## 2.1 Preaching as telling about Jesus of Nazareth, the ascriptive subject of the Gospel narrative

Campbell (1997:168-69) observed the use of narrative in the New Homiletic. He begins to unfold his idea with a critique of the New Homiletic, identifying the following faults of the New Homiletic. The first is its focus on the form and plot of narrative, with general theories about narrative, rather than on the content of the biblical story. The second is the diluting of the particular identity of Jesus Christ as a symbol of religion or a model for our life, without revealing his identity in the preaching (Campbell 1997:117-145). Of the figure of the New Homiletic, Campbell (1997:165) said:

'The world absorbs the Bible, rather than Scripture absorbing the world; Christology becomes the function of an independently generated soteriology. This result is not surprising when one discovers the extraordinarily small role that Jesus of Nazareth plays in narrative preaching'.

The New Homiletic has a tendency to rely too much on the experience of humans and on stories from outside the Bible. Campbell (1997:221) characterised this kind of narrative homiletics as liberal, problem-solving preaching. Campbell (1997:121) indicated that the effect of the New Homiletic, which is based on the experiential-expressive model, has been used in the pulpit for decades, but has not created more vitality and activity in the church.

The narrative in the New Homiletic has been a patching together of God's story, the congregation's story, the preacher's story and life's story. The world of

Scripture and the world of the listeners are woven together into a sermon. Campbell thought the reason for these tendencies came from liberal theological assumptions (Brothers 2014:113). Campbell, who followed the theology of Frei, could not accept these tendencies, because this overemphasis can cause 'theological relationalism' that does not admit God without human experience (Campbell 1997:141). So Campbell (1997:190) suggested the following application of narrative in the light of the postliberal theology:

'In a postliberal homiletic, narrative is important neither because it provides a 'homiletical plot' for sermons nor because preaching should consist of telling stories. Rather, narrative is important because it is the vehicle through which the gospels render the identity of Jesus of Nazareth, who has been raised from the dead and seeks today to form a people who follow his way. Accordingly, preaching from the gospels begins with the identity of Jesus'.

Unlike the New Homiletic, which begins from a particular human experience to keep the interest of the listeners in the preaching, Campbell is interested in biblical narrative, especially of Jesus Christ in the story of the Gospels. Up to the present, the form or plot of the narrative sermon was most important, but Campbell turns away from this trend.

Campbell (1997:172) explained his second issue with the New Homiletic as being its ascriptive logic of the gospel, which Frei advocated. The church must read the Gospels according to this logic and preach the sermon on its characteristic. He concentrates on the story of the Bible, especially the story of Jesus Christ, located in the centre of the biblical story. Campbell (1997:172) understood 'the centrality of the identity of Jesus Christ as the crucial issue that must be considered in telling stories in preaching'.

To him, narrative in the Gospels is a way to prove the identity of Jesus Christ through the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. Campbell (1997:193) described the forward direction for preaching according to Frei's view:

'preaching, including 'narrative preaching'...should adhere to the ascriptive logic of the gospels and dare to preach Jesus of Nazareth in all his

particularity by rendering him as the subject of his own predicates’.

Campbell (1997:190-193) saw that preaching should pay attention to Jesus’ predicate, which revealed his divine characteristic. His predicate is closely related to the identity of the person whose life, death and resurrection fulfilled God’s purpose for the world. It is not shown as one of the symbols of religion or the key to the problem of human experience (Campbell 1997:190-193). For this reason, Frei’s interest is not the narrative form, but the identity of Jesus rendered through the narrative. Campbell (1997:172) also emphasised that the ‘story cannot save us or empower us. Rather, it is God in Jesus Christ, whom the biblical narratives identify, who saves and empowers. Character, not plot, is primary’.

Campbell (1997:173) insists that although the contemporary preaching contributed to arousing interest in the narrative, it focuses excessively on the form and plot. It needs to change to preaching that stresses the identity of Jesus rendered through the narrative. Jesus Christ is not the subject of the solution in the issue of the human life, but the person who has the particular identity to embody God’s reign and to present his unique mission. Therefore, Campbell (1997:193) said, ‘the story of Jesus, not the particulars of human experience, is the fundamental reality and starting point’.

### 2.1.1 The preaching as revealing God’s reign in and for the world

Campbell (1997:232) shows that the embodiment of the way God acts in the world presents the reign of God through Jesus. He suggests that when the sermon follows the ascriptive logic in the narrative of the Gospels, the community becomes radical, is recovered and communal practice arises in the church (Campbell 1997:232). Therefore, the sermon that is telling the peculiar identity of Jesus Christ naturally goes forward to the particular community, namely the alternative community, for its redemption in the kingdom of God (Campbell 1997:232).

His concern is that the 'church' and 'practice' should be in an intimate relationship with the preaching of Jesus (Campbell 1997:193). Preaching Jesus advances the concern of building the church by following the vision that Jesus showed and helps the church to know how the community practises discipleship in and for the world.

## 2.2 Preaching to build up the church

Like Frei, Campbell develops his preaching in a cultural-linguistic model that focuses on the community rather than on the individual. He wants to set up a community of disciples following Jesus rather than preaching to the individual or on an experiential level. Preaching inevitably leads to practical aspects.

'Within Frei's cultural-linguistic model of Christianity, this communal function of helping to 'build up' a distinctive 'infrastructure' within the church becomes fundamental to preaching - and leads to a quite different understanding of preaching from that which focuses on private, individual, experiential events' (Campbell 2002a:463).

His ultimate purpose with preaching is the building up of the church. Preaching is not about finding a problem of the listener in order to give God as an answer, but building up the community of Jesus Christ (Campbell 1997:221-222; 2002:90, 94,134,139). His aim in building up the church is formatted through vision and practice. The relationship between the 'preaching Jesus' and 'building up the church' will be discussed below.

### 2.2.1 Preaching to build up the community of faith

As Frei's focus moved from rendering the identity of Jesus Christ through narrative to the church, to show the indirect presence of Jesus in and for the world, Campbell's homiletic also moves from Christology to ecclesiology (Campbell 1997:227). In the cultural-linguistic system, religion is similar to learning the peculiar language which already exists in the community. From this angle the tasks of the preacher are teaching and training the language to build

up the church, not by translating the peculiar speech of the church community to the listeners. Brothers (2014:116) said 'one of the functions of preaching is the teaching and learning of the language of Christian community's 'linguistic improvisation' where it not only reflects the language of the church, but also 'builds up' the church.' McClure (2007:111) said that because of the emphasis on language, postliberal preaching is called 'linguistic homiletic' and sets the goal 'to relanguage people's lives:'

'Within a postliberal, cultural-linguistic model, then, faith is not primarily an individual, existential, experiential event, but rather a journey into the language and practice of a particular community. People enter this distinctive community through the practice of baptism, which inaugurates their journey into the language and practices of the church' (Campbell 1997:232; 2002a: 464-65).

To Campbell, the church is the disciples of Jesus, communal disciples following the acted work of Jesus. He said 'the church is called to be a 'collective disciple' and to 'follow at a distance' the pattern of Christ's intentional action that is narrated in the gospels' (Campbell 1997:226-227).

The church is seen as the intermediary for the interpreting of Scripture between 'the text' and the 'sermon' (Campbell 1997:228). In this regard, preaching is to participate in God's work, which is building up the people. The church is a company of the witnesses who show the presence of Jesus by their life in and for the world.

'Jesus' presence and action in the world, which is the presence and action of God, is indirectly embodied in the church through the presence and action of the Spirit. The church is now the spatial and temporal basis of the presence of Jesus in the world' (Campbell 1997:225).

Lose (1998:5) summarised Campbell's assertion: 'the church is Jesus' 'indirect presence' in the world, believers are granted the possibility not only of joining their story to the biblical one but also of continuing that story by publicly enacting it in the worship of the congregation'.

Campbell sees two dimensions of preaching to build up the church: its 'theological vision' and its 'ethical practice'. Preaching aims at the church's vision and ethical practice.

### 2.2.2 Preaching the church's vision by telling the narrative/story of Jesus Christ

'For Frei, the key is not the genre of narrative, but the content, logic, and function of the particular narrative of the Christian community - the 'world' of the Bible.' (Campbell 1997:55)

Campbell, like Frei, is interested in the content of the preaching; what the sermon focused on, not the form of the preaching. He pays attention to the vision the redeemed alternative community should have in the midst of the world of the new creation through Jesus' life, death and resurrection, as well as the vision of Jesus himself to the community of faith (Campbell 2008:425)<sup>73</sup>.

This vision helps the community to see the world in a different way. The vision concretely maintains life in the world. In other words, the vision asks to see the world differently.

'He envisions the alternative reality that is breaking into the world in his own life, death, and resurrection, a reality in which peacemakers are indeed children of God. Through this exposing and envisioning Jesus helps the community of faith to see the world in new ways: he invites them to see the world through a different story - the story that he will enact in his life, death, and resurrection' (Campbell 2002b:95).

The reason Campbell focuses on the Nazareth Jesus is not to find some morals in Jesus' inner life, nor to give answers on our issues through Jesus, but to embody the practical and communal concerns with the person of Jesus in the midst of this world.

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<sup>73</sup> This article was originally published as his lecture in October 2007 to the Presbyterian College and Theological Seminary.

### 2.2.2.1 Redescription to invite us into the story

He suggested a 'redescription', which is a dramatic retelling of the narrative (Lose 1998:7), as the concrete way to accomplish the two elements, 'theological vision' and 'ethical practice' in a sermon. He said 'one concrete way this 'upbuilding' can take place through preaching is when the preacher redescribes theologically the common practices of the church, usually in contrast to the descriptions offered by the culture' (Campbell 2002a:463).

According to Campbell, the preacher has to help the faithful to see the world differently through the church's imagination and vision. When he/ she preaches, redescription is useful for the faithful to see the world differently (Campbell 2008:427). The preacher can show the world through the lens of Scripture and redescribes the narrative of Jesus as well as repeatedly describing the world through the biblical story. Inevitably the listener will see the event and the situation in a new way with the new-formed method (Campbell 2008:427). He does not take the human experience to Scripture, but draws the congregation into the Bible by retelling the biblical narrative. In his assertions, the concept of intratextuality can be seen as one of the main themes of postliberal theology.

Campbell (2008:428) gave an example in the sermon 'Fish stories' by Joen Gray.<sup>74</sup> The preacher describes our world with redescription through the story of a rich man and Lazarus. At this point, she reveals the problems of our world,

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<sup>74</sup> 'I was walking Friday night [the preacher began]. My husband and I were coming home from the symphony, and we passed the building where we used to live and where we still own a condominium. And there was a new addition to the décor of the building. Someone had put a padlock and chain on the dumpster behind the building. Now the reason for this was obvious to me. People who delve in dumpsters create litter and are unsightly. And so a padlock was put there to keep people out. And that made perfect sense. Except that I remembered a story about a rich man—a rich man who dined in luxury every day and sat at table in his fine house, while outside by the door was a beggar whose name was Lazarus. And day after day the rich man sat there and ate.

And Lazarus would have been glad to gather up the crumbs from the rich man's table or the aluminum cans out of his dumpster. But no one gave him anything. You know how that story continues. You know what happens to the rich man. That is a powerful story. It is a story that is going to force me to do something about this thing that I have seen. I cannot be silent because of Lazarus.'

the greed of one side and the exclusion and poverty in society on the other side. In addition, she awakens the congregation to sharing and comprehension through a biblical story.

Campbell (1997:189-220) also employed the method of 'dramatic reenactment' in the sermon form. This method is used in order that the congregation may meet Jesus Christ by following him through the Bible itself, rather than by an analogy showing the Bible story with other stories. It is by restating the congregation's story with Bible stories that preaching should move the congregation's story to the biblical story. Campbell's method of showing the vision is related to the cultural-linguistic approach and intratextuality of postliberal theology.

### 2.2.3 Preaching as ethical practice

One of the features of postliberal homiletics is its emphasis on practice and ethics. To Campbell (1994:19), the main aim of building up the church is to perform the Scripture. To him the preaching is not one person's address, but involves the performance of the community as an activity of the church.

'As a performance of Scripture, preaching helps to form the church's life after the pattern of Jesus' identity; it seeks to 'build up' the church to enact publicly the way of peace in and for the world' (Campbell 1997:217)

Inevitably, his sermon moves toward practice. In contrast, the New Homiletic usually does not request practice, because it prefers open-ended conclusions. The focus of the New Homiletic is not on the community, but on the individual. Campbell (1997:246) explains that 'contemporary homiletics have given almost no attention to the communal practices that enable 'faithful listening''(Campbell 1997:246).

Campbell (2008:432), as a postliberal homiletician, strongly demanded practice:

'Vision alone, however, is not enough. Vision must be accompanied by practices. Practices, as I understand them, are those concrete, communal,



habitual activities that are shaped by vision, but also help to nurture and sustain the Christian vision’.

In this respect, Campbell’s homiletic differs substantially from the New Homiletic. The preacher must present communal practices to the church and congregation that place the public and social dimension above the individual and private dimension. This aspect is related to the characteristic of the cultural-linguistic approach. Vanhoozer (2005:13) mentioned this characteristic:

‘The cultural-linguistic insight is that theology is connected to the life of the church. Doctrines arise not from speculative theories but from the core practices - baptism, the Eucharist, prayer, worship - that constitute the ongoing life and identity of the church’.

Campbell (2008:432) defines the sermon as follows:

‘Preaching, then, not only needs to help people see the world differently, but also must nurture communities in the practices that shape the way Christians see and live in the world’.

The aim of preaching is neither to suggest the cognitive proposition nor to focus on the individual experience of events, but to learn the language and practice of the Scripture in the particular Christian community (Campbell 1997:232; 2002a:467). Therefore the preacher ‘performs’ a biblical viewpoint to the community and questions the function of the church in the world. Campbell (2002a:464) said the preacher ‘should learn to ask ‘the hermeneutical question in this communal way’...such communal interpretation provides one concrete means of building up the church as an alternative community’.

His homiletic, which emphasises the ethical dimension of preaching, is related to the situation of the church as being depressed and attacked in North America in modern times. He considered how the church could embody the proclaimed word in life, and what the act of preaching in the church means for the church’s ethics. This concern is linked with the postliberal ethicist Stanley Hauerwas’s idea that concretely evolved into the concept of nonviolent resistance.

