

CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In this dissertation, the researcher has attempted to bring in the issues of transformation and development of human society from a homiletical pastoral perspective. The researcher will attempt to show that the Preacher and preaching, with its *Kerugmatik* (see p.38) nature impacting effectively on transformation and development of human society and that its therapeutic influences, are critical points in the quest for a better life for the under privileged and under-developed rural majority. People perceive society in different ways, "...The Political revolutionary wants to overthrow society; the reformer wants to change it; the evangelist wants to save it. Everybody looks at society from their own viewpoint " (Hud 1973:1). Therefore, these prove that there are many views about society. It is therefore true that there is a perspective in the outlook on life. However, in this dissertation the human component that has a relational bearing on transformation, development and its therapeutic nature that, seeks to redress the maladies that engulf society, is derived from a practical, pastoral theology and homiletical point of view.

The main role player in human and rural transformational, developmental and restorative healing areas is the Preacher and her/his message. He/She is to be found in the core of activity that is liberating and unleashing the potential which is inhibited by the inherent structures of oppression and under-development. In human society there are many layers and intricate interwoven facets; especially in rural South Africa. There is an abundance of under-development and a lack of adequate infrastructure: good roads, electricity, good clean water, good reliable health centres and enough good schools. There is also much unleashed, unreleased potential and a communal mindset riddled with idolatry and superstition. This becomes a challenge which causes under-development, lack of transformation and does not bring healing to society. There is a Church in almost every village, where homilies are preached every Sunday. Pieterse (2001:15) says "no village could stand without a house of prayer". The researcher will seek to find out whether the type of preaching can unlock the peoples' potential to effect change, improve the quality of life and offer healing of the majority in a holistic sense. There are many who view the

Preacher as having nothing to offer on the subject as they have relegated him/her to heavenly affairs with no earthly use.

“When God created Adam and Eve, He entrusted the care of His creation to them and appointed them as trustees of His property. The Bible says, “[God] blessed them, and said, ‘Have many children, so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control. I am putting you in charge’” (Genesis 1:28). The first job God gave humans was to manage and take care of His “stuff” on earth. This role has never been rescinded. It is a part of our purpose today. Everything we enjoy is to be regarded as trust God placed in our hands” (Warren, 2002:44).

The research in question is, “about research as a participative process and about research with people rather than research on people. It is about inquiry as a means by which people engage together to explore some significant aspect of their lives, to understand it better and transform their action in order to meet their purposes more fully” (Peters 1988:1).

In this research, I will also grapple with the key concepts of transformation, development and human society; from a homiletical perspective and therapeutic point of view. The root word in Latin of the concept Transformation is “*transformationem*”-and its basic meaning is, “*the action of changing in form, shape or appearance*” according to *Shorter Oxford English dictionary*, and also the Oxford dictionary explains the word ‘*transform*’ as ‘make considerable change in form, outward appearance, character or disposition, for example, a caterpillar is transformed into a butterfly. Other dictionaries explain it as: change, turn, convert, transfigure, transmute, alter, transmogrify, metamorphose, remodel, reconstruct, re-mould, recast, refurbish”.

The concept of transformation triggers a number of interpretations, some of which are political, economical, physiological, psychological, emotional and spiritual dimensions. The narrowed perspective/view to be explored will encompass the change within people that is brought about through preaching. Preaching informs the holistic understanding in

individuals and society; which leads to wholeness, healing and progressive positive betterment of the underprivileged and underdeveloped.

In the Vhembe district, with its rural dynamics, there is a need to transform the mindset of the society with regard to helping citizens to aspire to the implementation of a better life. In order to release their hidden potential, a mindset change must occur. There is, however, another area where the traditional African and Venda view of Man, as a communalistic being has caused poverty and under-development.

“The communal African view of society is well known and has often been praised. Its value for a black ecclesiology has been emphasized” (Goba 1981:56). “This concept with its strong sense of solidarity and mutual responsibility has been a major factor in the survival of the race on a hard continent like Africa. The communal view of man has also led to great emphasis on conformity” (Gelfand 1965:114). “Conformity is considered necessary for survival of the community. Deviations from the norm, are highly dangerous. Peace and happiness are ensured by conformity to the customs and folkways of the community” (Gelfand 1965:117-8).

Van Wyk (1984:184-185) argues that “Individual ability is recognized but beyond a certain point it may threaten stability even survival itself. The communal emphasis has caused many Africans to feel the centre of their identity as being outside themselves, in the community. This has diminished the amount of inner individual awareness and has hampered individual initiative. In a time of such selfish individualism the great sense of community and coherence in African society is certainly impressive. At the same time there is great need in modern society for individual responsibility and initiative. A high degree of individual inwardness is required. In order for society to advance and improve its quality of life even to survive in today’s world, individuals are needed who can improvise, who can ‘separate’ themselves from the community and take personal responsibility on behalf of others. At this point tension arises. This happens in education, at the work place and in political life. The community needs innovators, leaders who can stand at a distance from the people. At the same time the pressure of communal obligation is very great and may be experienced as stifling or inhibiting.”

