CHAPTER 3 INTERPRETATION:
BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL & THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, preaching in the interaction between church and culture is interpreted biblically, historically and theologically. Classic sources such as the biblical texts, church history (including the sayings of some classical church figures), and contemporary Christian thinkers' thoughts are used.

3.2 Biblical interpretation

The Bible does not give a direct definition of preaching but has more than enough material to help us understand the perceptions and practices of preaching in the specific time and culture. We then have to go the New Testament for there we can find the origin of Christian preaching. However, because Christian preaching has its root in the Old Testament (see K Runia 1983:21-24), we have to start our search with the Old Testament.

3.2.1 Preaching in the Old Testament

Throughout the biblical period, information was largely communicated orally rather than through the written word. The most common and fundamental revelatory act that the Bible attributes to God is His speaking.

3.2.1.1 God's word as His action

It is through His own sovereign speaking that heaven and earth were created: "And God said, 'Let there be light' and there was light" (Gen 1:3). The Psalmist calls all inhabitants of the earth to revere Him, "for He spoke and it came to be, He commanded, and it came forth" (Ps 33:8-9). In the story of redemption, the situation is not different. The story of Israel begins with the call of Abraham directly by God and with the promises God gives him. The special relationship of Israel as a nation rests from the first word on the Ten Commandments of this God (Deut 4:13; 10:4).[58]

When God acts in history, His activity never takes place without a revealing word. God always makes His purpose known beforehand, so that His people may know that it is He who acts. On this relationship between God's Word and His action, Greidanus (2001:2) gives a clear explanation by indicating the present tendency to separate words and action:

"For us today, words are often cheap. We think of words merely as something that is said. 'Action speaks louder than words.' we say, and thus we tend to separate words and action and ascribe greater value to action than to words. Although we would hesitate to call God's words 'cheap,' we often cheapen God's words by separating them from His deeds and thinking about His words merely as words *about* His deeds."

The Bible, however, does not separate God's word from His action. God's word is indeed His action in a sense that they accomplish His purpose. Whenever the prophets faithfully proclaimed the Word of God, that word was therefore not simply something that was said, information about God's will for the present or His plan for the future, but that word was an *action* of God. The Hebrew mind

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[58] See S Greidanus, *The modern preacher and the ancient text.* Reprinted (Leicester: Eerdmans, 2001). 1-10.

understood this relation more readily than we do, for the word *dabar* could mean "word" or "action" or both (cf Pieterse 1987:10; Greidanus 2001:3).

Isaiah has a clear point on this: "As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (55:10-11).

Ultimately, in this sense, it can be concluded that preaching of God's Word is making God's Action known and revealing His Purpose to people and to the world mediated by culture. It is easily found in the Old Testament that the story of God's revealing and redeeming activity in the history of His people has to be passed on, by word of mouth, from generation to generation. It was initiated by God's own words and performed mostly through His prophets.

Accordingly, many have concluded that the basic structure of God's revelation in the Bible is dialogic (see H J Eggold 1980:17-22; G W Swank 1981:27-34; J C Müller 1984:106-7 in Pieterse 1987:7; U Y Kim 1999:85; Greidanus 2001:201-3). God introduces Himself to Abraham, Moses, Ezekiel, and others in the Old Testament in a dialogue: God speaks, His prophet or people answer; God questions, His prophet or people being questions or raise objections; and in this interaction God reveals Himself and His will.

3.2.1.2 Old Testament prophets

In Old Testament culture, the prophets in particular proclaimed the word of God. The prophets were incisively aware of the fact that the word was God's Word, not theirs. God communicated His Word to them; He put His Words in their mouth (Jer 1:9); He inspired them. The New Testament confirms this view when

it declares, "Because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Pet 1:21 NRSV).

Concerning the authority of preaching, the same principle can be applied. Since Old Testament prophets proclaimed the Word of God, their preaching was authoritative. This relationship suggests that the authority of the prophets or preaching did not reside in their person, their calling, or their office; but that their authority was rather founded in the Word of God, they proclaimed (see J W Cox 1985:19-25; Greidanus 2001:2).

"This is what the LORD Almighty says: Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you; they fill you with false hopes. They speak visions from their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD" (Jer 23:16).

In proclaiming the Word of God, prophets were placed between God and His people. In Moses' case, for example, it is very clear, "At that time I stood between the LORD and you to declare to you the Word of the LORD" (Deut 5:5). And the people of Israel also understood how it worked: "Go near and listen to all that the LORD our God says. Then tell us whatever the LORD our God tells you. We will listen and obey" (5:27).

Of all the biblical genres of literature, narrative may be described as the central and foundational. In Old Testament preaching, narration is featured prominently. There are entire narrative books such as Jonah, Job, Nehemiah, Ruth and Esther. The Pentateuch also contains a lot of narrative. Besides, many sermons found in the Old Testament are presented in narrative form, for example, prophet Nathan's story to king David in 2 Sam 12 (U Y Kim 1999:85). In Old Testament narrative, dialogue is one of the main methods of characterization (Greidanus 2001:188-201). R Alter (1981:182) argues that Old Testament writers tell their tales with a special rhythm. They begin with narration and then move into dialogue.

A passage from the Book of Nehemiah, however, shows another aspect of preaching. When the people of Israel returned from their exile in Babylonia and rebuilt the gate and wall of the city of Jerusalem, Ezra was asked to bring and read the Book of the Law of Moses before them. After that, the Levites explained what Ezra read:

> "They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read. Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, 'this day is sacred to the LORD your God. Do not mourn or weep.' For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law" (Neh 8:8-9).

This shows the significant expository relationship between the Scriptures and preaching: the Scriptures became the very source of preaching (see M H Lee 1999:57). Greidanus (2001:5) also refers to it but with different emphasis. He distinguishes between the preaching of the prophets and that of the apostles. Aside from the contents, lies in the sources used or their preaching: "Where the prophets usually received the Word of the Lord via vision, dream, or audition, the apostles usually based their preaching on what they had *seen* and *heard* (1 John 1:3), the Word made flesh in fulfillment of the Scriptures. As such, their preaching moved toward exposition of the Scriptures."

I agree with the Greidanus. It is more usual in the case of the preaching of the New Testament apostles than in the case of the Old Testament prophets. This will be discussed in *3.2.3 Bible and culture.* At this stage of the argument one can say that the early church period seemed in transition from oral culture to literature. The fact that there are the passages like Nehemiah 8:8-9 that shows the Old Testament as the root of the expository preaching, should however not be neglected.

3.2.1.3 Old Testament preaching

The characteristics of Old Testament preaching can briefly be concluded with the following points: 1) *God's own revelatory action*: the preaching of God's Word is to make God's action known and to reveal His purpose to people and to the world mediated by culture. God Himself performed this revelatory action, known as *preaching* to us, by His own word before He used the prophets in the specific time and culture (Gen 1:3; Exo 3:4-14; Deut 4:13, 10:4; Ps 33:89). 2) *God's dialogue*: the basic structure of God's revelation in the Bible is dialogic and in this interaction, God reveals Himself and His will. 3) *God's word as His action*: accordingly, God's words are indeed His actions in the sense that they accomplish His purposes. The Bible does not separate God's Words from His actions. 4) *The word of God as the object of preaching and the subject of authority*: as Old Testament prophets were aware of, preaching is to proclaim God's Word, not the preacher's own. The authority of preaching or preachers comes from the very Word of God they preach. 5) *Exposition of scripture*: an expository relationship between the Scriptures and preaching emerges when the Scriptures become the source of preaching as Ezra and Paul used it (Neh 8:8-9; Act 17:2-3).

3.2.2 Preaching in the New Testament

The astonishing aspect of New Testament revelation is that God sent his own Son into the human culture. In the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God laid the foundation for the salvation of all people, but this salvific event had to be proclaimed in order to become effective. The Word of God speaks through preaching and it evokes faith (cf Pieterse 1987:9; D Buttrick 1994:33-36; Greidanus 2001:3). There is thus the necessity of preaching. It is crystal clear in Paul's exhortation:

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they

believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?" (Rom 10:13-15a)

Before moving on to New Testament apostles who were sent to preach the Word of God, we need to first look at some aspects of preaching in the ancient Jewish synagogue in order to find if there is any cultural aspect between the Christian preaching and synagogue preaching.

3.2.2.1 Preaching in the synagogue

Little is known about the earliest history of the synagogue, its service, and the preaching that occurred there. The current tendency of scholars is to date the origin of synagogues more recently than was done in the past.[59] Instead of the exile, the first or second century BC is now considered the time when synagogues emerged (Willimon & Lischer 1995:186).

Some of the earliest evidence about synagogue service and preaching occurs in New Testament passages such as Lk 4:16-21 and Act 13:15-16. Both of these passages show that after readings from the Torah and Haftarot (the Law and its completion on the Prophets, the first two divisions of the Hebrew canon) there could be exposition on one or both[60] passages that would apply their preaching to the lives of the people. Here already then is what has been the most distinctive characteristic of Christian preaching through the ages: the exposition and application of biblical texts (see Pieterse 1987:9; Willimon & Lischer 1995:186; Greidanus 2001:5-6).

Such preaching has had its history. It began as an instructive exposition. When Ezra read the Law in the Book of Nehemiah 8, he was assisted by the Levites who taught the people. For a long time there was no distinction between

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[59] A B Du Toit, for example, sees it in the exile (1993:49; 1998:491).
[60] These synagogues served primarily as places for the reading of the Law, but the Law and the Prophets were both read on the Sabbath day (see Willimon & Lischer 1995:186; Kurewa

preaching and teaching; teaching was the usual term in the synagogue, used also to describe Jesus' proclamation. He *taught* in the synagogue (Mk 1:21) and sat down on the mountain and *taught* them (Mt 5:1-2).[61]

Out of this teaching in the synagogue there arose by degrees the rich expository literature that we know as the Targum, the Midrash, and the Haggadah. In doing so for years, the substance of the tradition grew more than that of the scriptures in preaching. That was the situation of the Jewish religion just before Jesus Christ came. These were the traditions Jesus rebuked in Mk 7:8-9 (cf S K Jung 1993:70):

"You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men… You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!"