The purpose of Campbell's homiletic is not only to build up the church as a community, but also to help Christians, as they discover their own identity through the narrative of Jesus, to participate in public affairs. For this reason, the preaching is a 'communal practice' and a 'practice of constituting a people' (Campbell 1997:224). Campbell (1997:225) cited Hauerwas: 'the sermon is the constitution of God's kingdom people for their journey between the ages' (Hauerwas 1993:155).

To Campbell (1990:375), the issue of ethics in preaching is important, because the relationship between preaching and ethics is inseparable. He criticised the Lutheran ethicist Meilaender, who separated preaching and ethics, by saying: 'Luther did not think of Christian ethics as a discipline distinct from preaching. Indeed, the term 'ethics' itself was foreign to him' (Campbell 1990:374-375). Campbell (1990:378) asserted that 'the most crucial moral work actually takes place, not in the moment of choice and action, but in the preaching and hearing of the Word'. He wanted to mould Christian people by preaching the Word. It is directly linked to his concern for ethics:

'the primary concern of Christian ethics is the formation of a Christian people. And he reminds us that it is largely through the ongoing journey of preaching that a Christian people is formed' (Campbell 1990:379).

#### 2.2.4 Preaching as resistance against the powers

Another characteristic of Campbell's preaching is the nature of resistance. He shows that another purpose of preaching is 'a dramatic encounter with the demonic powers of the world' and preaching is a spiritual battle (Campbell 2004:26).

He defined a sermon as a 'homiletical exorcism' that drives out the evil spirit and the powers that hold the people of God captive today. The cross of Jesus is directly resisting death and defeating the ideology of the world (Campbell 2002b:58-64; Campbell & Cilliers 2012:21). His triumph is unmasking and

disarming the power. Campbell calls it 'a third way' that is neither passivity nor violence (Campbell 1994:20).

But it does not end with resistance itself; it opens the way of life to an alternative community (Campbell 2002b:48):

'Exorcism is not simply an individual matter, but seeks to build up the church and enhance the church's servanthood on behalf of the world. It seeks to contribute to the restoration or renewal of human life in community so that the church may live faithfully in the face of the powers. Exorcism is fundamentally a communal act of resistance to the powers of death, and not just an individual one' (Campbell 2004:29).

He shows the three phases of resisting the 'force of history' through preaching based on the life, story and proclamation of Jesus.

The first phase is Christian preaching according to the characteristics mentioned above to resist evil by exposing the power, the violence and the world stained by trickery, and to move forward toward the shalom community. The preacher can expose the powers through 'direct, concrete and truthful speech' (Campbell 2006:76-77), or he/she can unmask the powers to show the real picture by burlesque, lampooning or a comic style (Campbell 1994:22; Campbell 2006:78; Campbell & Cilliers 2012).

The second phase is a sermon that envisions God's coming new creation. Envisioning and imagination are useful to inspire listeners to see the vision of new creation. Big, dramatic pictures wake up the listeners who lost their vision. The prophets employed this method to convince the Israelites of their errors.

'Sometimes we preachers need to stir the imaginations of our congregations by providing them with big pictures, with large, dramatic visions' (Campbell 2008: 430).

In this situation the preacher must preach the joyful language of hope rather than be 'judgmental and angry' (Campbell 2004:29). The preacher should not rely on his homiletical skill, but must stand as a person of hope, filled with hope in places of death (Campbell 2006:80).

The third phase is building up the church so that those people who have been freed from possession by the powers will not be caught again by those powers (Campbell 2004:28-29; Campbell & Cilliers 2012).

‘Like modern character ethicists, Jesus understood that vision and practices work together to build up the community of faith as a distinctive people. Like Jesus’ sermon, contemporary sermons that seek to build up the church as a community of resistance will include these two dimensions; vision and practice’ (Campbell 2002b:96).

The ethical aspect of his preaching is closely related with this phase. The people of God who experienced freedom from the powers of darkness, lay down their old habits, defy the powers and fulfil their new discipleship to embody the reign of God bear witness by their way of life. Therefore Campbell said building up the community resists the world.

Campbell suggested the paradoxical figure of the preacher as being fool and clown in order to confront the demonic power. He borrowed the image of a fool and a clown from Grözinger (Campbell & Cilliers 2012:117). Grözinger said the role of a preacher is to be a fool in reality and the role of the sermon is to queer reality<sup>75</sup> (Campbell & Cilliers 2012:118). On this point, Campbell said a preacher is a preaching fool like Picasso’s picture (1955) of Don Quixote (Campbell & Cilliers 2012:15).<sup>76</sup>

Campbell said ‘the folly of the cross interrupts and challenges the power of death in the world.’ (Campbell & Cilliers 2012:2). In this way the sermons of Jesus Christ, the sermon on the mount and the parables of Jesus subvert and make a fool of the world, which is governed by violence and power (Campbell & Cilliers 2012:113, 118).

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<sup>75</sup> queer reality: make reality seem strange, even unreal, in the light of the gospel.

<sup>76</sup> Vanhoozer (2014:185-190) also mentioned the responsibility of the church; subversion of the powers through the cross and being holy fools.

### 2.2.5 Preaching as challenging the institutional church

Campbell's preaching is not bound to any place. The place is a matter of little concern. He preaches in a building or on the street, like Jesus and the prophets. He is also not bound to a specific form of the sermon. He attaches importance to follow ascriptive logic in the sermon rather than to the inductive–deductive form.

‘Borrowing from the contemporary homiletical debate over ‘inductive’ and ‘deductive’ preaching, one could describe the ascriptive logic of the sermon in a different way... Rather, within the ‘paradigm’ of the church’s reading of Scripture, ‘inductive’ preaching properly begins with the particularity of Jesus of Nazareth and moves from there to the church in and for the world’ (Campbell 1997:193)

In this respect, his preaching is different from the New Homiletic. Craddock and Lowry were concerned about how to preach to listeners in a depressed church. Their concern was with the space, especially in the chapel. They found the solution to the problem by changing the form of the sermon.

Campbell, however, discovered the solution not in the form of the sermon, but in its content. Campbell, who emphasised communal practice, was not interested in preaching in a specific space, as he selected the street for preaching. The form of preaching is not seen as important. On the contrary; he thought that the ethical practice, through the theological vision, brought reform and reconciliation of the church to the street as its space, as the mission of the preacher (Campbell 1999:24):

‘Street preaching has frequently arisen at times when the church has grown moribund and in need of reform. Because of hardened or lifeless institutional structures and practices, preachers have taken to the streets as a means of renewing the Body of Christ’ (Campbell 1999:24).

The way of awaking and being vital for the depressed church is not by storytelling or narrative artistry, but acting in ‘moral obedience’ as disciples of Jesus who ‘embodied the reign of God’ (Campbell 1997:216). At present, the main method of preaching is the extemporaneous style for a dramatic sermon

(Campbell 1999:24). Preaching is the performance of Scripture with imagination and envisioning, and the preacher is the witness of Jesus (Campbell 1997:216).

### 3. CRITICAL EVALUATION OF CAMPBELL'S HOMILETIC

#### 3.1 Contributions of Campbell's homiletic

##### 3.1.1 Turning to the biblical narrative

One of the strengths of Campbell's homiletic is his turning to the biblical narrative. As Pape (2013:44) put it: 'Campbell's strength is in urging preachers to stay close to the biblical text'. The New Homiletic contributed to the discovery of the importance of the narrative in Scripture. But it did not discuss which story should be preached. In other words, it did not return to the Scripture itself. It also degraded the gospel and the story of Jesus, the main content for proclamation in preaching, into a tool or instrument for solving problems.

Campbell, who noticed this problem of the New Homiletic, tried to show the proper guiding principle of the biblical narrative through the identity of Jesus, who is the purpose and centre of the biblical story. Accepting Frei's insistence on the ascriptive logic of Jesus in the Gospels, Campbell (1997:161) changed the flow in homiletics from focusing on the individual experience and needs to revealing the identity of Jesus of Nazareth in Scripture. Pape (2013:44) mentions Campbell's strength, which he focused on the preacher and not on the method of the story, on Jesus as rendered in the Gospels:

'Campbell has very helpfully reminded us that it is not the 'old man with a wrinkled face who worked in Gibson's Hardware' that the church has gathered to encounter, but the Jesus witnessed to in the gospels'

### 3.1.2 Turning from individual interest to the Church

Campbell's homiletic is also turned from interest in the individual to focusing on the church. Campbell's preaching leads to the communal. His homiletic served as a warning to contemporary homiletics, which focuses on individual needs and experiences by emphasising what constitutes the community of the kingdom of God:

‘Campbell exhorts preachers to eschew the anti-communal tendencies of modern narrative preaching which focuses almost exclusively on the experience of the individual’ (Lose 1998:5).

Campbell adheres to building up the people and the church through the language in the community and looking upon the Bible as the church's book (Lose 1998:5). To him the mission of the preacher is not to create the experiences of the congregation, but to build up a true church that tells God's will and gathers the people of God in the world.

McGrath (1996a:39), an evangelical, recognised this value of postliberalism:

‘Indeed, evangelicalism can learn from postliberalism, especially in the latter's strong sense of community, which stands in sharp contrast to evangelicalism's tendency toward social atomism’.

### 3.1.3 The emphasis on practice

Another characteristic of his homiletic is the emphasis on communal practice. The New Homiletic normally closed the sermon in an open-ended way, in which the sermon entrusted the application to the congregation. Campbell, on the other hand, defines the sermon as the assistant to reveal and enliven the reality of the Word, and not as speculative language. Therefore the sermon that Campbell advocates is the practice of the sermon by the listeners. A sermon is an action to show the congregation, through a story of Christianity, especially the story of Jesus Christ, and to help to obtain the vision that God brought through Jesus Christ.

### 3.1.4 Turning to overcome the spirit of the times

One of the characteristics of Campbell's homiletic is resisting the spirit of the times as well as overcoming it. A preacher should be a fool facing the spirit of the times without evil and violence.

He suggested two strategies: humour and breaking taboos. Humour such as fools and clowns often use create laughter and pleasure, but humour has other purposes too. Humour maximises ambiguities, makes the stiffness smooth, overturns familiarity and demonstrates the reality of the power (Campbell 1994:22). Campbell & Cilliers (2012:144) mentioned the theological usefulness of humour:

‘The eschatological character of humor, however, moves us toward lament. The hope of humor brings with it sight into the ambiguities of God’s revelation, the incongruities of God’s presence among us. Such eschatological humor brings joy as a result of the presence of God, but also sadness because of the seeming absence of this God.’

Fools do not know the term taboo. In this meaning, the preachers are fools who challenge and break these taboos and are ‘agents of interruption’ (Campbell & Cilliers 2012:154, 156).

Kay (2007:117) extolled Campbell’s contribution to lead the church toward a nonviolent resistance through preaching against the principalities and powers. His preaching calls not to follow this world, but to choose another way to overcome the spirit of the times as fools and clowns.

‘Preaching is a countercultural practice in a world in which attempts to control and manipulate the future through violence often rule the day.’ (Campbell 1994:21)



## 3.2 Limitations of Campbell's homiletic

This thesis recognises Campbell's contributions, but questions theologically some of the points of Campbell's preaching and his homiletic, which is founded on postliberalism.

### 3.2.1 The loss of a method for effective preaching

One of the criticisms directed at Campbell is that his theory is too theoretical. He has a theological interest in what to preach, but he does not show us how to preach. His theory departs from the critique of the New Homiletic, which only takes interest in the methodology of and the form of preaching. Consequently, he rejects an outward form and method of preaching. Instead he focuses on the substance of the preaching. But his approach to preaching neglects the method itself in his critique. Campbell even insists on the uselessness of method, taking an example from a sermon of Frei, who is a narrative theologian:

'In addition, Frei's own sermons did not take an explicitly narrative form - something Kay neglected to consider. Rather, Frei liked the form of colonial Puritan sermons: exegesis and application. Frei's sermons would not be considered 'narrative preaching,' much less a simple recitation of the biblical stories' (Campbell 1997:203).

But what Campbell accuses Frei of is not corroborated by Frei (1974:13-14):

'Subject and social setting belong together, and characters and external circumstances fitly render each other. Neither character nor circumstance separately, nor yet their interaction, is a shadow of something else more real or more significant. Nor is the one more important than the other in the story.'

Campbell's argument in this regard is clearly wrong. Pape (2013:45) says, 'Campbell even goes so far as to suggest that once the character of Jesus has been rendered by story, narrative form becomes dispensable for the preacher.'

Cilliers (2004:28) says it is not wrong, but natural for the preacher who relies on the Holy Spirit to pursue and consider methods of preaching. Quoting Bohren's

writing (1971), he said: 'Spirit and method may never adopt contrary stances' (Cilliers 2004:28).

One should guard against misusing a story as an instrument to gather people, but also beware of becoming a hollow theological echo, shouting that preaching is for building up the church, without preaching being heard.

### 3.2.2 The loss of the agency of the Holy Spirit in preaching

In Campbell's article 'Living faith - Luther, preaching and ethics', he cited Luther's idea that emphasised the role of the Spirit in preaching. It portrayed the relationship between 'the preacher's external word and God's internal Spirit' as 'the heat and light of the sun or the voice and breath of a person' (Campbell 1990:376). Campbell (1990:376) continued the explanation of the relationship between preaching and ethics in the light of the Holy Spirit:

'This linkage of Word and Spirit is important for ethics because the Holy Spirit, active in and through the preached Word, enables believers to live the gospel.'

But in his masterpiece *Preaching Jesus* (1997), based on postliberal theology, the role of the Spirit is not seen. In his postliberal homiletic, which stresses the community, the role of the Spirit is replaced by tradition and training. Lose cautioned (2003:121) against this characteristic:

'In a postliberal homiletic, preaching is not about proclaiming the gospel by which the Holy Spirit creates faith, but rather is the means by which to acculturate participants more deeply in their tradition while training them in the habitual practices of their community.' (Lose 2003:121).

In Lose's view (2003:121), Campbell believes faith is not a relationship between Christ and the body of Christ (the church), but a 'sociological term' that refers to membership of a particular tradition by training in the culture and its language.