Van Deventer argues that “Individual human development is thus constrained within the context of the whole of the group. It is therefore not merely a case of the individual who disintegrates when the whole group disintegrates, but the individual also disintegrates within himself because of the pressure of the group dynamics. As such, one has to conclude that communalism has a determining influence on the human psyche” (Van Deventer 1989:77). With regard to transformation, development and healing of society, individual innovation is denied a chance, and is labelled anti-common cause. Even when the majority is on the path of self sabotage, the communal cause must be upheld. “Dederen mentions a few aspects concerning the communalistic psyche which put reference to ‘one for all and all for one’ in a better perspective. It then becomes clear that communalism is not merely a series of superficial collective activities, but in fact, a deep psychological phenomenon... to be different, to be better and to strive for or promote change is to be anti-conservative. As Van Wyk has pointed out, this conformation and conservatism, which is brought about by communalistic dynamics inhibits the growth and development of individuals, to such an extent that he/she can hardly ever reach the point of utilizing his full potential as a human being. The end result is that the whole group and community do not grow or develop to their full potential; resulting in a lack of individual initiative, entrepreneurship and leadership. In order to survive, the respective members of the group and community become dependent upon one another. A fatalistic attitude develops of waiting for assistance from outside... and this whole process leads to what Dederen calls, ‘a poverty culture’” (Van Deventer 1989:78).

This is one of the mindsets that has to be changed, if transformation, development and healing in human society are to be given a chance. In rural Africa, it is suicidal to remove oneself from the trends that are accepted by the majority; even if common sense shows them to be faulty. This type of solidarity is somehow manipulated by the strong and the influential and cannot be challenged. Challenge is misconstrued as arrogance and being anti-social. In view of the phenomenon, this mindset needs to shift if any transformation, development and healing of society is to take place, effectively.

Now the concepts in the research topic will be explained to give thrust and direction to the research. The proper configuration of these basic concepts will later enable analysis of data. The use of the terminology/words inscribed in the topic and the practice of the terminology/words, are two different premises. Any people that negate the thriving for change, in how they view/perceive things are bound to be locked up in the mood, that is always fighting/ militating against the very things that are meant to be for their own good and progress.

Development, in this dissertation, will revolve around releasing people's potential; and empowering them to impact society positively and progressively. The Oxford dictionary explains the word *develop* as to “unfold, reveal or be revealed, bring or come from latent to active or visible state; make or become known; make or become fuller, more elaborate or systematic, or bigger. Construct on land, convert land to new use, so as to realize its potentialities.”

The root word for development is in the Latin word “*envolup*”, means to wrap in, (some say the root not known) “*envelop*” to cover, and “*de*” meaning to *un-* to *de-envelop* is to uncover, to unfold, unroll, to unveil, to disclose. The basic to *develop/ sviluppare* is to “*change the form of*” in the shorter oxford dictionary.

Word origin- to develop something- literally, means to uphold or unwrap it.

In French *des- un + voloper- to fold or, wrap up, also voloper* gives envelop.

This is a spiritually loaded word. The uncovering of the preacher in preaching has the hidden potential despite its inhibiting circumstances, so it is necessary to release the hidden potential thus bringing *development* within human society.

The World Bank defines development as follows:

Sustainable development by WCED, 1987 (World commission on Environment and development), is defined as being, “*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs, Far from requiring the cessation of economic growth, it recognizes that the problems of underdevelopment cannot be solved unless we have a new era of growth in which developing countries play a large role and reap large benefits*” [www.World bank. Org/ DEP HOME/DEP WEB](http://www.Worldbank.org/DEP%20HOME/DEP%20WEB), (Holliday, Schimidheiny and Watts 2002:13).

It is interesting to note that the root meaning of transformation, we get '*the action of changing in form, shape or appearance*', while development is '*to change the form of*.' One only surmise that these terms are interconnected and can be used interchangeably as the key words are '*the action of changing in form*' and '*change in form*' respectively. It can be said that, there are the two sides of the same coin, one can not do without the other.

In the rural setup, like Vhembe district, there are many Churches that are preaching every Sunday. But we need to ask and investigate as to whether the homilies have brought transformation, development and healing with them as the core issues. Since there is a lot of under-development in terms of human resources, and infrastructure (roads, clean water, electricity, schools, health centres) the Preacher's role must come under focus as he/she is found in almost every village (cf Pieterse 2001:15).

What kind of voice are we hearing in our pulpits in relation to the phenomenon? In the field of practical and pastoral theology as in any people-oriented discipline, the focus is on investigating areas that can improve the plight of the masses. In this research, the issue of probing is: transformation and development of human society which is: a homiletical pastoral perspective. "The modern scientific story tells much about the development of the physical universe but sets humanity apart from the natural world. What is needed, they assert, is a story which interprets the account of the universe given by modern scientific observation in a way that acknowledges the presence and majesty of the universe and the human place within it. The universe carries within itself a psychic-spiritual as well as a physical material dimension. The human activates the most profound dimension of the universe itself, its capacity to reflect on and celebrate itself in conscious self awareness" (Berry, 1988:131-132). The majority of the poor find it hard to link development issues to preaching because, in most cases, it is seen as a terrain of the powerful and strong. If Jesus still walked the earth, would he affirm developmental issues or would he sideline them as being unspiritual? Since much of Jesus work affirmed life, it would be appropriate to surmise that he would promote transformation, development and healing of the human society. He was a radical life changer and has liberated people to

realize their dreams and in order for them to experience their release to live life to the full.