Preaching was not restricted to an ordained class in the synagogue and any competent person such as a lay teacher or even a travelling stranger could preach if they had the capacity for it (see S K Jung 1993:69; Norrington 1996:4). Paul's preaching in the synagogue (Act 9:20, 13:15) was able to happen in this background:[62]

"At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God… After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the synagogue rulers sent word to them, saying, 'Brothers, if you have a message of encouragement for the people, please speak.'"

2000:35).

[61] Concerning the separation issue between preaching and teaching, see my discussion later in this Chapter (3.4.2.2.2 Definition of Preaching). For specific emphasis on teaching aspect of preaching, however, see James I H McDonald, *Kerygma and Didache* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1980) and David C S Lee, *The preaching as a teaching event*. PhD. Diss. University of Pretoria. 2003.

[62] For a general but deep search for synagogue, see Lee I Levine (ed), *The synagogue in late antiquity* (Philadelphia: The American School of Oriental Research, 1987) as a centennial publication of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

3.2.2.2 New Testament apostles

This section (3.2.2 *Preaching in the New Testament*), started with an emphasis on the new element of New Testament revelation, in which we can find in Jesus Christ, as the Book of Hebrews indicates:

> "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe" (1:1-2).

Jesus began his ministry by preaching:

> "After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 'The time has come,' he said. 'The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!'" (Mk 1:14-5)

Jesus, who was sent from God, appointed the twelve apostles and sent them to preach as well:

> "He appointed twelve--designating them apostles--that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach (Mk 3:14)… Calling the Twelve to him, he sent them out two by two and gave them authority over evil spirits… They went out and preached that people should repent." (6:7,12).

Despite the fact that they were sent by Jesus Christ, ultimately the apostles represented God the Father as they proclaimed His Word:

> "He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me" (Mt 10:40).

Besides, the apostles were aware of that they preached on behalf of God and therefore indeed proclaimed the very Word of God just like Old Testament prophets. Greidanus (2001:5) picks up the best example among the New Testament passages in 1 Thess 2:13:

> "And we also thank God continually because, when you received the Word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the Word of God, which is at work in you who believe."

Here one thinks (as many homileticians thought) of the images of a preacher so far i.e., herald, ambassador, pastor, and witness. At this stage, a preacher can merely be defined as *one who is sent*. In my opinion, this definition is good enough to explain what has been addressed. This point will be theologically approached later in the study (under *3.4.2.3.3 The contemporary preacher and culture)*.

I have found from the above discussion some interesting similarities between the preaching of the prophets and that of the apostles: both represented God, both proclaimed His Word, both were aware of God's Word to be God's action, both preached on what they had seen and heard, and both preached to people in the specific period and culture. Greidanus (2001:5) notes in the fourth aspect a difference between the preaching of the prophets and that of the apostles because he is more concerned with the source of preaching they use, than the nature of the source. He states: "Where the prophets usually received the word of the Lord via vision, dream, or audition, the apostles usually based their preaching on what they had seen and heard."

There is, however, no difference in nature between the sources they used because visions, dreams and auditions were the mediums to convey what the prophets had seen and heard from God. In only one condition their preaching,

both of the prophets and apostles, moved toward an exposition of the Scriptures: that is when the Scriptures become the source of preaching as Ezra and Paul did (Neh 8:8-9; Act 17:2-3).

3.2.2.3 New Testament preaching

3.2.2.3.1 The necessity and purpose of preaching

Preaching is as necessary for the Christian faith as breathing is for the human life. There is no faith without the preaching of the gospel as can be seen in the discussed of the New Testament passage (Rom 10:13-15a) earlier in 3.2.2. For this reason the New Testament does not make any differentiation in principle between missionary (conversion) preaching and congregational preaching (Runia 1983:24). In this regard, the purpose of preaching is concerned not only with the evoking of faith, but also with building up in the implications of faith for one's whole life. In other words, preaching aims not only to change certain things, such as belief, behavior and belonging, but also to equip the congregation for the church of God and Kingdom of God (cf Pieterse 1987:11).

3.2.2.3.2 Dialogical preaching

The origin of Christian preaching that we can find in the New Testament shows something of the dialogical character of preaching. Scholars fully agree that the basic structure of God's revelation in the Bible, not just in the New Testament, is dialogical (see G W Swank 1981:27-34; J C Müller 1984:106-7 in Pieterse 1987:7; U Y Kim 1999:85; Greidanus 2001:201-3; B A Müller 2002:206-10). Jesus Christ's ministry is filled with dialogues in which he asks questions and draws answers to questions. Jesus forces no one, but in a gentle but persuading way invites people to follow him. Paul's preaching was too mainly dialogical, that is, an interaction in which the hearers asked questions, discussion arose and even arguments could follow.

The origin of preaching demonstrates thus the dialogic foundation of preaching. On this foundation preaching was continued according to the dialogic nature of the revelation (J C Müller 1984:106-7 in Pieterse 1987:7; see 2001:21, 85-6). B A Müller (2002:209) states that preaching is a discourse of the biblical text with the human context. Pieterse (2001:85) follows the same direction but in emphasizing more personal aspects of communication between the congregation and preacher in preaching. I would say, therefore, that preaching should be surrounded by dialogue between the text, preacher, congregation and culture of congregation (cf D C S Lee 2003:iii).[63]

3.2.2.3.3 Inspired preaching

The New Testament apostles mainly preached on Old Testament passages and the gospel based on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (cf M H Lee 1999:57). From the letters of Paul, for example, it is obvious that his preaching was not only an exposition of the Old Testament Scriptures but also a transmission of New Testament traditions, that is, on the life and ministry of Jesus Christ:

> "Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you… For *what I received* I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins *according to the Scriptures*, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day *according to the Scriptures*, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve" (1 Cor 15:1-5).

Whether the apostles preached the fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures or delivered eyewitness accounts or New Testament traditions, their preaching was inspired by the same Spirit who had earlier inspired the Old Testament prophets (Greidanus 2001:6).

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[63] Although he does not highlight preacher and culture, David C S Lee also emphasizes the

"This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words" (1 Cor 2:13).

"By the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ" (Rom 15:19).

The work of the Spirit cannot be examined. All we can do thus is to confess our faith that the Spirit is at work in preaching. Accordingly, preaching can be described in this way: the action of preaching takes place to evoke and to strengthen faith in the triune God, Father, Son and Spirit (cf Runia 1983:24; J C Müller 1984:79 in Pieterse 1987:11; D Buttrick 1994:33-36; Greidanus 2001:3). In other words, preaching is a sign of the presence of the Spirit (Isa 61:1-4; R Allen 1998:12). The preacher cannot bring this work of faith but God Himself does this work through His Word and His Spirit.

3.2.2.3.4 Christ centered preaching

It has been customary for the history of preaching not to go further back than the words spoken by Jesus himself. This may be legitimate as far as the Christian proclamation is essentially the message concerning Jesus Christ and God's action in Him, the message of the fulfillment of the gospel. This emphasis, however, seems to shorten the perspective and cut the lines of communication between the Old Testament and the New, because many have been opposed to Christ centered preaching from the Old Testament because it resulted in any kind of christological interpretation.

R N Whybray (1987:172), for example, argues that the Old Testament can only be properly understood if it is studied independently. Accordingly, E Achtemeier

same three factors such as the text, congregation, and the context of congregation.

(1989:56; 1992:50) insists that apart from the New Testament, the Old Testament does not belong to the Christian church: it is not our book, nor a revelation spoken to us, but rather it is directed to Israel. However, as Greidanus (1999:33-39, 46-53) correctly argues against these objections of preaching Christ from the Old Testament, I believe there is continuity between the Old Testament and the New. Jesus Christ is the link between the two.

3.2.2.3.5 Biblical preaching

Since the Bible is the normative source of revelation for contemporary preachers, they should bind themselves to the Scripture if they want to preach the Word of God. In other words, they are to preach biblically. Accordingly, Leander Keck (1978:106) gives two elements that we preachers need to consider: "Preaching is truly biblical when 1) the Bible dominates the content of preaching and when 2) the role of preaching is comparable to that of the text. In other words, preaching is biblical when it imparts a Bible-shaped word in a Bible-like way" (see D L Larsen 1999:22-34).

3.2.2.3.6 Expository preaching

In order to be faithful to the origin of faith and to preach the content of the Scripture (or biblical preaching), preaching has to consist of exposition and application. This is the basic structure of Scriptural preaching (Pieterse 1987:9). Jesus *explains* the words of Moses and all the prophets that refer to him to the disciples on the way to Emmaus (Lk 24:27). Philip *expounds* the words of Isaiah the prophet, concerning Jesus, to the Ethiopian eunuch, and *applies* them to him, evoking his faith (Act 8:26-39). In the synagogue, Paul also *reasons* with the Jews from the Scriptures to *explain* and *prove* that Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead (Act 17:2-3). In the preaching of the apostles, the same pattern is found throughout the New Testament (cf Pieterse 1987:10; M H Lee 1999:57; see H W Robinson 2001:17-32).

3.2.3 Summary: preaching and culture in the Bible

Today we hear a great deal about the importance of culture in the preaching of the gospel. Certainly much damage can come to the mission of the church if cultural factors are ignored. Although culture is not an explicit subject of the Bible, biblical studies have made it clear that human cultures have played a far more significant role in biblical history (cf S A Kumar 1980:33). In other words, God's self-disclosure did not occur in a cultural vacuum. In the Old Testament, on the one hand, it seems clear that God indeed spoke through Moses and the subsequent prophets and biblical writers in the context of the surrounding cultures. He was pleased to demonstrate Himself to the nations through. To this end, He dwelt within Israel, extended His revelation to them, and gave them a land in which they could developed a culture in which all aspects of society, economics, and politics would demonstrate His will and purpose (cf W A VanGemeren 2001:78).