Campbell's weakness is his neglect of the Holy Spirit, who makes preaching a living word for today. He is interested in the church and in the community without paying attention to the most important role of the Spirit.

'Ultimately, according to Campbell, preaching does not seek to address hearers with a living, dynamic word of the gospel that creates faith; rather, preaching executes a primarily catechetical and ethical function to train the mind, but not quicken the spirit, of the hearers'(Lose 2003:122)

### 3.2.3 The loss of concern for the individual

If the Holy Spirit is important as the agent of the preaching, the people who are the object of the preaching also have significance because they are the infrastructure of the community. By criticising apologetic preaching, Campbell (1997:69) focuses on the church and on the community of faith: 'becoming a Christian is a communal journey, rather than an individual, experiential event'. He explained that the focus on the community does not neglect the individual, but he is not interested in the individual's salvation and individual's experience in the gospel.

Without concern for the individual, a community cannot be built. Allen (2001:46) says: 'Apologetics helps a community understand why it is possible to believe and act as it does.' 'Why should persons remain (or become) Christians?' and 'to strengthen Christian identity'.

It is impossible to evangelise without the personal contact point. Lose (1998:8) called this the weakening of the incarnation theology of preaching:

'the movement from our world to the biblical one in which Campbell stands diametrically opposed to God's movement in the Incarnation. Most simply put, when the fourth evangelist climaxes his mighty hymn to God's Word, he does not conclude, 'And the Word created a new world and invited us into it,' but rather, 'And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us'.

### 3.2.4 Putting the authority of the Bible below that of the church

In many parts, the criticism on Campbell's homiletic is related to postliberal theology. Among them, the authority of the Bible is regarded as the first of the problems. According to Pecknold's (2005:1-2) introduction to postliberal theology, postliberal theology should not be treated as anti-liberalism, anti-secular or anti-liberal. It means that postliberalism is a revision and a complement of liberalism. Postliberalism looks to return to scripture on the surface, but it is a return to the biblical narrative, not a return to the Bible.

The view of the Bible in postliberalism is different to that of evangelicalism. The reason why the Bible has authority is because the community has decided on it. But in evangelicalism the Bible has authority for its content and for itself.

Evangelicals say: 'Scripture has authority, not because of what the Christian community has chosen to make of it, but because of what it is, and what it conveys' (McGrath 1996b:155-156). In contrast, postliberals say: 'The Christian church has affirmed and submitted itself to Scripture down the ages; consequently, the proper sphere of interpretation of Scripture must be the Christian community itself' (McGrath 1996b:155).

The question to postliberalism is: 'Why does the Bible possess such authority? Why is it the narrative of Jesus Christ, which exercises this controlling authority?' (McGrath 1996b:155). This question is also directed at Campbell. He has not suggested a reason why preaching should be based on the biblical narrative.

Vanhoozer (2005:294) said: 'The main weakness of this position is that the authority of Scripture - God's communicative action - is relegated (demoted) to the role of one voice among many. The emphasis is on the church's use of Scripture rather than the inspired authorial use. Indeed, Scripture is considered mute unless 'illuminated by tradition, vivified in personal experience, and

confirmed by reason.’ Vanhoozer’s (2005:26) criticism against the cultural-language approach gives a clear perspective:

‘Many Evangelicals have unknowingly made the cultural-linguistic turn already, though the cultures they have appropriated have not been altogether holy. Practices that owe more to managerial, therapeutic, consumerist, and entertainment cultures increasingly characterize Evangelical churches, so much so that they are in danger of becoming the de facto, if not the de jure, authority for the Evangelical way of life.’

Another question is of the adequacy of intratextuality. Vanhoozer (2007a:48) warns of the danger of the cultural-linguistic model of postliberal theology: ‘The danger is that theology becomes a species of ethnography whose task is simply to describe how one particular community talks; doctrine then becomes an instrument for socialisation into an ecclesial community’ (Vanhoozer 2007a:48). McClure (2007:111) also mentions the prime criticism related to the tendency of the postliberal homiletics ‘toward forms of sectarianism that isolate preaching from any integral relationship with the public square.’

#### 4. Conclusion

Chapter 5 has explored the postliberal homiletics as an alternative to the New Homiletic, which has dominated the scene for 40 years in North America. In particular, the researcher has looked at the figure and background of the homiletic of Campbell, who is a representative of postliberal homiletics and critical of the New Homiletic.

In section 1 the origin of the postliberal theology was surveyed and the three postliberals who influenced Campbell were presented. As a preliminary study, the five assertions of postliberal theology were enumerated to understand Campbell’s theory: ascriptive logic of the gospel stories, the cultural-linguistic model, the community of interpretation, intratextual hermeneutics and practice-oriented theology.

In section 2 the figure of postliberal homiletics was looked at. The New Homiletic, which focuses on the form without concern for the content, was criticised by Campbell, who emphasised that preaching should preach Jesus Christ, who is the centre of the biblical narrative. He suggested a new homiletic, the postliberal homiletics that is interested in building up the church. It is critical of the New Homiletic that is grounded on the need of the individual and his/her experience. To Campbell preaching is the building up of the church community to be witnesses of Jesus Christ. The community is the interpreting community of the Bible, which is the canon of Christianity. It requests the community to live according to the Bible. The community is also a community that resists the powers in the world as Jesus did. Campbell is interested in the content of the narrative rather than in its form and method. He expects the recovery of the depressed contemporary church through the biblical narrative. Therefore, to him preaching is showing the vision of the kingdom of God and practising it in order to accomplish it through the vision.

In section 3 the contribution and limitation of Campbell's homiletic were examined. He contributed four aspects to homiletics. First, he made preachers concerned with the biblical narrative – not just with any narrative. Second, he shifted interest away from the individual to interest in community. Third, he brought the value of practice to preaching, which the New Homiletic was not interested in. Fourth, he shows a good example of preaching in order to overcome the spirit of the times.

In spite of Campbell's efforts, he was criticised on some of his points. The criticism relates to his homiletic itself and the postliberal theology he based his theory on. Campbell is associated with indifference to the sermon form and to the methodology of the narrative sermon. He has no interest in the form of the sermon. Therefore his sermon has an element that reduces the concern for the listener in the preaching. The second criticism is connected with his theology. To him preaching is not proclamation, but training and learning the peculiar language in the community. The agent of the preaching, the Holy Spirit, is not revealed in his homiletic. Third, he focused on the community and was not

interested in the individual as the contact point for evangelism. The fourth criticism is related to the postliberal theology, especially intratextuality and the cultural-linguistic model. Although these two elements are the basis of his sermon, the model is weak as regards the authority of the Bible, and it raises the problem of the historical view of the Bible. We must also know that not all culture is holy.

This thesis suggests a homiletic that is not based on postliberal theology, but on evangelicalism, which emphasises the authority of the Bible. The canonical-linguistic model of Vanhoozer will be studied in the next chapter. For this reason, in Chapter 6 the researcher will examine Vanhoozer's work as an alternative plan and its application to homiletics will be indicated.

## **Chapter 6 Vanhoozer's theological dramatic theory as a normative task**

The research of the present Korean church by priestly listening in Chapters 2 and 3 looked at the result of the Korean church's experience of the pulpit, with the New Homiletic as the interpretive task in Chapter 4. The validity of postliberal homiletics as the normative task of the Korean church beyond the New Homiletic was checked and the limitation of the homiletics pointed out in Chapter 5.

In this Chapter Vanhoozer's drama metaphor theory as the alternative normative task compared with postliberal homiletics will be studied. The purpose of this chapter is not only to deal with the subject of theodrama, but also to briefly survey the relationship between theology and drama so as to discover the potential of drama and the validity of its application to practical theology. Then Vanhoozer's dramatic theory of theology will be scrutinised, especially its canonical-linguistic approach. The introductory assessment of Kevin Vanhoozer's theology is not exhaustive, but is focused on the topic of homiletics in order to overcome the limitations of the New Homiletic and of postliberal homiletics. Finally the essential points will be applied to homiletics.

### **1. UNDERSTANDING THEOLOGY AS DRAMA**

#### **1.1 Historical consideration of theology as drama**

The contemporary understanding of theology as theodrama began in earnest with the Roman Catholic theologian, Hans Urs von Balthasar, who developed the concept of the world as a theatre in his book *Theo-Drama* in the 1980s. The



dramatic approach has since been applied to several areas, such as ethics (Wells 2004, Wesley 2014), doctrine (Vanhoozer 2005), catechism (Osmer 2005), church history (Quash 2005) and worship (Nell & Meyer 2013).

Although the theatrical metaphor has been very active recently, the attempt to see theology in connection with drama started a long time ago. Vanhoozer (2014:13) found the basis for the theatrical Trinitarian theology in Augustine, Aquinas and Calvin. During the Reformation, in the sixteenth century, both Calvin and Luther were contemporaries of Shakespeare at a time when the theatre prospered (Bouwsma 1988:1, 177).

Calvin's life and theological view was directly influenced by drama (Nell 2009:68). Even though he recognised the dangers of the nature of drama, he did not ignore the gravity of drama and sometimes used a theatrical metaphor in his letters and commentaries (Bouwsma 1988:177-178; Nell 2009:69; Lugt 2014:2).

Calvin's concern about drama can be seen in Book IV 1:9 of his *Institution*, where he added the phrase 'and is also heard' to Article VII of the confession of Augsburg for Lutheran churches and believers across the world: 'The church is where the *Gospel is preached correctly and the sacraments are administered correctly*' (Smit 2009:200). It means that 'the Gospel not only wants to be preached, but also wants to be heard, which means obeyed, lived and 'performed' (Nell 2009:70).

Lugt (2014:xiii) is one of the scholars who adapted the concept of drama as theology. He revealed three reasons why 'theology is inherently theatrical', although there are negative attributes of drama. Firstly the triune God, who is the object of theology, says and acts on the stage of the world God created. Secondly theology takes place within the theodrama. Thirdly the goal of theology is not simply to be understood, but to be practically performed through fittingly participating in the correct comprehension of the theodrama.

## 1.2 Criticisms of the theatrical analogy

Although the understanding of theology as drama or theatre has many positive attributes, there are still criticisms of the theatrical or dramatic analogy, both historical and contemporary objections.

The first, the historical objection, is related to ‘the anti-theatrical prejudice’ mentioned by Johas Barish (Bouwsma 1998:178). In the historical view, the theatrical analogy was criticised by Plato, Tertullian, Augustine and Calvin (Vanhoozer 2014:240-242). Plato regarded the theatre as a poor double imitation of what already exists in the idea, and reality already imitated the theatre. Tertullian and Augustine refused the analogy because they considered the roots of theatre to be closely related to pagan ritual. However, a millennium later Calvin took a positive view and used the theatrical model to show God’s works (Vanhoozer 2014:242). He still worried that the drama hid oneself behind a mask on the stage of life (Bouwsma 1998:178); however, the intensity of the rejection of the analogy certainly decreased.

Since then the opposition to the theatrical analogy persisted, but it has taken on a new dimension. Abraham Kuyper is also against the theatre, but his reason differs from earlier reasons, which were related to the sinful attributes of the theatre. His opposition to the theatre is to prevent a bad influence of the actor on the audience, like today’s worries that movies encourage copycat crimes (Vanhoozer 2014:242).

The chronological changes of view of the theatrical model are very similar to the path on which philosophy, music and rhetoric have evolved alongside theology (Vanhoozer 2014:243). Augustine’s comment about music apparently supports the attempt to apply the theatrical model to theology:

‘We should not avoid music because of the associated pagan superstitions if we can take from it anything useful for comprehending the Sacred Scriptures’ (Augustine 2002:87).

The second group of objections is contemporary. Vanhoozer (2014:244-252) refutes the six accusations against the dramatic metaphor to theology<sup>77</sup>, as indicated in section two, together with his arguments.

Nell & Meyer (2013:2) found a new objection that has appeared in correlation with the character of entertainment by drama in church today. He saw that the church, especially the building, emulated the dominant powers of the times, according to Miller (2009). Medieval architecture emulated in the church the splendour of castles to show the power of the house of God. During the Enlightenment the church emulated lecture-halls like universities awakening to learning. In the Industrial Revolution, the church emulated big business like the 'Corporation'.

Nell & Meyer (2013:2) added one objection to which Miller did not refer: today the church buildings resemble a theatre where entertainment is provided. The congregation are seated on pews facing the stage like an audience waiting to see a play. They anticipate something to satisfy them, and the church eventually will be tempted to try to give people what they want and to satisfy them. This perspective is not new. The Puritans, and later fundamentalists, say: 'the theatre is an epicenter of evil, existing merely for base entertainment' (Lugt 2014:1).

Nell & Meyer paradoxically speak with Donald Miller's metaphors that a crisis is a time of danger, but also a time of opportunity:

'if the Medieval church said, 'We have a better King than the king' and the Enlightenment church said 'We have a better classroom than the University', then maybe the 21st-century church is saying, 'We have better entertainment than MTV.' (Nell & Meyer 2013:6-7)

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<sup>77</sup> 'The dramatic metaphor risks making theology less biblical by imposing an external model (i.e., the theater) onto Scripture.' 2. 'The Bible is not dramatic literature.' 3. 'The Bible is not a script.' 4. 'The dramatic model does not do justice to propositions.' 5. 'An emphasis on Scripture as script, prescript, and transcript unhelpfully down plays the role of the Holy Spirit'. 6. 'Drama is a term less appropriate than story or narrative.'

It is true that there are risks in adapting the drama metaphor to theology, because drama is fun and interesting and one can hide oneself behind a mask. Nevertheless, the model has potential for transforming congregations from passive audiences to active actors on the stage of theodrama (Nell & Meyer 2013:2). Long (2001:42-43) observes the criticism of the dramatic in the worship service, such as the nature of entertainment, the use of artificial lighting for liturgical moods, the shape of the chapel resembling a television studio. Nevertheless, he said, '[v]ital and faithful congregations have recovered and made visible the sense of drama inherent in Christian worship' (Long 2001:43). The key question is: Where did the drama come from? From the gospel or from outside the church? In this way, the ideas of Augustine, Nell & Meyer and Long, responding to the criticisms, help to think of and to apply a dramatic approach to theology and particularly to practical theology.