The understanding of society is also cardinal to the dissertation, as the impact for change is fathomed from the context of society. In order to have clarity of the word, here are some arguments which try to define society. According to Gushee (1999:50), “The first difficulty in using the concept of...society...is that there is no consensus on the precise definition.” Jean Bethke Elshtain (1995:5) defined society as, “the many forms of community and association which dot the landscape of a democratic culture, from families to churches to neighborhood groups to self-help movements to volunteer assistance to the needy.” And Alan Wolfe (1997:9) has defined--society as, “those forms of communal and associational life which are organized neither by the self-interest of the market nor by the coercive potential of the state.” Gushee (1999:51) concludes by saying that, “at the heart of the concept of...society-even though it is often not clearly articulated is the insistence that we do not live our lives as discrete, autonomous individuals, nor do we simply live them as a part of large, impersonal, modern bureaucratic structures, such as corporations or political units.”

This dissertation, will focus on Vhembe. It is a rural society which is ruled by three Venda kings and many other sub chiefs who govern the Venda populace. A panoramic overview of perceptions of the key concepts of the phenomenon that are being studied and placed at the centre are; namely: transformation, development its therapeutic and restorative component .

2. THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The research’s theoretical premises will be taken from Billy Graham, as he makes the most profound statement, notably;

“Then also, there is the scholar who claims that the remedy for vice is to be found in a universal system of education. His opinion is that man will be made pure and happy by intellectual culture and mental repose. Suppose that is the answer to all the problems that

man faces. Develop the intellectual to the maximum; yet do you get virtue? Knowledge did not save Solomon from vice or Byron from immorality. Art and education may refine the taste; but they cannot purify the heart, forgive sin, and regenerate the individual. It is not simply education in civilization that the world is wanting today, but civilization with enlightened conscience” (Graham,1956:95). This Preacher, who preached for more than half a century, better epitomizes a homiletical perspective as change of heart is the cure for the sin-sick world. The same has been said about “Martyn Lloyd-Jones” (Peters1986:17), one of the case studied Preachers, who was a trained physician turned Preacher, bringing his diagnostic knowledge to homiletics as he used scripture to heal and lead people to the saving knowledge that transforms and heals society . Peters (1986:9) continues to say that, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, “... was sure God had called him to and for which, he was sure, God had equipped him. Preaching, he believed, was the most urgent need in the Church as well as being ‘the greatest need of the world’. He gave himself to it without reserve. The role of the Preacher was one which thrilled him at every level of his being to, involve his entire personality, intellect and energies.”

When the researcher investigates the three churches as case studies, he will try to establish whether the transformational, developmental and therapeutical path is being set by the preacher’s homilies, thus challenging education that lacks morality. The research will endeavour to find out the effectiveness and try to fathom/ measure the Preacher and his homilies; and make comparison in the three selected Churches, the affluent, the middle class and the poor rural (Calvary Charismatic, Lutheran Church, and the Tshigubu Church respectively).

The link to transformation, development and therapeutic effects that have lasting impact will also be looked at as stated by Billy Graham. “To think of civilizing men without converting them to Christ is...to think about transforming wolves into lambs merely by washing them and putting on them a fleece of wool...The mercy the world needs is the grace, love, and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is His transforming and regenerating power that the world needs more than anything else. To be sure we are to use the world’s physical resources, but along with them we are to take a cup of cold water in one hand

and regeneration in the other and give them to a physically and spiritually starved world. We thought that man's (sic) needs were entirely physical, but we are beginning to realize that they are spiritual"(Graham,1956:97). In order to illustrate this inner transformation in Mrs. Lloyd-Jones' own spiritual experience, memories of Sand-fields (it is a residential place in a Sub church) she observes:

"In those early years at Aberavon I rejoiced to see men and women converted... I rejoiced to see them and I envied them...when I saw their radiant faces and changed lives...I never imagined that I needed to be converted...God graciously used Martyn's morning sermons to open my eyes and to show me myself and my needs. I came to know my sins forgiven and the peace of God in my heart" (Peters, 1986:19).

To begin with, according to Maslow's pyramid of needs, human beings, have an essential psychological structure analogous to their physical structure: they have "needs, capacities, and tendencies that are genetically based". Some of these characteristics are typical of all human beings; others are "unique to the individual."These needs, capacities, and tendencies are essentially good or at least neutral; they are not evil.

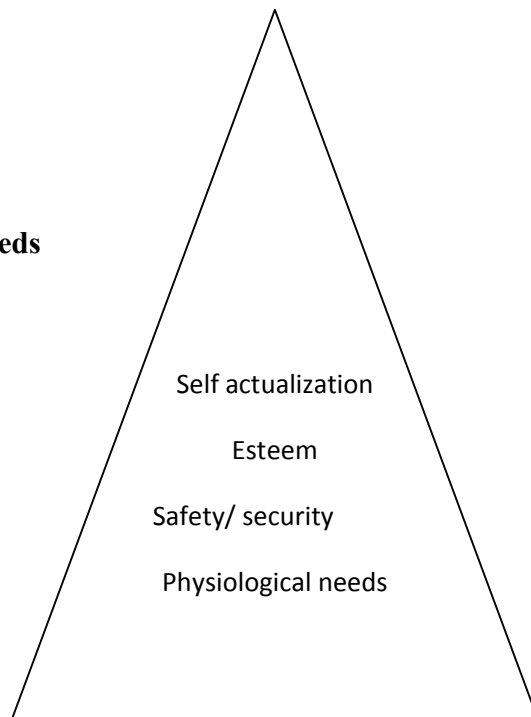
Secondly, healthy and desirable development involves actualizing these characteristics, or fulfilling the person's potentialities. The person matures "along the lines that this hidden, covert, dimly seen essential nature dictates, growing from within rather than being shaped from without" (Maslow, 1954:340, Hall and Lindzey 1985:200-2).