On the other hand, many agree that two factors, namely Judaism and Hellenism culture, mainly influenced the development of the Christian preaching (O C Edwards Jr 1995:184-87; R E Osborn 1999:71; J W Z Kurewa 2000:34-6). Besides, according to H Y Gamble (1995:28-32), the two media of oral tradition and literary culture coexisted and interacted. In other words, some Christian traditions were orally transmitted during a period. During that same period Christians were deeply and continuously engaged with literature (:23-4). These cultural context of preaching not only appeared both in the synagogue and in the New Testament, but also influenced both synagogue practices and the New Testament writing.

3.3 Historical interpretation

In this section, a historical survey is done in an attempt to the interpret preaching in the interaction between church and culture. This investigation

should present a certain historical point of view on the specific subject we concern. O C Edwards Jr (1995:184-227) summarizes the history of preaching from the early church to the modern era. The historical interpretation relies on his period, that is the early church, the middle ages, the reformation, the modern era 1 and the modern era 2. The church figures featured here are selected based on their significant contributions to the development and history of Christian preaching.

3.3.1 The early church

The history of Christian preaching is as old as the history of the Christian church. J W Z Kurewa (2000:34-6) rightly argues that the science of homiletics had certain historical antecedents, i.e., Hebrew preaching and ancient rhetoric. O C Edwards Jr (1995:184-87) too values rightly the ancient Jewish synagogue and Greco Roman rhetoric as the main impact of Christian preaching. In relation to this, R E Osborn (1999:71) on large scale clearly points out the influence of Hellenistic culture and Judaism:

> As background and context for the emergence of Christianity as a universal faith, it has to be pointed out that Judaism and Hellenistic culture (of which it was an integral part), exercised, from the very beginning profound influence on the development of the church's preaching

If we are going to understand and appreciate the function that preaching has practiced in both the history of the church and the life of Christendom, homiletics need to go back to that cultural background of preaching in the early church. I will therefore consider the two factors, as the consensus among the scholars, which influence the development and history of preaching, and analyze some aspects of them below. In this regard, I will not repeat something related to the Old Testament, the New Testament and the synagogue that had already been discussed:

3.3.1.1 Preaching in Judaism during the Hellenistic era: Prophecy to preaching

For the history of preaching, developments in Judaism during the Hellenistic era are of monumental importance for that majestic faith and for Christianity as well (Osborn 1999:178). From the beginning, the Word of God was communicated to believers within the Christian gathering. This meets the broad and functional definition of preaching proposed at the beginning of this work, even though it was not preaching as we would now recognize it. Rather than scriptural preaching, prophecy would appear to have been the most primitive form of Christian communication. This includes true prophecy, and the expansion or application of prophetic messages, which might itself be seen as an inspired speech-activity (Stewart-Sykes 2001:270).

The need for the testing of prophetic messages meant that from an early period both prophecy and the testing of prophecy were bound up to the use of the Scripture. Scripture could provide some external basis for the critical examination of prophecy. In this process, Scripture came to replace the living voice, and the process of expansion and application was applied to the written word. As a result, Scripture started to dominate prophecy to such an extent that the prophetic voice disappeared and was replaced by systematic communication through the reading and interpretation of Scripture. This took place partly under the influence of preaching in the synagogue, and partly as the result of the models available for delivery and discussion within schools, as the churches formed themselves along these essentially scholastic lines (:270-1).

Having suggested that Christian preaching is a product of the late first century, even though the root of it could be found in the Old Testament, the fact that there is not much mention of preaching in the literature of the early centuries should not be taken to imply that preaching did not happen. Bradshaw (1992:76-7) rightly remind us that the fact that something is mentioned more

often means that it is more unusual than common, and that the common and familiar is often passed over in silence. If so, one can then conclude that preaching in that early period was such a normal activity that it hardly needed to be mentioned.

3.3.1.2 Preaching in Hellenism: Preaching and oratory

The Greco-Roman world produced and disseminated the culture of Hellenism, which within Christianity arose and spread. In that pre-technological society, oratory was the primary mode of public communication and the orator was the dominant figure. Preaching thus became the primary medium for communicating the Christian gospel and the Christian preachers were treated as the orators were (Osborn 1999:71-2). The desire for skill in oratory had called forth the discipline of rhetoric with its precise analysis and program for producing effective public address.

According to Stanfield (Turnbull 1967:50), the development of the theory of rhetoric in the Greco-Roman world started with Corax and his pupil, who first recorded what became known as the principles of rhetoric in 465 BC. But the study of such rhetorical principles found their greatest effectiveness in Greco-Roman culture, culminating in the writings of Aristotle, 384-322 BC; the Latin rhetoric of Cicero, 106-43 BC; and Quintilian, AD 35-95 (see Osborn 1999:51-7).

Accordingly, as Osborn (1999:179) rightly points out, in the great Jewish communities of Alexandria, Antioch, and Rome, openness to intellectual and aesthetic movements among the Gentiles allowed a two-way traffic of the spirit. In such participation and sensitivity with their culture, the early preachers developed methods of biblical exegesis designed both to deal seriously with the text and the sacred history it narrated, and address the new situation of the hearers. In other words, the establishment of the Christian preaching form as a face-to-face engagement between preacher and people with the word of

Scripture was in quest of light on their particular situation and need. This would profoundly affect the subsequent history of preaching. For example, the preachers engaged the high culture of classical antiquity in profoundly important ways: they challenged its idolatry, superstition, immorality, and reliance on wealth and power. They also addressed its spiritual need with their gospel (:320-1).

However, the preachers' appropriation and adaptation of classical rhetoric as the instrument of proclamation on a more subtle level, tended to shift the emphasis in preaching from proclamation to demonstration, too often subtly transmuting the Scripture from witness to proof-text. Furthermore, the more serious fault lay in the tendency of self conscious rhetorical speakers to assume an ethos befitting the orator as master of the assembly, the self-image of one in a position of importance "talking down" to lesser folk. In doing so, hearers unintentionally fell into inferiority and preaching became lectures (:426-7). Since then, this happens even today.[64]

In conclusion, both the culture of Judaism and that of Hellenism shaped the understanding and practice of preaching in the early church. We shall see how some of the preachers used both traditions or learned more on one than the other. However, there is no way that a preacher can ignore either one altogether. I cannot also ignore the fact that, despite the disadvantages one may find in the history of Christian church, most of the Christian preachers in

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[64] We call the first preachers in the early church the church fathers. In using the Hellenistic philosophy and rhetoric, they were different. For example, John Chrysostom (the greatest pulpit orator of the Greek church, who preached for twelve years in the Cathedral in Antioch); Clement of Alexandria (who was the teacher of Origen), and Augustine (the first person who wrote on the subject of homiletics - *On Christian doctrine*), actively adapted the rhetoric and Hellenistic philosophy such as Stoicism, while the Latin father and North African typical preacher, Tertulian, rejected them. Accordingly, Augustine stresses that the wise speaker is greater than the orator and seek God's guidance in prayer so that he or she receives the message from above (see Stott 1982:16-21; S K Jung 1993: 92-107; Willimon & Lischer 1995: 187-91; Kurewa 2000: 43-55). In falling short of inclusiveness that title obscures the significant contribution of women to the ministry of the word in the early days of the faith and the firm fidelity of many of them in going to death rather than deny their Lord. Along with the "fathers", there were mothers of the church as well, spiritual ancestors of all subsequent generations of believers.

both the eastern and western parts of the Roman Empire benefited from both Judaism and Hellenism.

3.3.2 The Middle Ages

The Middle Ages used to be called the "Dark Ages" in the church history. It was not much different in the history of preaching because the practice and the content of preaching declined in the Middle Ages for almost six hundred years, from the resignation of the last Roman emperor in the West in AD 476, to the coming of the Friars in the eleventh century.[65] The concept of the Dark Ages, however, is now being discarded by historians of the Middle Ages because of the great cultural vitality of the period (Willimon & Lischer 1995:195) and because of the idea that we should enable scholars to regard issues of the specific era more objectively and positively (Kurewa 2000:57).

In this study, the the Middle Ages is defined a period that extends from AD 430, the death date of Augustine, bishop of Hippo, to the year 1517, when Martin Luther posted his theses.

3.3.2.1 The 5th-11th centuries

The centuries from 476 to 1100 are roughly considered as the Dark Ages. It was the time of the "barbarian invasions." The Goths and Vandals, Huns and Lombards invaded the ancient Roman Empire to the extent that the emperor surrendered in AD 476 (Dargan 1968:106). By AD 651 the Arabs had conquered Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, and Egypt. They took Carthage in AD 697, and overran most of Spain by AD 715 (Latourette 1953:273). The Danes sacked Hamburg, Paris, and the eastern coast of England, ransacking the monasteries in 9th to 11th centuries (Bainton 1964:162).

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[65] Charles Smyth (1940:13) rightly comments on this: "the age of preaching dates from the coming of the Friars… and the history of pulpit as we know it begins with the preaching friars. They met and stimulated a growing popular demand for sermons. They revolutionized the

As a result, the Roman Empire and the Greco-Roman cultures were in decline. The decline of the Roman Empire and its culture inevitably affected the life of the church. Since the preaching of the Western church had been so intimately connected with Roman culture (as can be noticed in the previous section), no one had the confidence any longer to compose entirely new sermons, but rather merely to translate or copy sermons of the Fathers and read them to the congregation (Brilioth 1965:70; Willimon & Lischer 1995:195).

It is not an ethical question here of criticizing the mere translation or copying of sermons. Although copying someone's sermon is serious problem on today's pulpit, as far as I am concerned, in the situation of those early days in the history of preaching, it would be acceptable. In fact, some of the popular sermons were preached even in the vernacular languages in countries like Switzerland, England and France (Dargan 1968:136). However, the problem that needs to be pointed out here is that, as the Frankish bishops had realized, such sermons were not reaching the people (Brilioth 1965:71). Moreover, in the 6th century, there was no longer even encouragement for the practice of reading the Scripturee (Jung 1993:109). Preaching in the 7th and 8th centuries would be rated lower than at any previous time (Dargan 1968:137). It thus deserved to be called the Dark Ages.