### 1.3 The validity of adapting the theatrical analogy to practical theology

Before the discussion on theology and theatre, theatre had dialogue with a variety of other disciplines, such as early psychology, sociology, philosophy, linguistics and anthropology. The concern of the interdisciplinary discussion between theology and theatre arose naturally. However, it is necessary to verify the validity of a careful discussion between the two disciplines beforehand, especially with practical theology.

According to Müller practical theology has to have a concrete context and the methodology for the specific context (Müller 2004:296). He suggested a methodology for practical theology with regard to social constructionism, meaning a person's life is constructed and interpreted by the communal and social epistemology around oneself, and post-foundationalism to make interdisciplinary dialogue possible (Müller 2009:202).

Foundationalism, which has its roots in modernism, pursues a universal perspective and absolute truth; in this process it uses assimilation and

unification of all the knowledge without a dialogue or a compromise (Müller 2009:202). On the other hand, anti or non-foundationalism grew up against foundationalism and only insists on relativism and subjectivity (Müller 2009:203). Post-foundationalism seeks the middle way between foundationalism's objectivism and non-foundationalism's extreme relativism and emphasises the context. So it can be the ground for practical theology with social constructionism in post-modern society to have an interdisciplinary research, unlike non-foundationalism, which could not find common ground for interdisciplinary discussion because everything is relative and subjective.

Van Huyssteen's (2006:25) viewpoint is useful to understand post-foundationalism.

'A postfoundationalist approach helps realize...that we are not the intellectual prisoners of our contexts or traditions, but that we are epistemically empowered to cross contextual, cultural, and disciplinary borders to explore critically the theories, meanings, and beliefs through which we and others construct our worlds.'

The exploration for an interdisciplinary dialogue opens the discussion between theatre and theology, including practical theology.

## 2. VANHOOZER'S THEOLOGICAL DRAMA

Vanhoozer is a research professor of systematic theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He has written many books on systematic theology, hermeneutics and postmodernism. Vanhoozer's concern is with the Age of the Reader – the so-called 'Reader's Liberation Movement, the Reader's Revolt, and the Revenge of the Reader' –, how the Bible is understood as the Word of God and God's revelation, because Christianity believes in the one and only God as well as confesses that the Bible is God's word (Vanhoozer 1998:27). In the Age of the Reader, the Bible is a mere text.

His concern for Scripture is seen in *Is there a meaning in this text?* (1998). The book was written to reveal the present purported loss of authority of Scripture in the theory of interpretation. He looked at the history of interpretation and tried to recover; the resurrecting of the author, the redeeming of the text and the reforming of the reader. *The first theology* (2002) which was a collection of his hermeneutic articles between 1993 and 2001, was written to review postmodernism and to respond to its reaction as a hermeneutic that puts its priority in the Word of God. His book *The drama of doctrine* (2005) was written to suggest a canonical-linguistic approach as strategy to recover the authority of the Bible as God's Word. As the title of the book shows, he critically accepted Balthasar's theological dramatic theory in Balthasar's *Theo-Drama*<sup>78</sup> and Lindbeck's cultural-linguistic approach in Lindbeck's *The nature of doctrine* (1984).

Vanhoozer's recently released book, *Faith Speaking Understanding* (2014), shows his theological drama more practically than a previous book, *The drama of doctrine* (2005). He tries to understand the Bible and the world which we live, how the Bible links to the world we live in and how the Bible changes the world. Therefore the assignment of theology is to link doctrine to real life. It is an attempt to overcome the dichotomy of theory and practice in theology. In this sense he is not a theoretical systematic theologian, but a theologian pursuing practice.

His attitude to practice is related to two scholars. First, Augustine's speech-act theory 'saying is also a kind of doing, many utterances are performative' (Vanhoozer 1998:209). To Augustine, the semantically correct sentence needs performance in a suitable way and circumstance, not just speaking as its real meaning (Vanhoozer 1998:209). Second, Balthasar accepted the concept of 'drama' in his theology (Vanhoozer 2005:84) in an attempt to resolve the limitation of the traditional dichotomy between theory and practice of theology in

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<sup>78</sup> This books consist of the 5 volumes and an epilogue and was first published in German in 1973-1983 and in San Francisco, 1988-1998; Volume I: *Prolegomena*, Volume II: *Dramatis Personae*, Volume III: *Dramatis Personae*, Volume IV: *The Action*, Volume V: *The Last Act*.

his drama analogy, and the old problem of finite human freedom within the absolute sovereignty of the infinite being (Balthasar 1988:50; 1990:189). Vanhoozer proposes the direction and role of doctrine by critically accepting the views of the two scholars in a canonical-linguistic approach.

## 2.1 The canonical-linguistic approach

The canonical linguistic approach has in common with the cultural linguistic approach that meaning and truth are crucially related to using language, but ‘the normative use is ultimately not that of ecclesial culture but of the biblical canon’ (Vanhoozer 2005:16). There is a difference between the two models: ‘not Scripture as used by the church but Scripture as used by God’ (Vanhoozer 2005:17).

The purpose of his work is to model a biblical interpretation respecting the principle of the *sola scriptura* as well the location of the interpretative community (Vanhoozer 2005:19).

Christianity believes in the one and only God and confesses that the Bible is the Word of God (Burnett 2013:225). To read the Bible is to understand Jesus, who is the way (John 14:6), and to become his disciples by faith in Him (Vanhoozer 2005:14, 2009:152). Vanhoozer (2009:171) said that

‘Scripture is not merely a vehicle for conveying information. It is rather a medium of divine communicative action whose purpose is not only to inform but to transform: to nurture right vision, right attitudes, right actions.’

But we live in another world than the world of Scripture. To follow its way, there is a need for a process to interpret and to judge the Bible correctly. In this he differs from Lindbeck. The canonical-linguistic approach appeared as a critique and an alternative plan of intratextual truth. Lindbeck’s notion is appropriate in the world of the text, but does not go further to the world outside the text. Vanhoozer (2007a:48) says ‘the biblical narrative is internally coherent but it

does not correspond to the external (extrasystematic) world'. Naturally theology is shut up in the community and the power of the gospel is lost (Vanhoozer 2000:100). Vanhoozer's biblical interpretation begins to overcome the dichotomy of theology, like the cultural-linguistic approach. Vanhoozer (2009:153) said that 'we cannot live biblically without engaging in biblical interpretation'. The interpretation itself is a training course to make disciples to follow Jesus's way.

The canonical-linguistic approach integrated three types of approaches to doctrine: cognitive-propositional, experiential-expressivity, and cultural-linguistic (Vanhoozer 2005:83-100). At the same time Vanhoozer (2000:100) reveals the weakness of these models by the canonical-linguistic approach's informational, expressive, volitional import (Vanhoozer 2005:106). The central issue of the canonical-linguistic approach is its core conviction:

'God has spoken and acted in Jesus Christ and that God speaks and acts in the canonical Scriptures that testify to him' (Vanhoozer 2005:26).

Vanhoozer emphasises that the gospel is not just a verbal communication, but shows God's action in Jesus Christ (Vanhoozer 2000:72).

## 2.1.1 The aspects of knowledge

### 2.1.1.1 Post-propositionalism

Vanhoozer tries to overcome the limitation of propositionalism with drama because drama is essentially a dialogical action. Vanhoozer (2005:270) says: 'Dialogical form cannot be reduced to monological substance'. The canonical linguistic approach pays attention to the actions and contexts of actions, which the monologising system ignored (Vanhoozer 2005:272).

Vanhoozer points out the weakness of the cognitive-propositional approach: there is no space for a spectator. In the 'doctrine as epic', the doctrine speaks



alone and is an absolute monologue (Vanhoozer 2005:88). A spectator is not involved in the drama, but is only an observer. For that reason there is no life.

‘It is as if all the action has been drained away from the communicative act. Propositionalist theology at its worst is guilty of dedramatizing Scripture’ (Vanhoozer 2005:87).

But Vanhoozer does not deny the necessity of this model. Although the proposition has become more distant from the communicative act and has become useless because it does not function, a proposition is necessary. If we do not have a concrete concept about action, we cannot perform concretely and rightly (Vanhoozer 2005:103), all meaning depends on the context. Without a defined proposition and cognition, there will be huge confusion such as heretical distortions, losing the church’s reason for being (Vanhoozer 2005:278):

‘To deny a propositional component to theology is in effect ‘an attack on the notion of revealed religion’ (Vanhoozer 2005:91).

For this he pursued communication through drama. It will not be a closed recognition, but an open recognition. This is post-proposition that conquers the old proposition. He said: ‘The aim is to rehabilitate the cognitive-propositional approach to theology by expanding what we mean by ‘cognitive’ and by dramatising what we mean by ‘proposition’ (Vanhoozer 2005:88).

The canonical linguistic approach affirms ‘both plurality of voices in Scripture and their theological significance’ (Vanhoozer 2005:272). As theodrama, Scripture is largely composed in a covenantal dialogical form between the word of God and the words of men (Vanhoozer 2005:272). In the Bible, there are various voices because God speaks through the voice of the author of the Bible in a distinctive time, place, and culture, as if the author speaks through their character (Vanhoozer 2005:272).

Vanhoozer (2005:273) admits to various forms in the Bible by minding the historical and literary factors of Scripture. Although the effort of postliberal theologians discovered the importance of the narrative form and bore abundant

fruits, he is not satisfied with the narrative form because he does not want to repeat the error of propositionalism that united the multiple forms of the Bible into one form (Vanhoozer 2005:273). He suggests a new way with the drama, because a single play includes many genres such as aria, poetry, narrative, monological drama, prologue and epilogue and conceptual clarification like the epistles of Paul (Vanhoozer 2005:273-274).

The efforts containing canonical plurality stimulate the theological diversity (Vanhoozer 2005:274). He pursues 'a unity in diversity' and called this 'beyond propositional revelation,' but does not ignore the importance of propositions. It is a post-propositionalist theology.

'The Canonical-linguistic watchword with regard to propositions must be 'beyond, but not without' (Vanhoozer 2005:278)

#### 2.1.1.2 Post-conservatism

The canonical-linguistic approach is interested in a diversity of forms without giving privilege to the one form of proposition, unlike conservative theology (Vanhoozer 2005:282). For this reason, the canonical-linguistic approach is called post-conservative theology. The approach selects a cognitive-poetic approach that emphasises both intellect and imagination (Vanhoozer 2005:278). He carefully noted that imagination is frequently used in the Bible because imaginations and their products, such as metaphors and stories, can be a distinctive and essential instrument of cognition and enable recognition that we could not otherwise observe (Vanhoozer 2005:280). Propositions and imagination are not exclusive, but have a relation of cooperation with each other:

'The imagination is that cognitive faculty that allows us to see as whole what those who lack imagination see only as unrelated parts' (Vanhoozer 2005:281).

Vanhoozer (2005:82) regards a form not as just a frame of content; it can also shape the content itself and become an integral part of the content. In this sense, he admits the validity of narrative form, but he does not attach a privilege

to narrative form, like the postliberal does. He thinks all genres in the Bible do more than just deliver information:

‘Apocalyptic, for example, displays the end of the world, and perhaps ‘exhorts’ and ‘comforts’ as well. This dimension is lost when apocalyptic is read only for its propositions or as a timetable for the future’ (Vanhoozer 2005:284).

Vanhoozer sees this function of genre as ‘enlarged conception of cognitive’, that genres are comprised of the aspects of ‘cognitive’, ‘communicative’ and ‘affective,’ not just delivering information (Vanhoozer 2005:284):

‘The canonical forms do not simply convey propositions but are strategies for training readers to see as, taste as, and feel as’ (Vanhoozer 2005:285).

Naturally, the variety of genres in the Bible supplement each other; sometimes they support and are compared with each other by diverse voices, but they point to the ‘same multifaceted reality: God’s word-act in Jesus Christ’ (Vanhoozer 2005:287). By this diversity of genres we hear a polyphonic truth that is authoritative, has a peculiar truth, and manifestly and abundantly understands the theodrama (Vanhoozer 2005:289):

‘That the truth of Jesus Christ comes clothed in the form of narratives, songs, parables, fulfilled prophecies, pastoral epistles, and apocalyptic says something about the nature of that truth, namely, that it is a truth that must not only be believed, but felt, done, and loved.’ (Vanhoozer 2005:288)

In this way one who is trained in thinking and discerning what God is doing through the variety of biblical genres can obtain an adequate cognition of God and can fittingly participate in the theodrama with persons (Vanhoozer 2005:288). Therefore attending the theodrama is not impersonal, but has an interpersonal dimension.

### 2.1.1.3 Post-foundationalism

The post-foundationalism of Vanhoozer is different from Lindbeck's idea in that he lays his foundation on the Scripture as post-foundation, where Lindbeck lays his foundation on community.

Vanhoozer, who is aware of criticism that the canonical-linguistic approach is the same as foundationalism, opens up a new assertion with the term post-foundationalism. He claims to stand on the sole foundation, Jesus Christ, who is the foundation of prophets and apostles, the church and the authoritative Scripture as God's communicative action, not like Lindbeck's emphasis on the church community (Vanhoozer 2005:292, 294).

Instead of the emphasis on the community of the cultural-linguistic approach as another type of post-foundationalism or the emphasis of the web, net, or mosaic belief of the non-foundationalist approach, he uses metaphors like 'map' and 'script' to explain post-foundationalism and emphasises 'the communicative practices of the canon itself' (Vanhoozer 2005:295).

The metaphors show the two characteristics of Scripture like the two sides of a coin. The script displays the unity of Scripture, and the map displays the feature of plurality of Scripture. Both metaphors play a role as direction for speaking and acting and for following and walking in the theodrama (Vanhoozer 2005:295).