Thirdly, Maslow suggests that, psychopathology generally results from the denial, frustration, and twisting of our essential nature. On this view, what is good? Anything that promotes self-actualisation.What is bad, or abnormal? Anything that frustrates, blocks or denies the human being's essential nature. It follows that psychotherapy or therapy of any sort is a means by which people can be restored to the path of self-actualisation and development along the lines dictated by their inner nature (Maslow, 1954).

The desire for self-actualization begins with basic needs at the bottom of the ladder."Maslow formulated a theory of human motivation in which the human being's many varying needs are seen as arising in a hierarchical fashion. These include, certain

basic needs, such as hunger and thirst, which must be satisfied before other needs, such as self-esteem, can even be felt; let alone fulfilled. The basic or deficiency needs are those that arise from some clear lack or deficit, within the person. Once the deficiency needs are satisfied, the metaneeds, or growth needs, arise out of the human being's need to pursue goals, to continually go beyond, to become something better, rather than just to be, or to continue to exist" (Hall and Lindzey 1985:202).“One of the best-known theories of motivation is Abraham Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs. The crux of Maslow's theory is that needs are arranged in a hierarchy; where the lowest-level needs are physiological needs and the highest-level needs are self-actualisation needs. Physiological needs...include food, drink, sex and air, are the basic ingredients for survival and for biological functioning... The next level in hierarchy, include safety and security needs, which include protection from physical and emotional harm...Esteem needs include the need for a positive self-image, self-respect, and needs for recognition from others. At the top of the hierarchy are self-actualisation needs, which involve realizing one's potential through growth and development” (Du Toit Eitla, 2007: 234) also depicted “the hierarchy of needs” (Mwamwenda 2004:239).

Fig 1 : Pyramid of needs



The theory of Maslow has its flaws when perceived from a theological perspective. It is seen as depicting accurately the basic human needs, but employs the all-sufficiency of human effort in meeting them by self-actualisation, and in turn negates the holistic approach which conversion of heart is part of, and does appear to push the Creator from the picture of being part of the transformation and development of human society, making humankind the centre of creation as a self-made being and self-sufficient without a need for the Maker and Creator.

“In recent years theological attention has been given to the ecological crisis which affirms humanity’s responsibility to care for and to live in harmony with God’s gifts of creation. The Rio Declaration which was adopted by UNCED (United Nations on conference and development) highlights that: “human beings are the centre of concerns for sustainable development” as the first principle. And yet, many ecologists and theologians have argued that it is precisely such an anthropocentric view, which isolates humanity from the whole of creation and humans as the source for measuring all value and progress, which has brought us to the ecological peril which is now threatening all life- especially human life” (Granberg-Michaelson, 1992:52-53). It is safe to surmise that humans must be looked at as forming part of the whole creation and thus; must, holistically, be placed in the big picture of life and its ecological dimension. However can humans transform, develop holistically, alone without God’s help? When God is left out of the picture of life, it leaves the impression that humans are all-sufficient beings needing no Godly intervention, even when addressing the phenomenon.

“Our present age is characterized by its scientific and technological preoccupations: we have come of age. This means for some that we have supposedly outgrown our need for God. By our scientific and technological knowledge and skills we can now get for ourselves what we once looked for from God. We evaluate so many aspects of our existence on the basis of scientific evidence...What has been taken for granted in the Bible is now believed by many to be a stumbling block to true knowledge and we would be better off abandoning the Bible with its prescientific views and getting on with something more congenial to our modern ways of thinking” (Cox 1985:29).

The story of the tower of Babel is the example *per excellence* that shows that building and developing, without involving the Creator, creates confusion rather than the intended progress and transformation. Technology has undoubtedly made many good strides, but has also created many unresolved dangerous problems that threaten man's existence to the point of extinction. One is aware that divine intervention in the affairs of men does help humans to develop and transform, bearing in mind the ethical implications and eco-environmentally friendly approaches. Those who argue to the contrary, namely that religion is a hindrance to development and progress, are advocating only a super-human achievement of progress that relegates God to a position where He is absent in the affairs of humans, who think they can do without Him.

“The report of the Theology Group from the ecumenical meeting at Baixada Fluminense argued this way: ‘we affirm the goodness of God’s creation and the intrinsic worth of all beings. Anthropocentric, hierarchical and patriarchal understandings of creation lead to the alienation of human beings from each other, from nature, and from God. The current ecological crisis calls us to move towards an eco-centred theology of creation which emphasizes God’s spirit in creation (Genesis I:2; Psalm 104), it is through Christ that the whole created world is brought into the scope of God’s redeeming and human beings as an integral part of nature’. Orthodox theologians have stressed that it is through Christ that the whole created world is brought into the scope of God’s redeeming love...”
(Graneberg-Michaelson, 1992:53).

The holistic perception of the whole creation, humans included, is to be encouraged if the ecological balance is to be attained; especially as it links to focus on the concepts of transformation, development, therapeutic societal care as viewed from the Preacher's perspective. This research attempts to investigate the preacher's role and his/her homilies, in order to establish whether he/she is a (key/pivotal) player in transformation, development and healing of societal ills. The modernists and humanists have sidelined the Preacher, relegating him/her to the bygone medieval times. His concern is to be with spiritual and heavenly things only, leaving the mundane issues to Politicians. He is grossly misinterpreted as a hindrance to transformation, development and healing of society.