3.3.2.2 The 12th-15th centuries

Despite these dark facts above, however, as Kurewa (2000:63-65) argues very clearly, positive developments took place in preaching in the twelfth through the fifteenth centuries. These developments are as follows:

First, there was a new desire and high regard for preaching in the life of the church during the time. People thus showed some respect and appreciation for the message of a preacher like Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153). His

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technique. They magnified the office."

reputation as a spiritual teacher grew until he was known all over Europe as a mystic, a man of dedication, and, at the same time, a man of action. Bernard was especially known for his love for Christ, and was an eloquent and persuasive preacher. Almost two thirds of the 3,500 pages of his work consist of preaching material (see Latourette 1953:425; Willimon & Lischer 1995:198).

Second, the Crusades brought a good cause for preaching. Like the christological controversies in the third and fourth centuries, the Crusades stimulated preaching in the life of the church. The conception of relics and the possibility of going on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land had tremendous appeal for the believers of the time (see Walker 1959:219).

Third, the development of scholastic theology was set in motion in the universities. As universities began to emerge with theology as the queen of all the sciences, Aristotle's logic became a factor in preaching and encouraged a new need for coherence and clarity. Such intellectual sermons were delivered at universities like Oxford and Paris in Latin (see Brilioth 1965:77).

Fourth, the coming of the Friars was one of the greatest events of the time in terms of preaching. The mendicant Friars emerged during a time of rapid growth of the cities and towns of Europe. While earlier monasteries had chosen to hide away from the society, the Friars went to the growing urban areas and preached the gospel to the people. The two largest orders of Friars, the Franciscans and the Dominicans, reflect the personalities of their founders. For example, preaching was at the center of Dominic's mission from the very beginning, but for the Francis it was only one apostolic activity among many. Very quickly, however, as both grew and reached the same conclusion that effective preaching was necessary, they sought the education in that purpose (see Latourette 1953:457; Brilioth 1965:94; Willimon & Lischer 1995:199).

Because of such effort, they developed the first real homiletical form that was not just a verse-by-verse comment on a passage that had been common of the

time. A manuscript from the time shows the development of a sermon in the branching of a tree. Begun with a single verse of the Bible, the text or theme of the sermon was usually divided into three points, and these were subdivided into three sub-points, including illustration by *exempla,* which is the typical sermon form that preachers even apply today. Later scholars have named this type of sermon a scholastic or thematic sermon (see Willimon & Lischer 1995:199-200).

For example, John Wycliff (1329-1384), the keen intellect, whose entire life was associated with Oxford University, and John Hus (1373-1415), the dean of Prague University and leader of the movement in Czechoslovakia were such figures. With these two, Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498) was one of the key figures before the Reformation. All their preaching was critical of the laxity of the church hierarchy. Savonarola's preaching was a verse-by-verse exegesis of passages taken continuously from the same biblical book, rather than being in the same thematic pattern as the other. These three, Wycliff, Hus and Savonarola, are often regarded as the precursors of the Reformation (see Stott 1982:22-23; Jung 1993: 119-26; Willimon & Lischer 1995:201-3).

3.3.3 The Reformation

There were many other notable preachers in the church, who already shared and preached Reformation ideas, especially in their search for renewal in the preaching of the gospel in all over the Europe. [66] The Reformation was possible not only because of the outstanding work of the key reformers like Martin Luther (1483-1546) or John Calvin (1509-1564) but also because of the common ground that they widely shared and practiced during the period.

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[66] They were indeed spread all over Europe. One thinks here of Jacues Le Fevre and Francis Lambert in France, Guillaume Farel and Ulrich Zwingli in Switzerland, Juan de Avila and Dr Egidio in Spain, John Mathesius and Paul Spretter in Germany, Jan Arends and Peter Gabriel in the Netherlands, Thomas Cramer and William Tyndale in England, and John Knox in Scotland (See for the detail Dargan 1968:433-64).

In the light of this background, only the interaction between culture and preaching in the German Reformation and two reformers, Luther and Calvin, will be discussed here. One reason for this is that the interaction of all reformers in all countries in Europe proved difficult to trace. In addition, the point of origin in most Reformation histories is Luther and his church in the specific culture. Calvin will nevertheless be included in this discussion.

3.3.3.1 Religious culture on the eve of the Reformation

In Germany, Catholicism of the medieval era was suffering from a lack of theological clarity. The schools of scholastic thought had multiplied throughout the Middle Ages with the result that there was considerable complexity and confusion on the eve of the Reformation (McGrath 1993:9-28). Many agree with McGrath, especially on the point that there was still no definitive understanding of the doctrine of salvation (Ozment 1980:22-42; Pelikan 1984:10-58). C S Dixon (2002:37-8) gives a clear picture of that:

> To be a member of the church, one had to be baptized into the church. To receive the grace of God, one had to pay witness to a prescribed and ritualized plan of salvation. Theologians imagined the Catholic community as a unified whole, a single church of believers which found the same purpose and meaning in its relationship to the divine. All members of the church thus had to observe the official declarations of faith. In practice, this meant that the believers had to be familiar with the vague definitions of the faith as captured in the creeds. Beyond this, the average member probably knew little more than what was related through litany, ceremony and observance as defined by the church authorities.

Medieval religious culture in Germany, probably in other countries in Europe, was thus a synthesis of abstract theory and ritual praxis. Besides, according to Dixon (2002:42), the clergy neglected the welfare of their flocks. Despite the

declared weaknesses of the institution and its servants, however, the Roman Catholic doctrine of salvation remained central to Christian belief in the Middle Ages. In addition, religious culture had rarely been more attached to the church than in the fifteenth century. As Dixon (ibid) explains, perhaps it was this turn towards the heart of religion, rather than a turn away from it, that explains the resonance of the evangelical movement that the Reformation provided.

3.3.3.2 Preaching and culture in the Reformation

This was not an age of mass literacy, and comparatively few people had the facility or the opportunity to work through a published text. Most parishioners therefore probably required a sermon or reading from the pulpit in order to learn the essentials of the Christian faith. As a result, there was scope for individual interpretation as each preacher emphasized certain aspects or themes. However, this does not necessarily mean that the character of the movement varied in its essentials from town to town. For example, according to the historian Bernd Moeller (1999:52), the preaching in the towns was marked by a fairly consistent corpus of "uniform teachings and maxims, uniform condemnations and recommendations" derived from the teaching of Martin Luther. The preachers shared the same sense and same conviction, just as Luther had written. Reformation ideas were spread in this way by preaching.

Scripture was the only guide, and it was no longer locked up in the confinement created by the medieval church, but rather revealed to all. Christ's message of salvation was meant for everyone, from even the least polished, least accomplished peasant to the most distinguished (Moeller & Stackmann 1996:315 in Dixon 2002:61). The early evangelical preaching also spoke of Luther's doctrine of justification through faith alone. By preaching, the early Reformation spread the central beliefs of the evangelical faith as Luther first popularized it.

There was another cultural instrument that was used for spreading the Reformation ideas: that is the pamphlet. As a printed image, the woodcut or pamphlet illustration was originally used for helping the illiterate who were reliant on the spoken word to understand the message well. The early reformation preachers conveyed messages in the same way that contemporary preachers use the imaginary or visionary words or stories. Printing, a German invention, had been evolving for over half a century, and as such, the reformers had the advantage of a cultural matrix already in place when they began to broadcast their message. It was, however, as Dixon (2002:67) maintains, a mutually beneficial relationship. Books were expensive objects at the time and the buying public made up a very small proportion of the population. It did not indeed extend beyond the educated elite.

With the Reformation, however, the printing industry was completely transformed. The majority of publications were now written in the vernacular, thus increasing the possible readership many times, while the books themselves were reduced in cost. Pamphlets became one of the main heralds of the Reformation movement due to their small, cheap and light nature that poured from the German presses (see B Cummings 2002:38-46). No other reformer in Germany used the printed word to better effect than Martin Luther. Accordingly, B Cummings (2002:57-68) calls Luther the reader and defines the Reformation as that of the reader. He was one of the first literary celebrities the world has ever known, and he was himself a creation of the press (Dixon 2002:69).

In conclusion, three important points have to be made: The first point is, in accordance with R Scribner (1981:2), that printing was in fact an addition and not a replacement for, oral communication. The second point relates to the first: there was the primacy of preaching over the pamphlet as decisive medium (B Moeller 1983:707-10 in S Ozment 1989:45). The third point is that the laity turned to the Reformation because it flattered them and placed their spiritual destinies in their own hands. Some agree and stress that from being hesitant

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trespassers on the margins of the spiritual domain, laymen were later actually invited to judge issues at the very heart of their dealings with the Almighty, and by clerics (see Cameron 1991; Dixon 2002). Others place more emphasis on the role of the so-called cultured, the literate, the learned and the reader (see Ozment 1989; Cummings 2002).

3.3.3.3 Preaching of the reformers

3.3.3.3.1 Martin Luther's preaching

First, *on the concept of preaching*, Luther considered preaching to be the most crucial task in the church and even in the world. For him preaching was the medium of salvation because it was not a mere human activity but the very Word of God proclaiming itself through the preacher. This does not mean that the human voice of the preacher is unimportant, however, because the word of preaching is essentially an oral encounter with God (Willimon & Lischer 204). Luther was also convinced of the notion that that preaching was an eschatological struggle through which Christ would save individuals. Therefore, every sermon should contain both law and gospel because it is the hearing of the law that ultimately leads people to know their need for the gospel and opens them up to hear its word of grace and forgiveness. Luther believed it was the Holy Spirit who allowed or challenged people to hear that word and to be saved by it.[67]

Second, *the exposition of preaching*, is related to Luther's concept of the Scripture. For him, the whole Scripture is about Christ and that was true of both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The purpose of the Bible therefore was to reveal Christ as the Word of God. Discovering that proclamation in any passage, then, would be the key to biblical interpretation.