The metaphor of a map shows the features of post-foundationalism. A map is not the universe nor objectivity; its first concern is geomorphological accuracy. A map, however, has a title, purpose for use, a standard orientation toward the north and an inherent variety of symbols. A map shows the interest of the map maker, such as the location of a buried treasure or a political tendency of an area (Vanhoozer 2005:296). As an interpretative framework a map has some functions that show the way, direction, indicates location and area variously over a monologue and has the characteristic of unity. As a map has coherence,

correspondence and coordination, theodrama has fittingness of intrasystematic, extrasystematic and intersystematic aspects (Vanhoozer 2005:297-298):

‘A canonical-linguistic theology is postfoundationalist because it accepts the canonical atlas as its primary interpretative framework with which to make sense of everything else’ (Vanhoozer 2005:299)

### 2.1.2 The aspects of wisdom

‘The wise disciple is the one who discerns and enacts in new, contextually appropriate ways the same truth, goodness, and beauty that is God’s reconciling love in Jesus Christ’ (Vanhoozer 2014:205).

Vanhoozer’s concern with Scripture is ‘faith seeking understanding,’ as Anselm defined theology (Vanhoozer 2014:15). It is ‘the attempt to grasp conceptually the nature of God, Jesus Christ, and humanity in the light of the significance of God’s acts’ (Vanhoozer 2007b:16). The goal of the theology of Christianity is not to store up knowledge about God but to let knowledge become lived knowledge. For this, we need the understanding of Scripture, the world we live in and the power and truth of the Bible message. Doing theology is to unfold our understanding of God’s speaking and doing in the world based on Scripture (Vanhoozer 2014:21).

Vanhoozer does not distinguish theology as theoretical and practical because he is confident that ‘[t]heology involves not only theoretical but theatrical reasoning: practical reasoning about what to say and do in particular situations in light of the gospel of Jesus Christ’ (Vanhoozer 2009:156). His idea goes further with drama because drama expresses a meaning through word and act together: ‘the medium of drama is living persons in dialogical interaction. Drama involves external, bodily activity that makes known one’s inner life or spirit’ (Vanhoozer 2009:157). He sees the theatrical model as a good way to resolve the dichotomy between theology and theory (what they believe) and practice (what they live) (Vanhoozer 2014:21).

Vanhoozer insists that in drama we are not just spectators, but actors and doers through 'participation in unified action and active faith' (Vanhoozer 2009:158). In the theodrama a person cannot act on his own without other believers. It is dramatic and the reason why theology is a drama (Vanhoozer 2014:21).

Vanhoozer (2009:162; 2014:205, 231) says the purpose of the doctrine is not to know 'what the play is about', but to cultivate the wisdom to play with the right will that fits the context to effectively communicate with others and the capacity to grow unto Christ to have Christ's mind. Vanhoozer (2005:80) said that in a new and complex circumstance, wisdom is needed rather than knowledge for concerted action with the gospel.

Vanhoozer (2009:158-159) is interested in how to be a wiser person 'by considering particular instances of canonical wisdom', not by extracting a principle from the scripture:

'Doctrine needs to capture not only the mind but the emotions and the imagination as well - what the Bible calls the 'heart'. We need to appropriate, embrace, even indwell doctrinal truth. The proper end of the drama of doctrine is wisdom: lived knowledge, a performance of the truth.'  
(Vanhoozer 2005:21)

To play the redemptive drama three elements are needed. The first is 'canon sense'. Disciples need adept comprehension of the overall flow of the Bible as canon and literature for which they need the church's role and essence (Vanhoozer 2014:205). The second is catholic sensibility; the disciples take on a fitting role in the drama through studying and imitating paradigmatic performances in the Bible and tradition. These help the disciples to perform the drama fittingly in their situation and circumstance (Vanhoozer 2014:205). The third is contextual sensitivity. The improvisation in the early church shows how the church in those days appropriated and transformed cultural materials and secular discipline (Vanhoozer 2014:205-206).

### 2.1.3 The benefit of the canonical–linguistic approach

Vanhoozer (2005:16) said: ‘The main purpose of doctrine is to equip Christians to understand and participate in the action of the principal players (namely, Father, Son, and Spirit)’. He understands that canonical-linguistic theology pursues two functions; the first is to instruct in the drama’s understanding and the second is to fittingly direct the participants into the drama (Vanhoozer 2005:268). The canonical-linguistic approach helps to give biblical direction on how to behave appropriately in the present drama of redemption. Doctrine is not just a proposition, an emotional expression about God, but a direction to the actors how to perform as disciples following Jesus Christ (Vanhoozer 2005:105). To Vanhoozer (2005:105) doctrine is a bridge between the gospel and theology and a guide how to perform the drama.

Another benefit of understanding theology is that the spectators are transformed to be active participants. Vanhoozer (2005:16) cites Aristotle’s understanding of the theatre in that it brings ‘catharsis’ that stimulates emotion and imagination as well as invites the spectators to participate in the play. Balthasar introduced the same idea (Osmer 2005:201), citing two reasons why people go to serious theatre. Firstly a drama reflects, like a mirror, the spectator’s life in the play. Naturally the spectator and audience cannot be mere onlookers, but are involved in the play with its dramatic tension. Secondly, through the play they are looking for a solution or insight to solve the problems in their life. Osmer (2005:203) said that when a reader finds his/her story within the theodrama of God’s story, they are invited to participate in the drama and are involved in the Trinity act. Drama has the potential to transform its participators.

## 2.2 Theology as drama

‘Dramas are not merely read; they are performed’ (Osmer 2005:200).

To Vanhoozer (2009:156), theology is God’s speech and action as well as a revelation of God’s doing, namely theodrama. Vanhoozer (2009:159) states that

understanding theology is a matter of cognition as well as a matter of action. Christianity is not a system of ideas or the teaching of morals. Christianity is a way of life. Theology is to follow God's speaking and doing for the world through Jesus Christ (Vanhoozer 2005:14, 2009:152). Vanhoozer (2014:244) says 'Christianity is intrinsically dramatic'. The reason why Vanhoozer (2005:220) accepts the analogy of drama is its practical aspect.

### 2.2.1 Understanding theological drama through its objections

Vanhoozer's responses to contemporary objections to the drama analogy for theology help to understand his theology.

First objection: 'The dramatic metaphor risks making theology less biblical by imposing an external model (i.e., the theatre) onto Scripture.'

Vanhoozer reacted to this accusation with 'Christianity is intrinsically dramatic' (Vanhoozer 2014:20, 244). The cross and resurrection of Jesus are the height of the drama to save His people, with Christ speaking God's word and doing God's work leading up to it (Vanhoozer 2014:20, 244). Of course there are risks whenever, wherever and whatever we do. Although not all metaphors can be used in theology, at least 'the dramatic model may bring less risk of doing violence to the subject matter of Scripture than other possibilities' (Vanhoozer 2014:244), because 'if drama involves a unified action specified by a script, then this seems to be exactly what the Bible, and Christianity, are all about' (Vanhoozer 2014:244). Christianity is not philosophy, science and a kind of moral system. It is rather following and embodying Jesus's way by practising and acting on behalf of Jesus, the way, truth and life (Vanhoozer 2005:12, 15).

Second objection: 'The Bible is not dramatic literature.'

Some parts in the Bible are not in dramatic form, but the whole Bible is a story of the overall interaction between God and people and it helps us to understand the theodrama. In this way it causes the reader to live a dramatic life as a witness (Vanhoozer 2014:244-245).



Third objection: 'The dramatic model does not do justice to propositions.'

Drama is a comprehensive perspective including proposition, experience, and narrative (Vanhoozer 2005:101). Although the dramatic model points to practice and action to make godly disciples, it still contains propositional content (Vanhoozer 2014:247). For example, the proposition 'He has risen' arose from the action of the resurrection of Christ. In the theatrical model, an expression mode is both speaking and action. Drama delivers the meaning through speaking-acting.

Fourth objection: 'Drama is a term less appropriate than story or narrative.'

Vanhoozer (2005:48) explained why he sees the Christian's faith as drama rather than narrative. Although many parts of the Bible were written in the form of a story or narrative, narratives mostly deliver the story as verbal communication through narrators. But drama is shown in both 'word' and 'act' (Vanhoozer 2009:156-158). Vanhoozer (2014:32) thinks it is the way to avoid two extremes. One values thought more than action, the other values action more than thought, like the tendency of narratives. In drama acting is showing, speaking, walking and following (Vanhoozer 2005:295). Another reason for choosing drama is to invite the hearers and spectators, who are the third party, to be actors in the redemptive drama of God (Vanhoozer 2009:158). In this respect drama is more appropriate than narrative to direct the church and individuals fittingly to participate in the drama of redemption (Vanhoozer 2005:102).

### 2.2.2 The elements of the theatrical drama

Vanhoozer said that being a disciple means following the life of Jesus Christ, which is the climax of the theodrama (Vanhoozer 2005:114-115). To emulate the life of the principal player in theodrama is to be a supporting actor who learns and matures. This procedure moves a supporting actor to become a mature actor. It is the process that makes a disciple through the drama. The

matured actor does not remain on the scene where he obtained salvation, but must move on to the next scenes bearing fruit of righteousness.

Vanhoozer (2005:xii) invents new metaphors 'for theology to dramaturgy, Scripture to the script, theological understanding to performance, the church to the company, and the pastor to director'. To these added the role of the triune God:

'Doctrine itself plays a role in the triune economy of the theo-drama. God the Father, maker of heaven and earth, is the playwright and producer of the play. The Son is the principal actor: God become fully human, and hence historical, on the world stage. The Holy Spirit is the director' (Vanhoozer 2005:106).

The significant elements of the theodrama are as follows:

#### 2.2.2.1 Script

Scripture is utilised as the script of the Kingdom of God and is a resource for the drama (Vanhoozer 2005:114). Scripture and a script, however, are different. The script of theodrama was written before the play. People such as the Israelites in Egypt did not follow the script, they followed Moses. On the other hand, Scripture was written after creation, the death of the last king of Israel, the betrayal of Christ and the persecution of Christians in the early church (Vanhoozer 2014:245). Scripture was not given to us like a blueprint which we should follow in order to perform.

Scripture helps us to speak and do in our present situations, through the wisdom displayed in a variety of authoritative scenarios of the faithful prophets and apostles (Vanhoozer 2014:246). Scripture is the script for improvising. We do not see Scripture as a script in a narrow sense, like a blueprint, that directly indicates our actions and our speech, but in a broader sense as the text for improvisation to act fittingly in this world. It is like an authoritative collection of lessons for us (Vanhoozer 2014:246).

Scripture, however, is not a collection of propositional truths, but God's communicative action and the norm of the truthful way of life (Vanhoozer 2005:22, 294). 'The Bible communicates divine doctrine that instructs the church in the way of the divine drama.' (Vanhoozer 2009:156). Therefore Scripture has a role to play in the performance of the church and has an authoritative character (Vanhoozer 2005:67). It helps carry out the performance and directs the performing in the drama.

Vanhoozer divided the drama of redemption into 5 acts. The first act is creation in Genesis 1 – 3. The second act is the election, rejection and restoration of Israel in Genesis 12 – to the end of the Old Testament. The third act is Christ as 'God's definitive Word/Act'. The fourth act is Pentecost and the church. The fifth act is the eschaton (Vanhoozer 2005:2-3; 2009:174). The church must play appropriately for the right acts. The performance does not end. The church is not in Act 5 but in Act 4. The kingdom of God already has come in Jesus Christ. Therefore the church needs to play its role between the Ascension and the Second Coming of Christ (Vanhoozer 2009:174).

#### 2.2.2.2 Direction and company

The role of doctrine is to direct the church and individuals into the drama of redemption to act fittingly in Christ through the Holy Spirit (Vanhoozer 2005:77-78, 399). Doctrine gives direction in Scripture how to play fittingly in our contemporary situation because we live in the church act, namely act 4 (Vanhoozer 2005:78). The direction of doctrine is not for the individual's participation nor for the satisfaction of the drama, but is communal participation by incorporating other players, namely God and neighbour (Vanhoozer 2005:105).

'The ultimate aim is not simply to 'picture' the divine drama but to incorporate more players into it, to lead them into the drama more deeply and, in so doing, to anticipate its conclusion' (Vanhoozer 2005:105).

Vanhoozer's concern is naturally for the community. 'Living biblically is ultimately a community project, not the accomplishment of an individual'

(Vanhoozer 2009:153). To play in the drama is not an individual, but a communal affair. He calls disciples 'little Christs' (Vanhoozer 2014:139). The church is the object Christ loved and gave himself for, and is the effect of being gathered to Christ (Vanhoozer 2014:141). The church is the theatre of the gospel where the congregation reconciles discrimination and isolation and reenacts martyrdom for the gospel of salvation. Therefore the church should be the place for practising the identity of the church: 'The church is a company of amateurs who gather together to do holy and vital theater: of the gospel; of word and sacrament; of martyrdom; of reconciliation; of holy folly' (Vanhoozer 2005:443).

As members of God's Kingdom question what to do in this or that situation, Vanhoozer suggests to disciples the three D's: '*discern, deliberate on, and do*' (Vanhoozer 2009:172). It is this that disciples must practise in their lives.

### 2.2.2.3 Performance

Performing in theodrama means to live biblically, but it does not mean to reproduce or repeat the historically performed (Vanhoozer 2009:159; 2014:69):

'Our performances are neither wholly arbitrary nor fully scripted. Faithful living requires more than a wooden repetition of the words' (Vanhoozer 2005:102).

The script is full of actions, human and divine, and is intended to bring people on to the stage for performance according to the actions in the Bible. In other words: the biblical drama has been calculated to play for us in this world (Vanhoozer 2005:101).

'The church, in order to communicate Christ to the world and grow up into Christ, must learn to "speak the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15) everywhere, at all times, and to everyone. This is the work of wisdom and the goal of theological formation.' (Vanhoozer 2014:206).

As mentioned above, the performance of a theodrama, 'performing the script', does not mean duplicating the author's situation, but to reproduce what the

author says and thinks into our present situation in the world (Vanhoozer 2009:167). Otherwise it means 'living in the world implied by the script' (Vanhoozer 2009:170) and appealing to the understanding of theodrama to our reality. To achieve this aim, the drama of the redemption model trains and fosters the believer to acquire the skills of a performer who moves beyond the Script to perform adequately in the world (Vanhoozer 2009:170). There are two ways, as described below.

#### a) Rehearsing

One way to prepare for a performance is to rehearse. Rehearsing, which is quite unlike improvisation, is conducted in the church. The theodrama is given to a company of players, namely the church, which is the body of Christ.