Gerben Heitink (1999:40) quotes M. ter Borg (1991:110ff) who shows how “Comte connects society and world-view. Each society needs a world-view as an integral and inspiring idea in which life and action are rooted. For along time religion filled the role. But as society developed wherein knowledge was based on sense experience, traditional religion gradually disappeared. Each branch of knowledge inevitably goes through three stages. Our knowledge of nature provides a good example. The stage of theological explanation was followed by the metaphysical stage, which in turn gave way to the positivistic stage. Religion and metaphysics gave way to logic and empirical perception ...Science replaced traditional religion as a means of orientation and thus led to its eclipse. But the need for a world-view that will give meaning to life remains, since existential questions cannot remain unanswered” (ter Borg 1991:14).

Development must be viewed holistically, as, the natural, social, political, economic, spiritual, and psychological environment. “The psychological environment is something abstract (in the mind: something one cannot touch). It consists of the attitude people display towards life around them. Poor people who spend their time in a battle for survival often feel apathy (lack of interest or concern) towards people or institutions trying to persuade them to do ‘something’. They are not prepared to take risks because if they fail (for instance, in an agricultural project) they stand to lose everything. Having experienced negative situations in the past, they are often mistrusting of strangers and even people they know who might come up with new ideas. The psychological environment is strongly influenced by the experiences in the past of the poor” (Swanepoel and De beer, 1994:8). The major concern of this research is to discover ways in which the rural under-developed, disadvantaged poor can be psychologically spurred/motivated through the Preachers’ homilies to overcome and come out of the unproductive mindset that kills hope and breeds untransformed, undeveloped and ill societies.

3. THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In this framework, the research is approached with the focus on concepts. In this particular study, the concepts of transformation, development and human society are explained in broad and clear terms. The homiletical perspective is part of the conceptual

framework. The concepts that interlink and are explored in this research are:*Transformation*: This entails change in the individual mindset affecting the whole society in addressing maladies that hamper progress.

Development: A concept that is basically about unfolding the hidden potential, the progress of the individuals, rural communities and society at large to banish poverty and underdevelopment. Development also carries the idea of changing the quality of life for the better, against a host of challenges that militate against development.

Homiletical perspective: When transformation and development are perceived from the preacher's point of view, the pulpit and the homilies are seen to be developmental tools. Allowing the preacher and his homilies to be transformational and developmental in the rural context is a perspective which is critical in the study.

Pastoral care: The concept of healing of human society is a pastoral care phenomenon. Perception, in the study, is wider than it is normally envisaged or understood. Pastoral care healing embraces the transformation, development of individuals and communities to heal them from maladies that face them and are hindering inner healing; societal, mindset wholeness. The interlinking and all societal dynamics are part of the framework. The conceptual understanding will be applied to the three types of Churches that are being studied and the data collected will be co-ordinated for validation.

4. THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVILIZATION BEFORE THE GREEKS.

The Oxford dictionary describes the word 'civilize' as 'bring out of barbarism, enlighten, refine and educate. Civilization means making or becoming civilized; a state reached in the process; stage, esp. advanced stage, in social development.' The ancient civilization is here depicted briefly in order to show the roots of modern transformation, development and therapeutic societal ethos that link the Preacher to the beginning of human civilization. This research's bedrock is working the earth and caring for it, that is: viewing the earth with a heavenly bearing, recognizing the transient nature of humans. The quest for progress and better life is an ideal which touches the Preacher and the

community. In other words, to *transform* for the better, is to *civilize* people from an inhibiting environment to an enabling one.

Sabine (1973:9) reminds us that “archeological research over the last several decades--- has greatly increased our knowledge of the ancient world. While man in the broad sense seems to have been born in Africa, a threshold crucial to our discussion was crossed somewhere in the neighborhood of 6500 B.C. in the Middle East. Here, man the hunter, the gatherer, the herder became for the first time and in a very simple way, man the farmer. The simple farming techniques seem to have spread steadily until by 3000B.C grain-growing agricultural communities could be found along the coast of North Africa, in Europe and India, and across the plateau of Iran into central Asia.” This is a reasonable and transcontinental coverage of the human journey that points to the origins of man and how civilization has come about, and shows the components that pushed it to grow.

Sabine (1973:9) further tells us that “agriculture became civilization only under particularly favorable circumstances, growing on the flood plain of great rivers- the first of which was apparently that of the valley of the Tigris-Euphrates. Civilization by definition requires social activities above the level of reproduction and subsistence farming. So it is easy to see that the greater fertility which is created by spring floods of a great river could provide an agricultural surplus capable of supporting characteristically “civilized” forms of human activity”(Sabine, 1973: 9). It can be acknowledged that the agrarian revolution is at the very source and beginning of civilization. Food security is at the source of civilization, and so is development, transformation and healing. In the following paragraph, the Hellenic contribution towards civilization is depicted forming a bedrock foundation to modern western civilization.

- **Contribution of the Hellenic heritage to western civilization**

One cannot overlook the legacy of Hellenic civilization. “Although Athens failed in its dream of political mastery of Greece, the Athenian miracle so impressed its

contemporaries that Attic culture dominated the Hellenic age. Tragic poets, comic playwrights, and natural philosophers made the Attic dialect the medium of expression for poetry and prose. The buildings on the Athenian Acropolis expressed visually the purity and restraint of the Attic style. And Athenian democracy, which served as the exciting teacher of its citizens, was the envy of most of the other Greek poleis. However, after the fall of Greece to Macedonia, the idea of democracy fell into disrepute. Almost 2000 years passed before some in Europe were ready to give democracy a second chance” (Matthews & Platt,1995:78). The western world borrowed a lot from the Greek culture through, building styles and democracy which, at first attempt, was disastrous but after twenty centuries, it took root. The other major contribution of Hellenist times is what has become the bedrock of modern thinking and reasoning, presumably for progress, as anything that cannot stand the scrutiny of reason is discarded as unreliable, which gives as the following contribution.