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[67] See for more on the Spirit's role in preaching C K Chung, *Preaching as a pneumatological*

Third, *on the form of preaching*, it can be pointed out that although Luther often wrote out his sermons, he preached in a typical impromptu style. Although it was time that classical rhetoric was re-emphasized and strongly influenced to public speaking (including preaching by the renaissance culture), the important factors in his delivery were simplicity and clarity. He also used conversational language for even children to understand his preaching (Kurewa 2000:69). Accordingly, Edwards Jr (Willimon & Lischer 205-6) explains that polished rhetorical forms reflecting humanistic consciousness and taste, obscured those eschatological battles waged in conversational language that were the mark of Luther's preaching.

As can be observed from the discussion above, Luther probably concerned the majority of people who were illiterate at his time.

3.3.3.3.2 John Calvin's preaching

- *God and preaching:*

Since the human mind was weak to understand God and His relationship towards human beings, the only solution for Calvin was that human beings would turn to God and be taught by Him. This is what happens in Holy Scripture, which discloses to us the nature of God and ourselves (Niesel 1956: 23-4). This is what happens in preaching also, when the Holy Spirit makes it the Word of God. Even so, the Spirit will not through preaching say anything that has not already been said in the Scripture. Thus, preaching may be said to be the Word of God only in the sense that it expounds and interprets the Bible and proclaims the Word of God. This is what the preacher is called to do (Willimon & Lischer 208).

- *Church ministry and preaching:*

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communication process, PhD Thesis. University of Stellenbosch. 1995.

Calvin is said to have understood his ministry in the light of Ephesians 4:11-13. Whether that was the case or not, at least Calvin is said to have held the view "that the church is composed of God's elect and that there are properly four classes of ecclesiastical officers, namely, pastors, teachers, elders, and deacons" (Burkil 1971:252). Calvin himself was the leading pastor and viewed his primary responsibility in the church as preaching the Word of God and teaching believers in wholesome doctrine (Parker 1954:80). For him, preaching was understood as the constituting essential of the ministry (Willimon & Lischer 208).

- *The form of preaching:*

Calvin preached steadily and sequential through book after book and expounded it passage by passage, verse by verse, day after day, until he reached the end. By handling a number of passages at the same time, he would preach on a number of ideas at the same time (Parker 1954:30). He preached impromptu, which always makes for better oral than written communication even though he was under the influence of humanists such as Erasmus (Willimon & Lischer 208). In this regard, like Luther, Calvin had a good understanding of his people and culture.

In conclusion, scholars have long considered the Reformation a major turning point in western history. This is quite often described as the turn towards modernity. The confessional age is seen as the point of division between the stagnant world of medieval Europe and the dynamism of the modern era (see Dulmen 1999:193-219).

3.3.4 The modern era 1 (pre World War II)

3.3.4.1 Cultural shift and preaching

There was a moment in history that the whole world suddenly awakened to a new thought. One such thing happened in Europe in the late seventeenth century. After the Reformation, there was the war of religion that devastated the whole of Europe and resulted in people having to decide whether they would live under any religious system or none rather than to continue in destruction. At the same time, there were the scientific experiments as attempted by scientists like James Watt (1736-1819) and Issac Newton (1642-1727) and produced extraordinary results. The mercantile class was emerging and took the priority over the noble and royal classes. Philosophers such as Francis Bacon (1561-1626), Baruch Spinoza (1632-77) and Rene Descartes (1596-1650) had stopped to presuppose revelation and had begun to rely on human experience and reason alone. The culture of Christendom that was initiated with the conversion of Constantine had apparently faded away (Willimon & Lischer 212-4).

These shifts, in such period of raging waves, were reflected in preaching. The first response came from the Church of England (Anglican as the coined word), against the style of either Anglo Catholics or Puritans in England. The basis of this change was expressed in terms of exclusively homiletical and rhetorical values, without reference to the cultural situation that caused the shift. The second response was from John Tillotson (1630-94), who succeeded in developing this style of preaching and who had been a Puritan. Tillotson longed for a more inclusive, less sectarian sort of preaching. Inevitably, such sermons in that time were topical and constructed around the need that emerged from the context to discuss a subject rather than to expound the text (:212-3).

A third response later showed a new emphasis and new methods of preaching. This developed in Britain and later in America, where it was evangelistic. It is usually understood that this preaching grew out of the theological idea that salvation generally occurs when the Word of God is opened to a congregation through preaching. Although it was God's eternal decree that effected salvation, it was nevertheless preaching that was the usual medium of conversion (:214-5).

3.3.4.2 Evangelistic preaching

Evangelistic preaching proclaims the gospel in the Spirit's energy and drawing power. It intends to bring people to repentance and belief in Christ as Savior (Willimon & Lischer 1995:120). All Christian preaching does this in some measure. However, this study is limited in historical sense to the Puritans and the evangelistic movement, practiced mostly in England and America since the seventeenth century.

The prominence, which was given to preaching by the early Reformers, continued in the latter part of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by the Puritans (Stott 1982:28). Among many, Irvonwy Morgan (1965:10-11) gives the best definition of the Puritans:

> "The essential thing in understanding the Puritans was that they were preachers before they were anything else, and preachers with a particular emphasis that could be distinguished from other preachers by those who heard them… What bound them together, undergirded their striving, and gave them the dynamic to persist was their consciousness that they were called to preach the Gospel. 'Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel' was their inspiration and justification. Puritan tradition in the first and last resort must be assessed in terms of the pulpit."

Thomas Sampson (Morgan 1965:11), one of the leaders and first sufferers of the Puritan movement, for example, says: "Let others be bishops. I will undertake the office of preacher or none of at all." Richard Baxter (Wilkinson 1950:75), one of the most outstanding figures of the Puritans, states: "We must teach them, as much as we can, of the Word and Works of God. O what two volumes are these for a minister to preach upon! How great, how excellent, how

wonderful and mysterious!" The American Puritan, Cotton Mather (1789:iii-v in Stott 1982:31) declares: "The office of the Christian ministry, rightly understood, is the most honorable, and important, that any man in the whole world can ever sustain. The great design and intention of the office of a Christian preacher are to restore the throne and dominion of God in the souls of men." Although he was an Anglican evangelical with Whitefield, John Wesley (1703-91), the man who lived by preaching, considered the Bible constantly as his textbook because he knew that its overriding purpose was to point to Christ and enlighten its readers for salvation (:32).

Compassion for preaching as a medium of conversion is one of the principles that characterize not only the Puritan preaching in particular, but also the evangelistic preaching in general.[68] It is much true of the preaching of the Great Awakening. Although the evangelical awakening is usually related to John Wesley in England and Jonathan Edwards in America, the link between the two movements is George Whitefield (1714-70). He created the basic pattern of evangelistic preaching: The sermon was usually based on a short text and, after an introduction and some background; there was an announcement of the points that would be made. After that, the sermon developed topically, with each of the points having several sub-points, all leading to a conclusion. What he was aiming for in his preaching was conversion, and he believed that it could happen only when people were brought under conviction of their sins and their need of God's intervention. Most of his sermons were driven by that conviction (Willimon & Lischer 1995:215).

Charles G Finney (1792-1875), a converted lawyer, emphasized the purpose of preaching. The purpose of his preaching was to awaken an awareness of sin in his hearers so that they might repent and be saved. D L Moody (1837-1899), however, was different from Finney regarding the theology of preaching. For

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[68] According to D E Demaray, the evangelistic preaching consists of five principles such as compassion, indispensable relation to the Scripture, understandable speech, conversion-oriented, and call for decision (see Willimon & Lischer 1995:120).

Moody, the love of God was the main truth to be communicated while Finney tried to pound on the sinner until he/she was broken down and slain. In spite of such diversity in the revivalist technique that developed over the years, the basic pattern of evangelistic preaching established by Whitefield can still be recognized. The evangelistic style was also not limited to revivals. It remained as the characteristic pulpit in many congregations until World War II and after (:216-7).[69]

3.3.5 The modern era 2 (post World War II)

3.3.5.1 Cultural shift and preaching

The last century had begun in a mood of euphoria. People in the West expected a period of political stability, scientific progress and material prosperity. The church was still a respectable social institution and preachers were admirable among people and society (Stott 1982:38).

However, the optimism of the 20th century's early years was shattered by the outbreak of two World Wars. After the first World War, Europe emerged from almost four years in a chastened mood as Stott (:40) properly expresses, which was soon worsened by the years of economic depression that followed. Moreover, by the influence of liberal theology asking God's existence and role in the horrors and traumas of war, people began to turn their interest or priority from God to reality. The Second World War unceasingly accelerated some realistic and secularized phenomena. Hence we went through the 1940's to the 90's and opened the new millennium. The tide of preaching ebbed, and the ebb is still low today. Although there is enormous ongoing church growth in many

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[69] For example, shortly after World War II, the United States became aware of a new mass evangelist, Billy Graham, who has remained at the center stage of evangelistic preaching ever since. Since his first crusade in Los Angeles in 1949, he has corrected all that had gone bad in revivalism and attempted to restore its integrity. Using the electronic amplification, his voice has been heard by congregations of over 100,000 and even 1,000,000 especially when he held his

countries, it cannot be denied from a historical perspective that the decline of preaching has been a symptom of the decline of the church. An era of skepticism and no absolute truth is not conducive to the recovery of confident proclamation of the gospel (:43-4).

Nevertheless, many voices declare the unchangeable importance and the renewal of Christian preaching just like those of the Reformers after the Dark Ages and the Puritans after the religious war. For example, concerning the trouble with preaching the Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner (1968:1) rightly identifies the failure to relate the Christian message to the everyday world as the main reason. Christian preaching carries no meaning for them and has no connection with their own lives and issues. Donald Coggan (1958:18) who was Archbishop of Canterbury insists on the indispensability of preaching, regardless of the situation. He stresses the importance of the preacher and emphasizes the task of the preacher to link human sin to God's forgiveness, human need to God's provision, and human search to God's truth (in his introductory chapter entitled "The primacy of preaching" of his book *Preaching and Preachers*). Martin Lloyd Jones (1998:9) defines the work of preaching as the highest, greatest and the most glorious calling, and adds that preaching is the most urgent need in the Christian church today.