'Disciples gather to rehearse: to retell and remember the main action of the play, to study their roles, to learn their lines until they know them by heart, to prepare for witness/performance in the world' (Vanhoozer 2014:140).

The resurrected Jesus gave the Great Commission to the church, which is His body. The first half of the Commission is to baptise all nations and to make disciples and the second half is to teach them. In other words, anybody who wants to become a disciple of Jesus must be baptised as well as taught (Vanhoozer 2014:142). Therefore rehearsing is to provide the grammar for learning the 'body language' of the church, which is Christ' body. The procedure of rehearsing is to prepare theoretical and practical understanding of the church. It is to give the disciples a direction to see and to act in order to walk the way of Jesus. When they learn the Bible, in order to act as disciples, they realise who is the central figure and how the triune God works (Vanhoozer 2014:143-144). Vanhoozer (2014:144) suggests that catechism is the most typical rehearsing the church conducts. For example, to learn and to recite the apostolic creed is not to develop intellectual capacity, but to prepare to obey the practical reality the gospel demands. It is not repetition of the doctrinal proposition: it is to prepare to react, following the direction of the apostolic creed, in fidelity, sharing, forgiveness and hospitality (Vanhoozer 2014:154-159).

## b) Improvising

The next course is to be performed outside the church. Vanhoozer proposed a way to perform Scripture in our life of improvisation<sup>79</sup>, because Scripture does not literally direct our speaking and action in our contemporary situation. For this reason he suggests the role of the improvisation of doctrine.

This idea of improvisation is seen in Wright's article (1991). Wright introduced the five acts as a Shakespearean play and suggested the notion of improvisation to play in the fifth act because without the four acts the fifth act is missing (Vanhoozer 2009:174). Wright gives an example: when we find a way where we should not follow the character's action nor follow the ethos of the story, but the third way (Wright 1991:19). In Wells' book (2004) this same idea can be seen. Wells insists that the performance according to the script is not sufficient. So the player has to improvise. He suggests the example of improvisation in Young's illustration of a cadenza<sup>80</sup>. A cadenza<sup>81</sup> keeps the style and themes of the concerto, 'but also shows virtuosity and inspiration in adapting and continuing in keeping with the setting and form' (Wells 2004:60).

Vanhoozer said that doctrine should rather infuse the habit which we think and judge as suitable acting in the context, based on the theodrama rather than tell us what to say or what to do in our situation (Vanhoozer 2009:173). He gives an

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<sup>79</sup> The word 'improvisation', meaning 'not provided' and 'not foreseen', comes from Latin (McClure 2007:32). Wilgram said (2004:29) improvisation is not impromptu, it asks the player to practise because improvisation is not magic and is not a natural gift.

<sup>80</sup> Collins Dictionary defines cadenza as 'a virtuoso solo passage occurring near the end of a piece of music, formerly improvised by the soloist but now usually specially composed.' <http://dictionary.reverso.net/english-definition/cadenza>.

<sup>81</sup> Toft (2013:153) defined 'cadenza' as 'improvised passages'. A cadenza is handed over to a musician to display their unique taste 'in embellishment at the end of a phrase.' At this time the musician can show off their performance ability with the style of ornamentation. According to Toft, which he cited from Bacon, the best cadenza comes when the musician derives 'the melodic material directly from the air'. Although the musician can creatively play or deliver a piece that a composer did not write, the musician must not deviate from the setting and form of the concerto. Therefore the musician is asked to constantly practise for cadenzas. The musician performs the cadenza in harmony with the other players.

example from the life of Jesus, who improvised on an Old Testament theme, and the apostle Paul, who improvised the Gospel for the non-Jewish. He said 'the key to good improvisation is knowing how to continue the same action in new situations' (Vanhoozer 2009:174).

But this does not happen naturally; it requires 'training' and 'discernment' (Vanhoozer 2009:173). It is not simple repetition. In order to improvise one must combine reading of the related texts with sufficient training (Vanhoozer 2014:xi). He suggests some requisites for improvisation: fidelity, attention, flexibility and creativity.

'This requires not only fidelity to the text, but also attention to the context, as well as flexibility, even creativity, on the part of those charged with continuing the same pattern/drama in new cultural scenes.' (Vanhoozer 2014:189).

Improvisation is the process of combining humans with the triune God. It needs the definitive understanding of the biblical text and of today's cultural context and the biblical and modern language (Vanhoozer 2014:198). For example, for those who are faced with a natural disaster, the suitable improvisation is not explanation of a theodicy and only praying for them, but to uncase our behaviour in how we can help and do like the Good Samaritan. In other words, it is to improvise like Christ. Vanhoozer said we need to be 'persons who improvise Christlike, compassionate responses to all who cry out in the wildernesses of pain, emotional trauma, and existential angst' (Vanhoozer 2014:197). Here improvisation is important to overcome Vanhoozer's concern with the dichotomy in theology.

Osmer (2005:201) said that although the actor's role is given by the author, the success of the performance rests on the actor's role and action. He said that 'the playwright's script remains unactualised without the dramatic realisation of the actors who bring it to life in a dramatic performance'. Nell & Meyer (2013:4) said that 'instead of the roles being part of a deterministic script, they are part of the creative unfolding of the story'.

#### 2.2.2.4 The Holy Spirit

A point of criticism against the theatrical model is that ‘an emphasis on Scripture as script, prescript, and transcript unhelpfully downplays the role of the Holy Spirit.’ (Vanhoozer 2014:251). But the role of the Holy Spirit in the model is quite contrary to the criticism.

The theatrical model emphasises the performance, but without the Holy Spirit’s help the performance is impossible. The Holy Spirit, who is the original author of the Bible, inspired the writers of the Bible. The prophets and apostles wrote Scripture by speaking through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit illuminates not only the writer, but also the readers of the Bible to renew our hearts and minds as well to recognise what they say and act (Vanhoozer 2014:251). Therefore the theodrama is necessarily used by the Holy Spirit. Vanhoozer (2014:251) says: ‘The theatrical model views the Holy Spirit not only as the director, but also as the enabler of the obedience of faith and the prompter who incites the players toward wisdom and holiness.’ (Vanhoozer 2014:251).

The Holy Spirit, being the author of the script as well as the director of the performance, is intimately involved in improvisation:

‘The Holy Spirit is both author of the script and the one who guides the church’s contemporary performance – its improvisatory variations – on the script...The drama of doctrine consists in the Spirit’s directing the church rightly to participate in the evangelical action by performing its authoritative script’ (Vanhoozer 2005:102).

### 3. APPLICATION OF VANHOOZER’S THEORY TO HOMILETICS

Rose (1997:91-93) divided the diversity of opinions on the purpose of preaching into three types: traditional, kerygmatic and transformational preaching. The traditional and kerygmatic preaching aim to transmit a message and the transformational preaching aims for the experience of a message. Furthermore,



she suggests a new type, the conversational model, whose goal is 'to gather the community of faith around the Word' (Childers 2004:40).

Thomson (2008:72) quoted Edward Farley: 'Preaching's aim is to preach the gospel' to teach the Scripture, to deepen the understanding of Scripture and to involve the listeners in the teaching. The true transformation of life does not come from merely knowing Scripture, but from tasting, experiencing and participating in the Word.

Therefore the metaphor of drama is fit for homiletics, because like Balthasar said, drama attracts the spectators into a theatre<sup>82</sup> and reflects, like a mirror, wisdom for their life through the actor's speaking and acting. Preaching as drama<sup>83</sup> may make listeners active actors and give them wisdom to cope in their role today in the world on the stage of theodrama according to the script or in order to improvise. Cilliers (2004:217) says 'it is important not to view a primary scriptural image as a static picture, as a still-life (a static dry arrangement!), but rather as a scene in a (salvific) drama, into which the preacher and the listeners are drawn so as to become part of the Great Story, but also as a scene with atmosphere (mood), that must enter me.' Therefore some benefits of preaching as drama based on Vanhoozer's theory will be discussed below.

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<sup>82</sup> Long (2001:46) shows the participatory character with the drama of Scrooge on Christmas Eve: 'We are all actors in a great play, and the script of the Gospel drama repeatedly beckons to those sitting in the bleachers, standing on the periphery, existing on the margins: 'Come up here,. I have something for you to do.'"

<sup>83</sup> Campbell mentioned preaching as drama in 1994. He borrowed the idea from Lash ("Performing the Scriptures", 1986:41-42) and Lischer (*A Theology of Preaching*, 1992:90-92). He concretely said that 'as one dimension of the church's performative interpretation of scripture, the 'dress rehearsal' of preaching embodies a distinctive performance of the New Testament' (Campbell 1994:19). But he did not develop the idea; instead, he developed preaching as nonviolent resistance following the third way, as Jesus did. Campbell's idea of preaching as drama reappears in 2012, but the focus is slightly different from 1994. He emphasizes the paradoxical figure of the preacher being fool and clown in order to confront the demonic power rather than a performative aspect of biblical interpretation.

### 3.1 A change of biblical interpretation

The preparation for preaching begins by engaging in the reading of the Bible and interpreting the text. Vanhoozer's theory can have effect from the beginning of the preaching. He said that 'preaching is a means of grace' to open our eyes to the presence of Christ and to the things which the resurrected Christ did (Vanhoozer 2014:133). Preachers invite those who want to become disciples through preaching, unfolding the things implied in the Bible, and reminding them who and where they are. They also prepare them to react suitably in this world and to memorise their role in the redemptive drama (Vanhoozer 2014:131, 146). Therefore the preaching is not just the function of delivering information about theology, but also to formulate disciples. Vanhoozer (2014:134) said.

'Preaching is a prompt: a timely reminder that both informs and incites to action, the action being the inner realization of Christ's rule. Preaching helps us to find ourselves in Christ in order to act Christ out.'

Vanhoozer (2002:18-19) suggests the way of CS Lewis to correctly interpret the Bible by 'looking along' the text. Looking along the text puts us into the text; this is different from looking at the text, which uses the text as an object to draw information from (Vanhoozer 2002:18).

'Instead of asking how the text "applies" to us in our day and age, as if the important thing is to discover how the text relates to our world, it is better to think in terms of inserting oneself into the world of the biblical text., which is the true story of our world' (Vanhoozer 2014:133).

Looking along the text comprises two steps. The first one is to stare at what the author and the reader see together and to learn the way the text sees the world. This participative way is not just remaining with seeing the text, but to taste the text; that means to truly experience 'through personal acquaintance' the central subject of which the text speaks (Vanhoozer 2002:19). The role of the preacher is to prepare what the listeners will speak, think and act fittingly in Christ. But it is not just to say a word, but to show our demeanour by holding and

understanding what we have been asked in life situations (Vanhoozer 2014:133).

‘They (preachers) orient us to God, the world, and ourselves by reminding us of what God, in Christ through the Spirit, is doing in the world with and for us ‘(Vanhoozer 2014:133).

The second step is to live along the text (Vanhoozer 2002:39). Looking and living along the text goes beyond acquiring the information of the Bible or the meaning of a word in the Bible. To live along the text one needs to realise the word of God, to be exposed to the specific shape and to grasp the literary form of the Bible rather than one word. Therefore preachers should comprehend a literary form and device (Vanhoozer 2005:284), especially imagination that leads and relates us to the world of the text, not to get information but to live along the text and for the text to remain in us (Vanhoozer 2002:37; 2009:171). It helps to avoid mistakes which a preacher can easily make, for example, when preachers try to interpret the Bible according to their aim or intention. Another benefit is that it helps to hear the polyphonic truth with its unity and diversity of genres in order to understand abundantly God’s redemptive drama (Vanhoozer 2005:289).

### 3.2 A change of the preacher’s role

Long (1989a:23-41) classified preachers into three images; herald, pastor/counsellor and story teller. Although Vanhoozer’s drama shows other images to preachers: co-dramaturge, assistant director of the Spirit, and fellow actor (Vanhoozer 2005: xii, 33, 106, 397), these images are similar to the witness<sup>84</sup> metaphor that Long develops (Long 1989a:48-59).

A preacher is not one who only delivers the word of God without regard for himself/herself. A preacher sometimes needs to encourage and comfort the

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<sup>84</sup> Williams said Vanhoozer’s theology is a witness metaphor. For more information, see *Theology as Witness: Reading Scripture in a New Era of Evangelical Thought. Part II*: Kevin Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine. Presbyterian* 37/1 (Spring 2011):16-30.

listeners. Like a good storyteller, a preacher can tell the story of Jesus without knowing how to act in the present situation.

Like a director, a preacher prepares the listeners for acting and speaking as well as demonstrating how listeners can act in their situation. It is truly a matter of rehearsing and improvising.

Vanhoozer (2014:146-147) brought the image of preacher as a co-dramaturge to deliver the message of the theodrama and the meaning of the original author. The dramaturge helps actors to understand a script better and how to play their role. For this, the dramaturge must research the theatre, the performed masterpiece in history and the author's intention in the script (Vanhoozer 2014:146). These are efforts and endeavours that coincide with those of a preacher.

Another role of a preacher is to be a fellow actor.<sup>85</sup> Long (1989b:11) mentioned that a preacher is not separated from a congregation. 'We (preachers) are members of the body of Christ, commissioned to preach by the very people to whom we are about to speak.' Cilliers (2004:2) also says 'The preacher indeed is part of the congregation.' Preaching is not just preaching the sermon to the listeners but also to the preacher. The preachers are shaped by their preaching (Long 1989a:12). The preaching as theodrama does not end by delivering a message. The true destination of the preaching is the practice of it. Vanhoozer said that

'Disciples understand the drama of redemption when they are able to explain it to others in their own words and when they are able to participate rightly in the play's action.' (Vanhoozer 2014:146)

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<sup>85</sup> Lamb (2005:150) borrows pastor images from athletic terms based on Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic theology – energetic player-coach instructing, directing and joining the fray: 'the evangelical preacher is energetically running up and down court, cheering on the team, calling timeouts to correct errors and strengthen strategy, and suiting up to join the game intermittently as well.'

As a disciple of Christ a preacher must preach what he/she fully understands and what he/she has done in the redemptive drama. He/she is a person who shows theoretically as well as practically how one walks in Christ's way and makes the listener follow the preacher, who resembles Jesus (Vanhoozer 2014:146). Cilliers (2004:62) says preaching should be a testimony of how the gospel pierced the preachers' heart.