Humanism was “the other great creation of Athens, which has survived as a guide to refined living for the cultivated classes in the west. Athenian culture became the heart of the educational curriculum that was followed in Hellenistic civilization; that model was adopted by Rome and transmitted in the humanistic tradition to Europe. In time, the study and practice of humanistic learning-literature, philosophy; theater, music, and the arts and architecture-became the crowning glory of western civilization, affecting private individuals and entire societies” (Matthews and Platt 1995:78). It is of vital importance to include these facets of knowledge to the the phenomenon under research. This forms part of a solid background of understanding the human journey of progress.

“Moreover, classicism--the style of humanistic achievements in the Hellenic Age - had three great effects on the Western tradition. Firstly, the principles of Greek Classicism--balance, simplicity, and restraint - set the standard by which the styles of other times are measured. Secondly, the actual works of Classicism became the basic building blocks of western culture. In the realm of thought, the works of Plato and Aristotle quickly acquired a luster of authority and retained it until the seventeenth century A.D. Aristotle’s literary criticism created a new writing genre, and his analysis of tragedy made this type

of play the ultimate challenge to ambitious writers. The Greek tragedies themselves- of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides- are thought by many to be unsurpassed” (Matthews and Platt, 1995:78). The Greek literary works inspired the western literary works and since the study of the phenomenon links to these roots, it is of paramount importance to lay them down in this brief way.

These beginnings of humans on the road to civilization will be researched, and the development and transformation viewed from the preacher’s eye will also be looked at in relation to past times. The following quotation is from a preacher who considered the healing of his society as paramount through the word/gospel.

Barclay said that “...externals can change while the underlying principles remain the same. Take the case of buildings. There is a very great difference between the pyramids in Egypt, Parthenon in Athens, Canterbury Cathedral, Liverpool Cathedral, Coventry Cathedral, and the Post Office Tower in London. Externally they look worlds apart, and yet underlying them all there are the same laws of architecture, because, if there were not, they would simply fall down. The externals can be as different as can be; the underlying principle is the same” (Barclay 1971:29). In all these great infrastructural sky--scrapers that decorate the skyline in the transformation of the landscape and is a sign of development, have the same laws of architecture notwithstanding the times and eras of construction apply. In a similar manner, the transforming, developing and healing gospel thread of effective preaching permeates all ages to the present one. Apparently, every age has needed the Preaching ‘thus says the Lord’ to develop and progress. An orator and Preacher of ancient times used the metaphor of the word as the diet that heals. From the later patristic period I will take only one example, indeed the most notable, namely John Chrysostom, who preached for twelve years in the Cathedral in Antioch before becoming Bishop of Constantinople in A.D 398.

John Chrysostom, who is quoted by John stott saying, ‘In an exposition of Ephesians 6:13’ (take the whole armour of God...).He voiced his conviction about the unique importance of preaching. Like our human body, he said, “the body of Christ is subjected to many diseases. Medicines, correct diet, suitable climate and adequate sleep all help to

restore our physical health. But how shall Christ's Body be healed? One only means and one way of cure has been given us... And that is teaching of the word. This is the best instrument, this is the best diet and climate" (Stott, 1982:20).

The subject of therapeutic preaching that impacts society will be one of the major focus in the study. "*Kerygmatic*" is derived from the Greek word *Kerygma*, which means "Preaching" or "proclamation". The verb (preach, proclaim) is *kerysso*. The verb is very common in the New Testament, especially in our four gospels. It has a number of synonyms such as "make known"(*gnorizo*), "give witness"(*martyreo*), and "evangelize" or "proclaim the gospel"(*euangelizomai*). When we call this model "*kerygmatic*", (Watson 1984:35),(cf Stott,1982),(Missiology tutorial book, 100:19 unisa), we,therefore wish emphasize the fact that the churches or mission agencies who subscribe to this model place a very heavy emphasis on preaching, on the verbal communication of the gospel. John Stott continues to argue that "preaching is indispensable to Christianity. Without preaching, a necessary part of its authenticity is lost. For Christianity is, in its very essence, a religion of the word of God. No attempt to understand Christianity can succeed which overlooks or denies the living God who has taken the initiative to reveal himself" (Stott, 1982:22-47).

5. PRELIMINARY SUPPOSITIONS

When I passed my form five (equivalent to South African Matric examinations), my late father sat me down and asked, "What do you want to study?" I said that I wanted to study theology. He said, "My son, why not study medicine?" He was a physiotherapist, and he, presumably, wanted someone to follow in his healing career. He continued to say that as a Preacher I wouldn't bring development to society: no roads, no water, no schools, no infrastructural development or transformation of society.

My father's view of Preachers, like many others then, was that Preachers are concerned with heavenly issues only and that the earthly issues are in the terrain and competence of

politicians. It is from these premises that I begin this research. Can the preacher bring about transformation, development and healing to society through his/her homilies?

6. PROBLEM STATEMENT

This statement will be in a question form.

The pivotal question is:

What role does the preacher and his/her preaching play in bringing progressive transformation and development to human society and healing it?

Theology is the queen of the sciences. All faculties and disciplines of learning stem from theology; hence the term “theology is the mother of all learning”. The carrier and his message will be scrutinized in this research in order to establish the contribution of the Preacher and his/her homilies to the issues of transformation, development and healing of human society.

7. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In a major research, the topic under investigation is divided into sub--questions that help the researcher to deal systematically with the phenomenon in question and the following are tabulated below.

7.1.1. Has homiletics anything to do with the transformation of a human being and his society?

7.1.2. Can a Preacher be part of the development of human society?

7.1.3. Is the preacher still in business or has he been replaced by other artists?

7.1.4. In the light of the prophecy that the world will be destroyed, is it worthwhile to work for development and healing of the earth?

7.1.5. Can homilies heal human society?

8. RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

A research of this magnitude must engage and employ both the qualitative for prose and narrative; and quantitative for statistical comparison charts. “Commonly used qualitative research methods include participant observation, direct observation, and unstructured or intensive interviewing. The term field research is often used to include all these methods... (Thus, we will be using field research and qualitative research somewhat interchangeably, as they are both used interchangeably in the research literature)” [Rubin& Babbie, 1993:358]. This method features prominently in social research in that it “helps us find rights, judge which sources of data are most valid for what we need to know, ask critical questions about public issues and reports, and derive our own conclusions with some degree of certainty. Even when we seek answers in other researchers’ findings, we will still need to conduct research of our own to assess which of the published reports to trust...Measuring the social world is a complex process. Social research is concerned with the things that are changing even as we measure them, and that change even more because we measure them. In fact, much of the time we study how things are in order to provide useful information that will help us change the things we are studying” (Lune, Pumar, Koppel, ix:2006).

The field of practical theology involves this: method as qualitative, includes case studies and narrative in nature and application. The show- case churches, namely Tshigubu church, Lutheran Church and Calvary Christian Church, all in the context of Venda, will be studied. “It is often not practical or possible to study an entire population, so it is necessary to make general findings based on a study of a subset of that population. A subset of a population is known as a sample” (Melville& Goddard 2001: 34). 10 members from each of these churches will be interviewed with a fair representation from all age groups and strands of leadership roles in each particular church. Also, the Preachers Billy Graham, Martyn Lloyd-Jones and John Chrysostom will feature in the study to show how preaching can be a developmental, transformative and therapeutic tool. Sampling is an empirical survey research method that depends upon a portion of the whole which is assumed to represent a population accurately. Therefore, the techniques by which the

sample is chosen are vital to the validity of the research findings. The research is properly located in the field of practical theology, as preaching, healing and change in people and about people is in this field.

The other method to be used in this research is quantitative, which will use numerical data to bring the study into the framework of comparison. These methods, which have been at the centre of debate since the 1980's are explained and will feature prominently in the research in order to help draw a comparison.

“Qualitative methods of research emphasize depth of understanding...attempt to tap the deeper meanings of human experience, and...tend to generate theoretically richer, observations which are not easily reduced to numbers... The Quantitative methods on the other hand emphasize the production of precise and generalize the statistical findings. When we want to verify whether a cause produces an effect, we are likely to use quantitative methods” Rubin and Babbie (1993:30).

The research will be carried out beginning with investigation from literary works in order to establish the historical basis of classical civilization. The main perspective will include assessing and inquiring the transformational, developmental and healing elements of human society. The feasibility framework is also to help locate the research in the context of the limitations and focus on the problem to be solved has to be narrowed. The focused scope is vast and narrowing it to specific related materials. A bridge will be created to link the topic to our present time. This will be in bringing the topic to be researched into the context of where the researcher can conduct research effectively. Venda is a land of kings and chiefs, and the Preacher of transformation, development and healing of human society cannot but rise from this context to find out whether this rural culture has any bearing on change, development and healing in improving the plight of the majority of our people. The research will be conducted in three church denominations, namely The Lutheran of the reformation church, one African Independent Church, (popularly known as Tshigubu Church) and Calvary Christian Church of the Charismatic Churches. These churches have been rooted in soils that have the spiritual, psychological, social anthropological, economic, agricultural, cultural, religious and political undertones that permeates the whole research ethos. A brief historical frame of reference about the

beginnings of these denominations will be stated and compared to the phenomenon under study. If the scope could widen it would take several decades to do the research. In narrowing the sampling is to enable the research to encompass manageable parameters. In order to have an accurate data collection, the interviews will be of an ethnographic probing type, and well-structured questionnaires will bring out information in the said churches. This will help to find out whether the phenomenon under inquiry has been neglected or enhanced by the theological persuasions of the denominations. The impact of the preaching on the mindset of the people is to be assessed on whether, it has a transformational, developmental and healing thrust.

9. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literary genre of some classic material:

9.1. Matthews & Platt (1995)

The western humanities .volume 1: Beginnings through the Renaissance

A history of civilization of classical times, placing the cultural achievements of western tradition in their historical context.

9.2. Geoffrey Hurd (1973)

Human societies an introduction to sociology

This is not a book about sociology; it is a book about human societies. It is, however, written by sociologist and presents a sociological way of looking at societies.

9.3. John Stambaugh and David Balch (1994)

The social world of the first Christians.

The Christian message, first preached in the villages of Galilee and Judea, then in the temple city of Jerusalem, spread during the period when the books of the New Testament were being composed throughout the Greco-Roman world.

9.4. John R. W. Stott. (1982), *I believe in Preaching*

He has tried to bring together several complementary aspects of the topic of preaching, which have often been kept apart.

9.5. Billy Graham (1956), *The secret of happiness*

He brings a preacher's perspective to the beatitudes, with a call to transformation and regeneration.

10. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data gathered through these multiple research methods namely:--literary works, interviews and questionnaires will be analyzed in the light of practical theology and related to how the church can apply the findings. The homiletic data in reference to transformation and development of human society will be deciphered and analyzed holistically. The analysis will be done inductively; the interpretations and reflections will be for the use and benefit of the wider body of Christ, the Church.

11. RESEARCH GAP

The research on development and transformation may have been attempted and done many times with emphasis on very complex theories that are dominated by academic jargon that seem to sideline the Preacher and rural environs . In this research, transformation, development and healing of human society from the perspective of the preacher, are looked at from a holistic approach that has a therapeutic ethos. The pulpit and the homilies that transform, develop, heal and are critical to society. The contribution of this research to the knowledge gap is not only in synergy of the topic to the preacher, but in pulpit being the tool to transformation, development and healing of the human society.

12. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The involvement of Practical theology in the investigation of the phenomenon of transformation, development and healing in a homiletical way, apparently is a significant synergy and contribution to the whole homiletical and theological field. The inquiry into some of main line, charismatic and African independent churches as to whether they have had divergent or similar persuasion in regard to the phenomenon is also a significant contribution. There have been researches that are focusing on individual components of the research topic but non coming from the synergy of the components as they relate to

preacher and his/her message with a perspective of theology that is focusing on transformation, development and healing of the human society.

13. AIM AND PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

13.1. The main aim and purpose of the research is to find out and establish whether Preachers who are based in the mainline churches, charismatic and African Independent churches have through their homilies impacted on transformation, development and healing of human society. Has the Preacher been an agent of change or has s/he outlived her/his usefulness in bringing healing to the human society?

13.2. The researcher shall try to show from literary works the story of ancient civilization's contribution to transformation, development and healing of human society.

13.3. The researcher shall aim at showing this from three different Churches streams of persuasion namely: one of the Reformation church, one of the charismatic and one African Independent church, is to find out their understanding regarding transformation, development and healing of the human society.

13.4. The researcher exploits the theological understanding of the phenomenon to enable the praxis of unleashing the Church's potential to preach effectively on the transformative, developmental and therapeutic homilies.

14. DELIMITATION AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research of this magnitude can take several years to undertake. Therefore one needs to set parameters and scope in order to give manageable limits. Apart from literary works which shall come from books, journals and electronic data, the research based on interviews and questionnaire shall be conducted within the northern part of South Africa in the Limpopo province. Since the researcher is acquainted with the southern Africa context, it shall enable him to overcome any hindrances which may be raised by suspicion and reserved attitudes which are given to an outsider. The materials engaged will have classical and current practical theology literature that has homiletical information, transformation, development and healing. There can be many dissertations

to be done from this study, but the focus will be on the practical realities that the interviewed and questionnaire returns from the key Preachers and ten of their membership in the three Churches, in the Thohoyandou and Sibasa area, Vhembe district in Venda. The historical accounting of facts, regarding the buildup of the transforming gospel and other literary works shall be a background to this enormous work of preaching. The theological streams of the East, west and Africa will meet in this dissertation, but will be limited to transformation, development and healing in the preaching environs.

15. DEFINITION OF TERMS

15.1. Charismatic.....Charisma divinely conferred power or talent; capacity to inspire followers with devotion and enthusiasm; hence Charismatic Greek, Kharisma (kharis, favour, grace).The churches that put emphasis on gifts of the Spirit.

15.2. Development.....to release the unfolded, latent potential

15.3. Healing..... Restore to health/

15.4. Homiletics..... The science of preaching

15.5. HomilySermon

15.6. Human Society.....social mode of life, the customs and organization of an Ordered community.

15.7. Kerugmatik.....the preaching ethos

15.8. Mainline..... The Older churches that where of the main stream Christianity, e.g. the reformation churches

15.9. Phenomenon..... the topic under research

15.10. Perspective point of view. The way or angle it is view from

15.11. Sola-scriptura..... only scripture has authority

15.12. Transformation..... Metamorphosed, change, transmutation

15.13 . Sola Fide..... Only faith is the basis of our salvation.

15.14. Sola Gracia.....Only grace that saves not human effort.

15.15. Sola Christus..... Only Christ is our salvation, no need for additions, He is sufficient for salvation.

15.16. Tshigubu.....Drum

16. OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

The findings in this dissertation are presented in **Seven Chapters**.

In Chapter one, deals with--the background of the study, theoretical framework, the conceptual framework, the development of civilization before the Greeks, preliminary suppositions, problem statement, and research questions, research methodology, literature review, data analysis and interpretation, significance of research, aim and purpose of the research, delimitation and limitations to the study and definition of terms.

In Chapter two, deals with the modus operandis, methodology which embraces the qualitative and quantitative and the summary thereof.

In Chapter three, deals with a brief overview of transformation and development through the ages.

In Chapter four, deals with the three preachers namely: John Chrysostom, Martyn Lloyd Jones and Billy Graham, their homilies and contributions to the phenomenon.

Chapter five, deals with the brief history of the three Churches: namely Tshigubu Church, Lutheran Church and Calvary Christian church and documented interviews presented and data analysis.

In Chapter six, deals with preaching, transformation, development and healing. It also deals with the Venda society in context covering the three major Royal houses namely: Ramabulana, Tshivhase, Mphaphuli and Bantustan policy and its effects in the perpetuation of underdevelopment.

In Chapter seven, deals with evaluation, recommendations and conclusion.