3.3.5.2 Theological movement and preaching

The second half of the 20th century has seen as many changes in the understanding of the meaning and practice of preaching as the previous two and half centuries (Willimon & Lischer 1995:222). These changes were the results of some major theological movements. Three of them were and are greatly influential in the recent preaching history:

The biblical theology movement led by the Swiss theologian Karl Barth (1886-

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crusade in Seoul, Korea in 1973 (see Willimon & Lischer 1995:223; Ro & Nelson 1983).

1968)[70] assumed that there was a consistent perspective throughout the Bible that made it possible to preach the theology of the whole Bible. In addition, it characterized a narrative orientation based on the theology of God: that is, God who acts in redemption history (*Heilsgeschichte*). Pastoral care in the pulpit movement was initiated by Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878-1969) and suggested preaching as life-situated or problem- centered. Pastoral care before this thought was often considered as one-on-one pastoral counseling. Fosdick moved the setting from the counseling room to the pulpit and shifted the paradigm of pastoral care from counseling alone to accompanied preaching. The social gospel, modern psychology, and the learning theory of John Dewey influenced Fosdick's thought (cf Willimon & Lischer 1995:26-7, 154-6, 222-3).

The new homiletic movement emerged out of a realization of the changing preaching context due to cultural breakdown. It was a new effort to increase the effectiveness of preaching in the changing culture. For example, there was a homiletical paradigm shift from deductive preaching to inductive preaching. The difference between the two is usually understood as a contrast between sermons that begin with a general principle and move toward particular examples, and sermons that begin with specific experience and move toward extensive principles. This change of consciousness is quite different from that of the biblical theology movement that characterized linear and deductive sermons. Moving beyond the old traditional paradigm, the story or narrative emerged as an effective medium for the communication of biblical truth in contemporary homiletics (see Thomas Long 1994:90-100). This movement originated by H G Davis and D J Randolph before 1970's, was developed by C Rice and F Craddock in 1970's, and led to fruition by E A Steimle, M J Niedenthal, C L Rice, R A Jensen, E Achtemeier, E L Lowry, and D Buttrick since 1980's (see U Y Kim 1999:114-123; H W Lee 2001c:1-3).

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[70] His theology is regarded as the theology of the Word of God and he initiated the movement called neo-orthodox in the United States. Gerhard Kittel who edited the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, the Old Testament theologian Gerhard von Rad, and Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971) who is one of the dominant theologians in the twentieth century are regarded as having similar emphases (see Willimon & Lischer 1995:26-7, 222, 347-9).

Although homiletics seems to have finally arrived at inductive preaching after 2000 years of history, the new homiletic is a generation old now[71] and the journey is not over.

3.3.6 Summary

From the beginning of Christianity, preaching has been central to public worship. We owe this heritage to the early church and the reformers. We noted that the apostles' practice placed the ministry of preaching at the center of Christian worship (Act 6:1-7; 1 Co 1:17). Similarly, throughout the Middle Ages, the mass had been placed at the center of Christian worship until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when reformers such as Luther and Calvin appeared on the scene and likewise recognized the centrality of the ministry of preaching in public Christian worship (Kurewa 2000:73).

Culturally speaking, Christian preaching is a product of the late first century although we can find the root of it in the OT. Despite the disadvantages, one may find in the Christian church's history, most of the Christian preachers in both the eastern and western parts of the Roman Empire benefited from both Judaism and Hellenism. In the Middle Ages, especially during the centuries from 476 to 1100 (called the Dark Ages), the Roman Empire and the Greco-Roman cultures declined because of barbarian invasions. The decline of the Roman Empire and its culture inevitably affected the life of the church and the practices of preaching in such a way that no one had the confidence any longer to compose new sermons, but rather to copy sermons of the Fathers. Despite these dark facts, however, positive developments took place in preaching in the twelfth through the fifteenth centuries. The reason for this was that there had

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[71] James W Thompson criticizes that the new homiletic is not new but a generation old and that a homiletic that solved the problem of preaching in the final days of a Christian culture is not likely to be the solution to the problem of preaching in a post-Christian culture (see Thompson

been a longing for a new desire and high regard for preaching. It turned out as the development of the first real homiletical form, which is the typical sermon form, that preachers even use today.

The Reformation was not taking place in an age of mass literacy. Comparatively few people had the facility or the opportunity to work through a published text. Most parishioners therefore definitely required a sermon or reading from the pulpit in order to learn the essentials of the Christian faith. Reformation ideas were spread in this way by preaching. During the modern era, the whole world suddenly awakened to a new thought and experienced rapid and various change in every area since the late seventeenth through the second World. Preaching had been moving between the two extremes of experience, passion, and emotion on the one side (context) and reason, knowledge, and dogma on the other side (text). In this way, it developed its form and language.

Although there were cultural raging waves that changed the phase of preaching in many ways in Christian history, I choose to still believe that preaching in the 21st century is the usual medium of conversion and that God works through preachers. Furthermore, I believe that the Word of God will remain living, active, and even sharper than ever before in the practice of preaching. For this hope, however, we as preachers need to renew our preaching to be the true preaching as the all above figures assert.

3.4 Theological interpretation

Within the context of preaching, theology is a critical interpretation of the sermon. In preaching, theology reflects critically on the content of Christian faith and thought, and helps the congregation getting to grips with their existential experiences such as death, justice, moral issues, suffering, and peace. This

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2001).

understanding of the culture of a congregation is a crucial part of leading a particular community in theological interpretation (Osmer 1990:183). This theological interpretation will therefore attempt to form the basic role of preaching and some criteria for its practice both in church and culture. This is because we believe that the task of our age is not only to speak the gospel, but also to find and form new and effective ways of preaching for an emerging new human consciousness and culture (cf Harris & Moran 1998:23).

3.4.1 Theology and preaching

Theology and preaching must be interrelated: without theology there will be no preaching. Theology has a central role in preaching. According to Halvorson (1982:141) theological reflection is important not only because it corrects theoretical statements in the sermon, but also because it creates true, penetrating and clear images and language.

3.4.1.1 Definition of theology

The word "theology" is a compound word of two Greek words: *theos* (God) and *logos* (word) (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:3; Grenz 1999:121; McGrath 2001:137; Lee 2003:81). Theology is therefore a discourse about God. If there is only one God, and if that God happens to be the Christian God, then the nature and scope of theology are relatively well defined because theology is a reflection on the God whom Christians worship and adore (McGrath 2001:137).

Theology is also an interpretation of the intervention of God as well as the encounter between God and human beings (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:4). In other words, theology is the object of human cognition. Theology is also faith in the acts and grace of God (Ebeling 1970:93). This is a step further from the definition of theology by D J Louw (1998:101) as "thought (logos) about God (theos)." Therefore, I define theology as thought about God and faith in God.

3.4.1.2 Theology and preaching

This relationship not only opens an important path to genuine dialogue, but it also applies to how theology should be related in the sermon (Lee 2003:84). F B Craddock (1985:48-50) has a clear insight on this and explains it in three statements. Firstly, theology and preaching exist in a relationship of mutuality. Theology is a careful reflection upon the preaching of the church, providing the tools, method, and categories, while preaching fulfills theology, and gives it a reason for being. Secondly, theology inspires preaching to treat subjects of importance and avoid trivia. It is almost impossible for a preaching on a matter of major importance to the congregation to be totally uninteresting and without impact. Thirdly, theology deals by concepts of working out its formulations, while preaching uses more concrete and graphic words that to create images and stir the senses.

Accordingly, G Ebeling (1980:424) clearly points out that theology is necessary in order to make preaching as hard for the preacher as it has to be. F B Craddock (1985:50) again rightly stresses that preaching takes place in a theological context, but is itself also a theological act. Besides, R Lischer (1992:7-10) correctly defines that preaching is the first and final expression of theology in a way that theology helps the preacher to discard sub-Christian ideas and to relate Christian ones to their source. P S Wilson (1995:70) gives a very distinctive statement – that preaching is not the dilution, popularization, or translation of theology. It is rather the completion of theology, and is made complete through Christ speaking it and constituting the church through it.

In addition to this, Hugher and Kysar (1997:23) too concur above all theologians in saying that the constitution of preaching is a profoundly theological task. Moreover, J W Thompson (2001:123-5) assuredly insists that preaching must be theological because without critical theological reflection, preaching mistakes

the gospel for the reigning ideologies and popular special interest causes, thus failing to bring congregations to consider what really matters. R J Allen (2002:21) conclusively comments that the purpose of theology in preaching is to nurture a transformed consciousness that shapes the conception and understanding of experience in terms of God's redemptive act in Christ. Furthermore, D.C.S Lee (2003:85-9) rightly argues that in preaching the theological element is not an option, but a necessity.

Ultimately, as many above theologians concur, I conclude that theology is not separable from preaching and theological work is necessary as an integral part of the preaching.

3.4.2 Preaching in the interaction between church and culture

3.4.2.1 Church and culture

The nature of culture can be defined first and its relation with society and the church in general can be described next.

3.4.2.1.1 The nature of culture

What is culture? As every sociologist knows, culture is a vague word. The word is too big to define with any precision. In spite of the fact, nothing could be more important than a proper understanding of the term. A failure to grasp the nature of culture would be a failure to grasp much of the nature of the Christian church's missionary work and preaching practice in it. The concept of culture is therefore the anthropologist's most significant contribution to this matter.