In this way, preachers may carefully use their life story as an example or illustration,<sup>86</sup> but should hide themselves because illustrating themselves can lead to pride. Stott (1982b:329-330) argued: 'Why, then does the power of the Spirit seem to accompany our preaching so seldom? I strongly suspect that the main reason is our pride.' To avoid this mistake, the preacher could use the method of delivering his/her story as an example or illustration in the sermon, but leaving out personal details so the congregation does not know it is the preacher's own story. That would follow Jesus's method. Jesus' parables might come from his experience, and the parable may invite the listeners into his experience (Denton 2004:21), but He did not directly tell His life's story; He taught and preached indirectly through parables.

A plotted preacher's story is not a proposition, but delivers a proposition to listeners who are disciples and actors that perform according to their situation. Preachers can only preach what they hold, what they understand and what they do (Vanhoozer 2014:132).

### 3.3 A change to taking an interest in the context

Preaching is a bridge between the message of the Bible and the context of the listeners (Cilliers 2004:110). Traditionally, preaching is understood as delivering to the listeners the core message of the Bible, with an accurate exegesis of it

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<sup>86</sup> Regarding the use of illustration, the illustration should be used to help the congregation's understanding. If the congregation only remembers the illustration without the message, it is subject to the limitations of the New Homiletic.

but without attention to the listeners' context. Preaching that does not analyse the listener's situation and their historical situation often presents a superficial application or only stimulates the listeners' emotions (Long 1989a:11-13).

Vanhoozer (2007b:16), who defines theology as 'bringing the Bible to bear on all areas of life', emphasises study of the contemporary culture because we as Christians live in a concrete time and place with particular problems and possibilities, and not in a vacuum (Vanhoozer 2007b:16). This approach overcomes the limitation of intratextuality of postliberal theology. Naturally, understanding preaching as drama can help to conquer the dualism between the sacred church and the secular world we live in, Sunday and Monday, clergy and laity, etc.

It helps one who prepares to do the work of a disciple to bear the fruit of righteousness through the Holy Spirit.

'The real work of discipleship, growing into our parts as 'little Christs,' therefore remains, not as a condition but as a consequence of our salvation' (Vanhoozer 2014:129).

### 3.4 A change to preaching that relies on the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit's role is decisive in preaching because the Holy Spirit inspires to accept Scripture explained in sermons as God's Word (Cilliers 2004:63; Vanhoozer 2014:134). The Holy Spirit is the spirit of the Word. The Spirit unites us with Christ and encourages us to follow the way of Christ with the word of hope and discipline (Vanhoozer 2014:134). The Spirit renews the Word in our minds and thoughts, guides and teaches how to be Christlike and to improvise in our world.

The Holy Spirit is the prompter 'who helps us remember our biblical lines' (Vanhoozer 2005:448) like an encourager cheers a player 'Do good, for God is God' (Vanhoozer 2014:52).

‘Scripture is the script in and through which the Spirit guides God’s people into the truth, which is to say into truthful ways of living’ (Vanhoozer 2005:102).

Wepener (2014a:11, 12 & 60) compared the Holy Spirit to the prompter in the play/drama who will teach and remind us when we forget our actions and words (John 14:26). Without the role of the Holy Spirit, the preaching cannot be complete and the congregation (including the preacher) cannot improvise on the stage.

The preacher who relies on the Holy Spirit goes to the kneeling stool to pray. Today, it is difficult to find recently published books on homiletics that emphasise prayer for preaching (Cilliers 2004:186). Müller (2006:61)<sup>87</sup> lamented that preachers emphasise sermon-making with a specific homiletical technique, so the development of the technique becomes their prime concern without concern for praying. He stressed how important prayer is for preaching:

‘In prayer, their too hasty and unfriendly thoughts disappear; in prayer they are liberated from their ‘beautiful’ twists in meaning; in prayer their sermons attain depth because, there, God whispers His thoughts in their ears. The living Word and its proclamation are first born in prayer and only then heard as such on the pulpit.’ (Müller 2006:61)

Vanhoozer cites the definition of Evagrius<sup>88</sup> that ‘[a] theologian is one who prays, and one who prays is a theologian’ (Vanhoozer 2014:229). He wants to add one phase to the sentence: ‘and acts’. To Vanhoozer ‘praying and acting’ is ‘worshiping and working’. Therefore praying is awakening. Through prayer a disciple can realise the triune God’s presence and activity and participate as a person in the theodrama (Vanhoozer 2014:230).

Müller (2006:61) emphasises that ‘[o]n the pulpit, the sermon is also inextricably linked to the *epiclesis*, the prayer for the opening of the Word.’ Cilliers (2004:49)

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<sup>87</sup> Prof. Bethel A. Müller taught homiletics in Hapdong Theological Seminary in South Korea during the 2nd semester in 2006. This reference comes from his lecture notes.

<sup>88</sup> This is also Wilken’s observation.

also says: 'The basis and depth structure of preaching remains one of prayer. Preaching without *epiclesis* is no preaching.' Preaching is deeply related to the work of the Holy Spirit, and the work of the Holy Spirit is closely related to prayer. Therefore, without prayer the preaching cannot be complete.

### 3.5 A change to practice the identity of the church

'The Holy Spirit as the bond that unites us to Christ' (Calvin 2001:65)

Preaching that relies on the Holy Spirit leads a preacher to preach real Christocentric gospel preaching. Preaching is not to speak a mere word as information about God, but to preach the Word of God: Jesus Christ Himself (Cilliers 2004:57). Vanhoozer (2014:233) says 'one of the most important tasks disciples have is to tell others about the theodrama, its implications, and in particular its climax and end: the gospel that Jesus Christ is Lord'.

Preaching as theodrama invites us into the drama and reveals our role in the drama.<sup>89</sup> We are united with Jesus Christ in the drama by being-in-Christ. For this reason preaching changes us to become united to Jesus Christ and requires us to practise being like Christ in this world (Vanhoozer 2014:132-133). Therefore, preaching is not only to proclaim Christ but to increase in Christlike behaviour.

Vanhoozer does not think Christ-oriented preaching is teaching about Christ as a sample or a purpose of a lesson. He tries to teach the language of Scripture and to make disciples of Jesus. Preaching as drama is to follow, to walk and to improvise in the way of Christ which shows in the Bible and his contemporary representation.

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<sup>89</sup> The researcher indicated 'a change of the pastors' role' in Chapter 6.3.2. Regarding the role and the position of the listeners in the drama, the listeners are not passive hearers on a pew but active participants and to go further, a principle actor because of transformational nature of the drama. However, being an actor in the drama is not dancing and singing on the stage inside church but performing outside the church as disciples of Jesus.



Therefore, improvisation is to follow what Jesus did and the way of practising the identity of the church. Church is hope, the company of the faithful and the body of Christ to let the kingdom of God come (Vanhoozer 2014: 236). A church is a local theatre and has reason of existence for the divine 'Encore' (Vanhoozer 2014:174).

'The church is the doctrinal and doxological "encore" where the company of faith prays and praises without ceasing, speaking and showing its understanding of God and the gospel in ways, small and large, that glorify God.' (Vanhoozer 2014:236).

His idea differs from the New Homiletic's improvisation and postliberal's improvisation. Although Lowry did not mention improvisation, Troeger (2008:213) mentioned improvisation in connection with Lowry's five-stage plot. His idea is methodological improvisation, that is: he pursues what a preacher fittingly utilises in Lowry's five stages in new situations. The subject of improvisation for him is directed at the preacher, not at the listeners.

Campbell's improvisation is different from Troeger's. He anticipates the community's improvisation in the world. But the community's improvisation is not performing in the world based on the canon as little Christs, but to develop the language of faith in a new situation and new context like a language game (Campbell 1997:236). For this reason he calls it linguistic improvisation.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This chapter sketches Vanhoozer's theodrama as the norm in order to suggest preaching as drama for the Korean Evangelical church.

In section 1, the validity of the drama or theatre analogy for theology was explained. The researcher explored the historical objections against the attempts to connect the theatrical analogy to theology from Tertullian to Kuyper and the contemporary objections which arise against the entertainment

character of drama in the church. The researcher examined the validity of adapting the theatrical analogy to practical theology, which puts emphasis on the concrete context. This process was guided by Augustine, Nell & Meyer, Long and Müller on interdisciplinary dialogue and how to apply the drama model to theology.

In section 2, the researcher looked at Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic approach as a basis for Korean Evangelical preaching in order to overcome the limitation of postliberal homiletics. The researcher exposed two aspects of the canonical-linguistic approach, knowledge and wisdom, and defended drama against contemporary objections against drama. Then the researcher introduced the benefits and the elements of the drama: script, direction, company, performance and the Holy Spirit.

In section 3, the researcher applied Vanhoozer's theology as drama to homiletics. Vanhoozer's theology provided some insights into homiletics. The first is the relevance of the attitude of the preacher. The canonical-linguistic approach helps a preacher not to look at Scripture as the object from which to draw information, but to look along the text and to live along the text. These ways help a preacher to know what the author of the Bible says and to hear the polyphonic voices and truth through a variety of forms. The second is that his dramatic theology puts a premium on the listeners as emphasised by contemporary homiletics. It is a balanced argument for considering the message of the Bible and the context of the listeners. The third is that Vanhoozer's theory can be applied to transform a preacher to be a disciple together with the listeners. The testimony of the preacher's way of life as an improvisation in our world can be a part of preparing the listeners to rehearse their theodrama. This illumination is different from other stories intended merely to entertain the listeners. It reflects the shape of a true disciple, as in a mirror, and prepares the listeners to live according to the word of God. The fourth is the emphasis on the Holy Spirit as significant in the theodrama. His theology stresses the importance of the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of the Word and inspires us to accept Scripture and the sermon as God's word. Lastly his

theology helps the preaching of the gospel. It differs crucially from contemporary homiletics and does not return to traditional homiletics. His theology realises the significance of the listeners, the variety of forms in Scripture, especially narrative. It can correct the weakness of the New Homiletic, which causes Christology to become soteriology, and the weakness of postliberal homiletics, which finds Jesus' role only in the world of the text and not in our world. Vanhoozer's theology leads us to become united with Jesus Christ and asks us to live like Christ in this world.

In Chapter 7 the researcher synthesises all the chapters, including the concrete situation of the Korean church, the empirical result of the research, the benefits and weaknesses of the New Homiletic and postliberal homiletics, and suggests Vanhoozer's theology as a way to find a new homiletical strategy for reviving the Korean church. The researcher presents the contribution of this dissertation and raises several questions that should be pursued further.

## Chapter 7 Conclusion

As the pragmatic task, Chapter 7 will focus on 'how might we respond'. Osmer (2008:4) defines the pragmatic task as 'Determining strategies of action that will influence situations in ways that are desirable and entering into a responsive conversation with the 'talkback' emerging when they are enacted' (Osmer 2008:4).

Chapter 7 presents the essence of each of the preceding chapters and then proceeds to suggest a new strategy for the Korean evangelical church. The pragmatic task is the process of the interaction of the descriptive-empirical task with the interpretive task and the normative task. It creates a bridge between praxis and theory.

Heitink (1999:152) said theory needs to be constantly verified through praxis and praxis should be transcended by theory. He portrayed the relationship between theory and praxis as a spiral (Heitink 1999:164). In this way Chapter 7 will suggest an amended strategy for evangelical preaching in South Korea.

Another section of this chapter is the time for 'talkback'. The researcher proceeds with reflective conversation and will mention the limitation of the research. Furthermore, he will suggest a direction for future research.

### 7.1 FINDINGS OF THIS RESEARCH

The researcher uses two techniques, review and summary, to unfold what was found in each chapter (Smith 2008:15).

Chapter 1, as the introduction to this research, described the challenges faced by Korean society, including the Korean church, after the economic crisis in

1997. As the purpose of the study three objectives were suggested: to reveal the background of the hermeneutics of the New Homiletic, which is in vogue in the Korean church; to evaluate the Campbell's homiletic based on Hans Frei's postliberal theology in order to overcome the failings of the New Homiletic; and to suggest a new homiletical approach based on Kevin Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistics approach as an alternative to Campbell's homiletic.

The researcher suggested the hypothesis that the development of homiletics is deeply related to the comprehension of doctrine. Therefore the research of Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic approach will help to establish a homiletical strategy for evangelical preaching in South Korea.

The main question was: How can Kevin Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic approach be applied to homiletics for the evangelical church in today's South Korea? Four detailed questions were suggested. First, why did the New Homiletic not change the congregation of the Korean churches and bring the vitality that was hoped for? Second, what are the contributions and limitations of the postliberal homiletics, as seen from the cultural-linguistic approach? Third, why does the canonical-linguistic model of Vanhoozer apply to homiletics? Fourth, how do we formulate the homiletical route markers for the future of preaching in South Korea based on the insights gained from the previous chapters?

This researcher selected Osmer's methodology and described the direction of the progress of the research accordingly.

Chapter 2 was a descriptive-empirical investigation. The starting point for this research was the question: What has been going on in the Korean church since 1997? After the 1997 economic crisis, the Korean church welcomed the New Homiletic and anticipated that it would bring vitality. This chapter researched what is taking place in the Korean church as well as the situation concerning the preacher and in the pulpit.

From listening to voices outside the church this research found that the church had lost the trust of society. They say it takes the side of power, does not communicate with others, ministers have not shown a good example, the church has been filled with conflict and quarrels and the church, which should pursue piety, has become a follower of Mammon. The Korean church, which was respected by society in the past, has become an object of criticism and faces a huge movement of anti-Christianity.

What the research found from listening to voices inside the church was misunderstanding of theology such as soteriology, which results in focus on the next life, ecclesiology, which results in concentrating only on church growth and pneumatology, which results in it becoming a tool for church growth. Another voice was saying that the ministers did not demonstrate the example of faith.