Several decades ago, Kroeber and Kluckhorn (1952:149), America's most respected anthropologists, collected almost three hundred definitions from the literature up to their time. These represented a number of quite different theoretical emphases and perspectives. But through all of this diversity, I found

that certain constant features characterize virtually all definitions of culture. In the past, for example, culture usually referred to mental culture or a configuration of ideas, that is, as something that exists essentially inside people's heads. Currently, however, scholars are largely agreed that this understanding is a narrow definition of culture (C A van Peursen 1974:7-20; C R Taber 1991:8-9; Y A Kang 1997:20). They no longer view culture only as a sort of configuration of ideas that is independent of material conditions,[72] or that is limited to certain people. Accordingly, Y H Kang (1997:19-20), a Korean philosopher, criticizes that if we define cultural mental action such as philosophy or religion that require higher and scholarly efforts, then the recipient and producer of culture are limited to the specific class.

Culture is understood as everything that human beings think, feel, say, and do consciously as human beings. It includes not only mental things, but also physical things such as foods, clothes, sports, and travels. It is open to everybody, not only to some. I can say, as Louis J Luzbetak (1970:60) rightly defines, that it is a way of life. Luzbetak (ibid) stresses this point interestingly: "to the anthropologist a prosaic garbage heap is as much an element of culture as the masterpieces of Beethoven, Dante, and Michelangelo." I believe that it is true to all human beings, not only to anthropologists or special talented people because "all human beings live in culture as fish live in water" (Taber 1991:1).

3.4.2.1.2 Culture and society

I agree with Luzbetak (1970:73) by saying that at birth human being is

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[72] Charles Taber (1991:8-9) rightly argues that if we think cultural ideas are essentially independent of material conditions, and then we will find it possible to define the gospel without reference to the material conditions of life and we will be able to preach without asking whether our hearers are hungry, hurting or oppressed. Taber's logic in his book that emphasizing the relationship between cultural ideas and the material conditions is based on two different positions, idealist and materialist. An idealist position has its modern roots in the thinking of philosophers like Kant and Hegel, and that is expressed today in the work of such anthropologists as Clifford Geertz and Victor Turner. A materialist position has its modern roots in the thought of Baron d'Holbach and Marx, and that is represented in contemporary anthropology by such thinkers as Leslie White and Marvin Harris.

cultureless and would remain cultureless if it were not for the process of acquiring or learning a way of life called "enculturation."[73] A human being cannot survive by himself or herself; he or she must learn how to survive and how to cope with his or her physical, social, and ideational environment (ibid).

Culture is therefore conceived as the way of life of a social group, but not of an individual as such. In other words, culture is society's regularized or standardized design for living. We can see that when one acquires culture through education, deliberate imitation, and unconscious absorption in one's environment or society. When this study speaks of culture, therefore, it is really speaking of a design for living of a particular social group, although it is actually the individual rather than the group as such that carries out the design (Luzbetak 1970:111). Regarding this, Paul G Hiebert (1976:32-3) supposes that there is an interrelationship between culture and society in a way that culture is the product of society and society is mediated by culture. The one cannot be considered apart from the other.

It does not, however, mean that culture totally determines the individual as C R Taber argues (1991:10). Human beings are molded by their culture and pressured by it but not chained to it. Therefore, I do not deny that culture is normative and that it rewards conformity and punishes deviance (:6).

At the same time, however, this study takes the view that culture is selective and one can choose what one wants. Human beings can and do even part from the standard and approved ways. I critically acknowledge that human beings are tremendously influenced by their surrounding culture, although they are not the slaves of it. It is true especially today (and also in this research) that the

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[73] The process of learning a culture is known as enculturation. Sometimes enculturation is referred to as socialization. This study, however, prefers to use the term *enculturation* because in my opinion the two terms are not synonymous. Enculturation embraces the learning of all aspects of culture, including technology, art, and religion, while socialization focuses on those patterns by means of which the individual becomes a members of his or her social group, adapts himself or herself to his or her fellows, achieves status, and acquires a role in society. For more on this, see Luzbetak (1970:73-74).

characteristics of culture tend to shift from value to entertainment, worldview to enjoyment, and high-class culture such as arts and classic music for limited people, to mass culture for everyone.[74]

3.4.2.1.3 Church and culture

What is the relationship of culture to church or religion in large? How do our churches preach the gospel without losing their theological identity? This is not only today's issue, but also that of the early churches in the first century. How to preach the gospel effectively and rightly has been a main interest for everyone in Christian history.

We cannot deny that this question is often asked in missionary work facing other cultures than church ministry. In line with Hauerwas & Willimon (1989:12), we can ask this question to our churches in relation to their culture or cultures. The condition here is that we should understand the church as an island of one culture (that of God's Kingdom) in the middle of another (that of the world); and if we presume that, our society and church lie not in one culture, but in various *other* subcultures.

Concerning this, George Marsden (Richard Mouw 2000:86-90) is right to declare that the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century was for evangelicals something like an immigration experience. What he meant by this move was not a geographical, but rather a transplanting move from a culture that had been quite friendly to evangelical Christianity to a new context dominated by an open hostility to our deepest convictions.

H Richard Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture*[75] is a classic writing of the relationship of culture and the church. Published in 1951, this book sets out the groundwork

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[74] For this trend, see William D Romanowski, *Pop culture wars, religion and the role of entertainment in American life* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP, 1996).
[75] There were two classic books before *Christ and culture*: *The social teaching of Christian

of the relationship between culture and church. Niebuhr proposes five types: against culture, of culture, above culture, in paradox with culture, and transformer of culture. Y D Kim (2002:152-57) agrees that these typical answers give some insight to the relationship, but at the same time criticizes it for two reasons. Firstly, these types are exclusive. Therefore, if we take one, the one cannot stand together with another. Secondly, Niebuhr uses culture as a singular concept, which means his argument is focused on the relationship between Christ and culture discussed in the 2000 years of Christian history. In contrast, most recent studies for the last 40 years has been focused on the relationship between church (the gospel) and other cultures as plural (:154).

I agree with Kim's second point, but not the first one because Richard Niebuhr (2001:41) clearly mentions that there are some agreement and unity when he is introducing his second type:

> In earlier times solutions of the problem along these lines were being offered simultaneously with the solutions of the first or Christ against Culture type. Three other typical answers *agree* with each other in seeking to maintain the great differences between the two principles and in undertaking to hold them together in some *unity*.

This study will use a model based on the work of James M Gustafson (1974:73-96), who calls Richard Niebuhr his mentor during his doctoral studies at Yale. Gustafson classifies the role of theologians in society into three roles: preserver, prophet and participant. The preserver tries to maintain the existing social value and system while the prophet questions the moral and spiritual health of the society. The participant criticizes the society, but at the same time exerts

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churches written by Ernst Troeltsch in 1911 and Reinhold Niebuhr's *The nature and the destiny of man* in 1941 (Vol. 1) and 1943 (Vol. 2). The English translations of these two books are published much later in America: Ernst Troeltsch, *The social teaching of the Christian churches*, Vol 1&2. trans. by Olive Wyon (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981); Reinhold Niebuhr, *The nature and destiny of man*, Vol 1&2 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964).

influence to change and construct it (:73). In line with Gustafson's recommendation, this study chooses the participant model for the church.

Culturally speaking, we are living in the era of cultural relativity with the idea that there are no absolute criteria for making value judgments or especially ethical judgments. According to Taber (1991:170), on the one hand, each human culture is a collective expression of the creatively inherent image of God in human beings, and as such is not only good, but also indispensable. It is not possible to conceive of a true human being without placing him or her in a particular cultural matrix. This view is very similar to Gustafson's first model (preserver) and to Niebuhr's first type (of culture).

Taber (1991:170-1) reminds of Gustafson's second model (prophet) and Niebuhr's second (against culture), and points out that the fall has fatally infected every aspect and detail of culture, regardless of how much good it expresses. Therefore, nothing fully escapes the perversion of sin and all culture must be seen as under the judgment of God. Gustafson's participant model goes beyond this limit as this model stands between two models, preserver and prophet. It does not criticize society passively from the outside of but rather actively participates in the process of social construction. I strongly sense that the Korean church also needs to go beyond this point.

3.4.2.2 Preaching and church

3.4.2.2.1 Preaching under attack: Contemporary criticism

With his famous words, "with its preaching Christianity stands and falls," P T Forsyth (1964:1) calls preaching the most distinctive institution in Christianity. We cannot, however, ignore the statement by K Runia (1983:1), that at the time when Forsyth declared the words, very few people (at least within the Protestant churches), would have contradicted him. The reason for this is that preaching is full of criticism, not only from outside the church but also from inside: preaching is thus under attack.

Something has happened in our time, or is in the process of happening, that has made the church an extremely difficult and uncertain place to be in. Whatever it is, has made churches different, altered the nature of congregational life, introduced disagreement into the question of what it means to live as a Christian, changed people's thought of the pastors' duties, and tended to revise even the consensus of opinion about what constitutes Christian mission, teaching and preaching (Killinger 1995:10).

With reference to preaching especially, contemporary criticism is not aimed just at the form or even at the content, but at the whole phenomenon of the preaching itself. In other words, there is a question mark on the very existence of preaching as an essential and indispensable part of the church's life and worship. Moreover, it is coming from all areas, the social scientists, communications theorists, theologians, and even ordinary people in the pew.[76] They are all very much sensitive to *change*: The social scientist, for example Gavin Reid (1962:22), insists that there has been a tremendous shift in the position of the church within society and in our culture itself. Modern communication experts including Marshall McLuhan (1964; 1967; 1968; 1997; 2001) also point to the great changes that in recent years have taken place and that are still taking place in the whole structure of communication. Accordingly,

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[76] See Gavin Reid, *The gagging of God: The failure of the church to communicate in the television age*. 1962. 22; Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding media: The extensions of man* (New York: The American Library, 1964) and (London, Routledge, 2001); Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, *The medium is the message* (Harword-Sworth: Penguin Books, 1967); Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, *War and peace in the global village* (Harword-Sworth: Penguin Books, 1968); Marshall McLuhan, Media research: technology, art, communication, edited with commentary, Michel A. Mors. (Amsterdam: G+B Arts, 1997); E Brown, "Theology in a postmodern culture: Implications of the video-dependent society," in D S Dockery (ed), *The challenge of postmodernism: an evangelical engagement*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 1995), 314-323; W D Romanowski, *Pop culture wars: religion and the role of entertainment in American life*. (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1996); P Appere, "The impact on the church of a postmodern culture," in A Fountain (ed), *Loving the God of truth: Preparing the church for the 21st century*. (Toronto: Britannia Printers, 1996), 71-114; J Campbell, "Communicating the gospel in a postmodern world," in A Fountain (ed), *Loving the God of truth: Preparing the church for the 21st century*. (Toronto: Britannia Printers, 1996), 153-176; D W Henderson, *Culture shift: Communicating God's truth to our changing world*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 1998).

they criticize the traditional one-way communication style of preaching and its low degree of effectiveness.