The researcher also scrutinised the real condition of the Korean church's preaching. The ministers' major work in the Korean church is preaching and leading the church through their message. The Korean church's preaching is a therefore a display window showing the church's reality. What this research found was that although the largest part of the ministers' work is preaching, they are not all that interested in preaching. The reason is the doubt about the influence of preaching itself among the preachers and the indifference of the listeners about the qualitative depreciation of the sermon. In these circumstances a new type of preacher, who does not follow the traditional preaching, appeared. They focus on the listeners, their needs and their mind. They use many illustrations in the sermon to make it funny and to elicit laughter. Their interest is the individual, not the communal. Their direction is in accord with the direction of the New Homiletic and their preaching style has influenced other preachers.

Chapter 3 was a qualitative survey among pastors and laypeople. Osmer said it is priestly listening based on a spirituality of presence. The researcher tried to find the reality of the Korean church and of the New Homiletic, which is in vogue in the Korean church, and to examine their understanding of the New Homiletic.

The core questions to the pastors were: First, by which aspect of the sermons did the congregation say they were blessed? Second, have you ever talked or chatted about preaching with laypeople or other pastors? What did they say? Third, what do you think of the New Homiletic? Fourth, how do you rate the balance of your sermons between individual faith and the problems of listeners versus the social and public aspects? Fifth, what message do you think your church members want to hear?

The core questions to the laypeople were: First, if you were blessed by the pastor's sermon, what aspects of the sermon blessed you? Second, have you ever talked or chatted with laypeople or other pastors about preaching? What did they say? Third, what do you think of the changing trend of preaching from the traditional preaching to the New Homiletical preaching? Fourth, how would you rate the balance of your pastor's sermons between individual faith and problems of the listeners as opposed to social and public aspects? Fifth, what kind of message do you want to hear from your pastor?

The research exposed four themes.

First, the Korean church's preachers started to use of the methodology of the New Homiletic. Not all pastors who participated in the interview knew the term 'New Homiletic', but when they heard the explanation they replied that they already knew it and that it was their current praxis.

Second, there was a gap between the pastors' and the laypeople's perceptions of the sermons. The ministers thought that laypeople would want to listen to a sermon that would touch their life and concern. Laypeople responded that they wanted to listen to preaching that was based on the Bible, with in-depth explanations of the meaning of the text.

Third, the direction of the Korean church's preaching should be the gospel. Although there was a diversity of opinions about using the method of the New Homiletic, both groups agreed that the mission of the preacher was to preach the gospel and speak the word of God as written in the Bible.

Fourth, due to the effect of the New Homiletic, the sermons of the Korean church were focusing on the individual. Although the group of pastors insisted that they preached about the social and public responsibility of Christians, the laypeople who listened to the sermons said that the proper place for communal and public aspects was the announcements or prayer meetings rather than the preaching.

Chapter 4 was the response to the first detailed research question in Chapter 1. The question was why the New Homiletic had not changed the congregation of the Korean church and brought the vitality that had been hoped for.

The research discovered that the New Hermeneutic was the background of the New Homiletic. The New Hermeneutic suggested two insistences: the language-event and the reversal of the traditional subject-object to biblical interpretation. Three central issues of the New Homiletic regarding the relationship with the New Hermeneutic were discovered: the sermon as cooperation between listener and preacher, the importance of language and the importance of movement in the sermon. The central issues with the New Homiletic in the insistences of its representative scholars, Craddock and Lowry, were demonstrated.

A critical evaluation of the New Homiletic was presented to answer why the New Homiletic had not brought vitality. Three positive aspects appeared: the significance of the listener in contemporary homiletics, the necessity of sermon movement in contemporary homiletics and the significance of the sermon form in contemporary homiletics. Four limitations of the New Homiletic became apparent: the loss of the identity of the community as a result of individualism, the change of the axis of biblical interpretation, the loss of balance between narrative and rational persuasion and the loss of the Holy Spirit in the sermon.

Chapter 5 was the response to the second detailed research question to evaluate the homiletic of Campbell based on Hans Frei's postliberal theology in order to overcome the failings of the New Homiletic. The question was divided



into three sub-questions. First, what is the background of Campbell's homiletic? Second, what are the features of Campbell's homiletic? Third, what are the contributions and limitations of Campbell's homiletic?

For the answer to the first question, postliberal theology was scrutinised as the background of Campbell's homiletic. Three representatives of the postliberal theology were discussed – Frei, Lindbeck and Hauerwas. The five central themes of postliberal theology were discussed: the ascriptive logic of the gospel stories, the cultural-linguistic model, the community of interpretation, intratextual hermeneutic and practice-oriented theology.

The answers to the second question identified two central themes from Campbell's theology. The first emphasis was preaching as telling about Jesus of Nazareth, the ascriptive subject of the Gospel narrative. Campbell rejected the effort to keep the listeners' attention with the narrative of human experience and focused on the Gospels to reveal the story of Jesus Christ. The second emphasis was to build up the church through preaching. Like postliberal theology, which teaches that language builds community, Campbell's interest was also to build up the church, but he rejected the New Homiletic's tendency toward the individual.

The third question prompted a critical evaluation of Campbell's homiletic. Four positive contributions appeared: turning to the biblical narrative, turning from individual interest to interest in the Church, emphasising practice and overcoming the spirit of the times. In spite of his contributions, four limitations were found in his homiletic: the loss of a method for effective preaching, the loss of the agency of the Holy Spirit in preaching, the loss of concern for the individual and putting the authority of the Bible below that of the church.

Chapter 6 responded to the main research question, namely how Kevin Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic approach, i.e. his theological dramatic theory, applied to homiletics. The question had sub-questions. The first was the question of the validity of using the drama analogy or theatrical analogy in

theology, especially in practical theology. The second was what Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic approach is. The third sub-question was how to apply his theology to homiletics.

For an answer to the first sub-question, the historical changes that took place in theology as drama were looked at. Sometimes the drama analogy encountered objections, but the interaction between theology and the drama analogy existed throughout history. There is another problem regarding the contemporary objection. The possibility of using the dramatic analogy was detected in the theology of Augustine, Nell & Meyer and Long, and the possibility of interdisciplinary study, which the drama analogy applied to practical theology, was confirmed through Müller's work.

To provide an answer to the second question, Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic model was compared with Campbell's cultural-linguistic model. Vanhoozer tried to overcome theology's dichotomy of theory and praxis and found it possible to overcome the dichotomy in Augustine's speech-act theory and Balthasar's Theodrama as drama. Vanhoozer introduced his theology as post-propositionalism, post-conservatism and post-foundationalism. His theology as drama and its character were looked at.

Through the third question, the five practical strategies to apply his theory to homiletics were found. The first was a change in biblical interpretation. Vanhoozer suggested that the preacher should look along the text, not look at it. This change can enable the preacher listen to the Bible's polyphonic voices. The second was a change of the preacher's role. The performative character of his theory will recover the ministers' identity and the reputation of those who are the object of criticism. The third change was his interest in the context. Vanhoozer emphasised that we should improvise as little Christs in our living context. Therefore his theory demands knowledge of the Bible as well as understanding of our context and contemporary culture. The fourth was the preaching that relies on the Holy Spirit. To Vanhoozer the Holy Spirit is a crucial requirement. The Holy Spirit is the original author of the Bible, the director and

the prompter in the redemptive drama. His theory recovered the role of the Holy Spirit, who is left out from contemporary homiletics. The fifth was a change to recover the identity of the church. Vanhoozer's theory was not to build the church, but rather to practice the identity the church. As local theatre and faithful company, the church must improvise in this world on the basis of the Bible.

In the light of this research, the researcher suggests some homiletical route markers for the future of evangelical preaching in South Korea based on the insights gained in the previous chapters.

The first marker is preaching as drama. The biggest problem faced by the Korean church is a loss of trust and confidence. The Korean church, which aims for church growth, focuses on the activity of faith in the chapel, it is losing its influence in society and the church attendance decreases.

The methods of the New Homiletic were invaluable instruments to the preachers who set church growth as the highest goal. The preachers did not learn the New Homiletic in a seminary, but were unknowingly using its methods in their current praxis. They considered the listeners neglected in the traditional preaching and now focus on the listener's anguish of life and trying to touch the listeners' hearts through his/her life's story.

The laypeople, however, revealed in the empirical research in Chapter 3 that they want to listen to the gospel and the preaching that explains in depth the meaning of the text rather than the preacher's individual story. Therefore, Campbell's homiletic, which emphasises Jesus' narrative and building up the church, is welcomed. However, preaching is proclaiming, not teaching sociological language in order to build community, and the language to make disciples of Jesus should be based on the biblical canon, not on ecclesiastical culture.

In this way, preaching as drama may bring a change in the trend of church growth in the Korean church. Preaching is an invitation to the congregation into God's redemptive drama and the call for preparing the congregation to

improvise the way of Christ in their lives. The understanding of preaching as drama does not leave the listeners with the experience of the Word only, nor with the language of the community, but calls on them to perform the Word. Coming together as a community prepares, teaches and nourishes the congregation. Therefore, the new understanding of preaching as drama will change the Korean church's interest from church growth to maturity and practice of the church's identity as the Lord's people.

The second marker is looking along the text in biblical interpretation. The traditional homiletics and the New Homiletic have an angle of interpretation of the text as looking at the text, where the goal is to extract a lesson from the Bible. The focus of interpretation is quite different in the New Homiletic, which moved the axis of interpretation from author and text to reader and pays attention to the listeners and their existence. The preaching becomes a problem-solving method rather than delivering the core message of the Bible, and it causes loss of authority of the Bible.

Campbell, who departs from the critique of the New Homiletic, tries to build the community through the biblical narrative. However, he is not interested in the individual's salvation and experience of the gospel that is the infrastructure of the community. Another limitation of his homiletic is isolated preaching that remains in the world of the Bible, without relating to our world, and then we cannot fulfil the role of being salt and light. He does not accept the methodology the New Homiletic developed and is indifferent to the sermon form as well. After all, he repeats the error of propositionalism that united the multiple forms of the Bible into one form, though he realised the importance of the narrative form and bore abundant fruits.

Looking along the text offers a new perspective for biblical interpretation from the beginning of the preparation of the sermon. It is to stare at what the author and the reader see together and to learn the way the text sees the world. This participative way does not just stop with seeing the text, but leads to experiencing the text through all five senses. In this process, the preacher has

the benefit of hearing the polyphonic truth with its unity and diversity of genres and notes the genre the author used. The preacher prepares the listeners to be actors that perform God's redemptive drama in a variety of contexts because the polyphonic voices, not a fragmentary lesson, from the Bible guides us how to act as disciples of Jesus in our different situations. It is a way to evangelise people to become disciples of Jesus. One of the characteristics of drama is that the spectators are transformed into active participants. In South Korea, where the church is berated for an aggressive evangelism, the improvisation of the drama by the congregation will be a good way to reveal Jesus Christ.

The third marker is the preacher's roles as co-dramaturge, assistant-director as well as co-actor. One of the criticisms of the Korean church is related to the ministers. Ministers' immoral conduct, a gap between the words and actions of the pastors and their authoritarian attitude are not observed only with regard to the ministers mentioned in this research, but of most ministers in the Korean church.

The New Homiletic asked preachers to become helpers and guides who assist the listeners to reach their own conclusion in their own lives. Campbell emphasises the role of storyteller, who teaches the grammar and the language to build the church. Both models failed to grasp the importance of the role of the Holy Spirit, who is the most important factor in a sermon. The New Homiletic focused on the methodology, without interest in the Holy Spirit, and Campbell replaced the role of the Holy Spirit with tradition and training to acculturate the listeners to the community.

The understanding of preaching as drama helps to create a new comprehension of the preacher to find the intention of the author in the Bible, to obey the Word of God and to rely on the Holy Spirit. As co-dramaturge, the preacher must research the performed masterpiece in the history and the author's intention in the script. As an assistant of the Holy Spirit, the preacher must rely on the Holy Spirit when he/she prepares a sermon and preaches in the pulpit, because the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the listeners'

minds and their lives in order to understand how to improvise in their lives (McGrath 1994:64). As co-actor, the preacher must have improvised it first as a disciple of Jesus before the listeners. Preaching is not just preaching the sermon to the listeners, but also to the preacher. Therefore, the sermon's content should come from his understanding through performing the Word. The authority of the preacher does not come from an elevated pulpit or a clerical collar, but from the preacher's practice and the attitude of the preacher in obeying the Word. It will be a way to resolve the issues of authoritarianism of pastors and collapsed reputations of pastors in Korea.

These route markers will be a guideline for evangelical preaching in a Korean church that is faced with harsh criticisms and will assist preachers who are concerned only with preaching, apart from theology, to let the sermon be based on their theology. 'A preacher should be a theologian' (McClure 2007:136).

## 7.2 REFLECTIVE CONVERSATION AND TALKBACK

This section indicates possible contributions from this research.

First, the relationship between theology, hermeneutics and homiletics was clarified. The understanding of theology and hermeneutic impacts on the sermon of the pastor, the sermon impacts on the church, which impacts on society as a whole.

Second, the empirical research shows the sermon's reality in the Korean church how pastors and laypeople experience the New Homiletic and the perception gap between them about the use of the New Homiletic in the Korean church.

Third, this research opens the possibility to overcome the evangelicals' narrowness with a new homiletical strategy for the evangelical Korean church. It hopes, with its strategy, to assist the Korean church to perform the balanced

functions of social responsibility based on the Bible that goes beyond individual salvation.

While these are positive contributions, a number of challenges remain to be explored.

First, this research did not suggest the method for delivering a pastor's story in the form of a plot as an example or illustration in the sermon. Further study is needed to develop the method.

Second, this research shows the opinions of a few participants on their experience of the New Homiletic. Further study needs to expand the research on the reality of the Korean church as well as the relationship between the New Homiletic and church growth or decline and its cause.

The third challenge is related to Webb's criticism of Vanhoozer. Webb (2009:213) compares Vanhoozer's approach to the theological stratosphere. Doriani (2009:209) also indicates that Vanhoozer needs to teach and preach more in a local church to see how his teaching will bear fruit, because he only stays in the seminary. As the indications this research may remain in the clouds. Therefore further study of the actual application of such a strategy and empirical research on it is needed.

Fourth is the need for empirical research in homiletics by the Korean church. The Korean church is not as familiar with empirical research as the Western church. Therefore further empirical research of empirical homiletics is expected.

It is also hoped that this research will serve as a platform from which studies of greater depth and specificity may be undertaken.

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