Some post-Barthians, such as H D Bastian and Gerhard Ebeling (Runia 1983:12), argue that homiletics is simply the study of communication and that it has to be tested by the laws of the science of communication. If such a test by the laws of the sermon is a very ineffective kind of communication; the consequences have to be accepted and replaced by a more suitable means of communication. Another point of criticism, according to the advocates of so-called political theology like Dorothee Solle and Fulbert Steffensky (1969; 1971), is that the traditional preaching is far too introverted. They therefore propose that the church should practice as an agency for social and political change.

There is more to this: the man and woman in the pew whose voices usually remain unheard because they can reveal their disappointment and dissatisfaction in one very familiar way: by simply staying away. The fact that many church people are deeply dissatisfied with the preaching of their pastors should not be underestimated.

The picture revealed so far is discouraging. John Killinger (1969:21), however, gives a different but indeed right view: "People are not tired of preaching but of non-preaching, of the badly garbled, anachronistic, irrelevant drivel that has in so many places passed for preaching because there was no real preaching to measure it against." The Roman Catholic theologian, Jerome Murphy-O'Connor (1964: XIV-V), gives the same point but differently: "The experience of the lay apostolate and the liturgical movement has shown that a renewal on the level of technique alone is not really a renewal at all, and in practice neither effective nor lasting. True renewal must begin with a profound appreciation of the nature of preaching, a realization of just what preaching is." If we agree with them, then we have to ask this essential question: What really is preaching?

3.4.2.2.2 The definition of preaching

To find the answer to our question we have to go to the New Testament, for the origin of Christian preaching is found there.[77] Christian preaching has its origin in the base and content of faith. Jesus Christ. God revealed Himself in word and deed in the history of Israel, a revelation culminating in the complete and final revelation in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus not only brought the Word of God, but He is the Word of God (Jn 1:1-18). He not only proclaimed the truth, but He is also the truth (Jn 14:6). The entire history of Jesus Christ not only manifests the truth, it also realizes the truth (cf H J C Pieterse 1987:5).

For this reason the origin of Christian preaching in the New Testament has to be considered, because it holds the testimony concerning the basis and origin of Christian faith in the person of Jesus Christ. K Runia (1983:19) goes one step further and says: "the New Testament itself is both the result of Christian preaching and also a form of Christian preaching. The Gospels, for example, were not written out of a merely historical or biographical interest in the person of the so called historical Jesus, but the authors, being members of the Christian church, summarized in their Gospel the preaching of their church concerning the Lord who died on the cross and who rose again on the third day."

The biblical words translated "preaching" do not coincide exactly with that activity to which we affix the label. A rich variety of words is used in the New

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[77] It is true that preaching is a specifically Christian activity. However, it is not indeed something new. It has its root in the Old Testament (cf K Runia 1983:21-24). Accordingly, S Greidanus (1999:39-53) argues that there are four contemporary views on the character of the Old Testament in relation to the New Testament: 1) the Old Testament is sub-Christian, 2) the Old Testament is non-Christian, 3) the Old Testament is pre-Christian, and 4) the Old Testament is Christian. We are not going to discuss these here but later in Chapter 3 when we attempt historical, theological, and biblical interpretation. See also for more and further detail S Greidanus' another book that gives an interesting section on "preaching then and now" to compare the Old Testament prophets, the New Testament apostles and preachers today (1988:1-9).

Testament for our word "preaching." G Friedrich (1965:703) names twenty-nine such Greek words.[78] Willimon & Lischer (1995: 433-35) introduce the eight functions of sermons based on the Greek words and usage.[79] I assume the work of K Runia (1983:25-6) who rightly discusses six key words used for "preaching" in the New Testament and conclude:

> "First of all, it appears from the use of the word *Keryssein* (to proclaim) that preaching is not only the proclamation of a saving event that once took place, some twenty centuries ago, in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, but that the proclamation of this event also inaugurates the new state of affairs for the believing listener. When he believes in Jesus Christ as the Savior, he at the very same time participates in the salvation brought about by him. The verb *euanegelizesthai*, which is virtually synonymous with *keryssein*, underscores that the message about Jesus Christ is a joyful message. The verb *marturein* (to witness), as far as it is applicable to present day preaching, indicates that all true preaching has to adhere to the apostolic tradition. *Didaskein* (to teach) emphasizes that the preacher also has to unfold the message as to its meaning and consequences, both dogmatically and ethically. Finally, *propheteuein* (to prophesy) and *parakalein* (to comfort, to admonish) tell us that the message may not remain an abstraction but has to be applied to the concrete situation of the listeners."

In sum, these and others words show the rich variety of preaching in the early church. It means that our almost exclusive use of preaching for all of them is a sign not only of poverty of vocabulary, but also of the loss of something that was

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[78] K Runia (1983:20) sees there are "no fewer than thirty" different verbs for preaching while S Greidanus (1999:6) counts it "as many as thirty-three."
[79] The eight functions of sermons are as follows: 1) sermons may be kerygma, proclamation; 2) sermons may be didache, teaching; 3) sermons may be paraklesis, exhortation or comfort; 4) sermons may be anamnesis, remembrance; 5) sermons may be makarism, blessing; 6) sermons may be Sophia, wisdom; 7) sermons may be propheteia, prophecy; and 8) sermons may be parabole, parable. However, they actually concern and touch the Hebrew Scripture as well, especially in 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8 functions above.

a living reality in primitive Christianity. In addition, there is the need to recover some of them in our preaching habits in our church today.

The New Testament does not separate preaching from these factors, especially preaching and teaching into such rigid and ironclad categories. There is, of course, an opposition against this. C H Dodd (1936:7), J E Adams (1982:5) and M Lloyd-Jones (1998:62), for example, insist that the early church distinguished sharply between proclamation in a missionary setting and teaching in an established church: "The New Testament writers draw a clear distinction between preaching and teaching… Teaching (*didaskein*) is in a large majority of cases ethical instruction… Preaching, on the other hand, is public proclamation of Christianity to the non-Christian world."

However, Matthew relates that Jesus was "teaching (*didaskon*) in their synagogues and preaching (*kerysson*) the gospel of the kingdom" (4:23; cf 9:35; 11:1). Luke similarly reports that Jesus "taught (*edidasken*) in the synagogues" and a little later, that Jesus "was preaching (*kerysson*) in the synagogues" (4:15, 44). In Rome Paul was engaged in "preaching (*kerysson*) the kingdom of God and teaching (*didaskon*) about the Lord Jesus Christ" (Act 28:31). Accordingly, Haddon Robinson (2001:74) clearly argues that the Bible speaks of the gift of pastor-teacher (Eph 4:11) and this implies that the two functions should be joined.

Consequently, in the same place, both kinds of activity went on: teaching and preaching. Although preaching in a mission situation must have had a different emphasis than preaching in an established church, there appears to be a developing consensus today that preaching and teaching were never sharply separated by the first Christians and that it should also not be separated by us today.[80]

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[80] See H G Davis, *Design for preaching*, (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1958) 123-25; R C Worley, *Preaching and teaching in the earlier church* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967); T Hall, *Future shape of preaching*, (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971) 105-7; James I H McDonald, *Kerygma and*

Therefore, as S Greidanus (1999:7) rightly argues, the church needs to hear the *kerygma* as well as the teaching, and unbelievers need to receive teaching as well as the *kerygma.* Consequently, preaching can be seen as an activity with many aspects, which are highlighted by such New Testament words and phrases as proclaiming, announcing the good news, witnessing, teaching, prophesying, and exhorting. Although one aspect or another may certainly be accentuated to match the text and the contemporary audience, preaching cannot be reduced to only one of its many aspects.

The various terms used in the New Testament show that Christian preaching is more than just recounting the story about the Word of God spoken in Jesus Christ. Christian preaching is the Word of God presenting itself to human beings. The Reformers' point of view was that preaching of the Word of God was the Word of God. This was most clearly expressed in the second Helvetic Confession (1566): *Praedicatio verbe Dei est verbum Dei*. Anyone, however, who has listened to a few sermons, knows that this simply cannot be true. Therefore, this statement needs to be qualified.

Concerning this, S Greidanus (2001:7) rightly maintains that preachers today are neither Old Testament prophets nor New Testament apostles. Unless one would be guilty of both presumption and anachronism, one should constantly keep in mind the great difference between preachers then and preachers now. Preachers today do not necessarily receive their messages directly from God the way the prophets did. Nor can preachers today claim with the apostles that they were "eyewitnesses" (2 Pet 1:16). In spite of that, provided their sermons are biblical, preachers today may also claim to bring the Word of God.

It is even more true when we sense what the Spirit is doing while preachers do their preaching. Today's preachers depend more on the Scriptures as their

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Didache (London: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Mark Abbott, "Should preaching teach?" *Preaching* 14 (1999) 4-6; and David C S Lee, *The preaching as a teaching event*. PhD. Thesis. University of Pretoria. 2003.

source of revelation than the apostles did. Some have sought to articulate the difference between the biblical preachers and their contemporary counterparts as follows:

"The Old Testament and the New Testament organs of revelation came forward, saying: 'Thus says the Lord.'… But the New Testament preacher must say, if he would speak strictly: 'Thus has the Lord written'" (Volbeda 1960:24).

Technically, in terms of the source of revelation, this formulation is correct, but materially, in terms of the reality of God's Word, contemporary preachers should also be able to say: "Thus says the Lord." For the Spirit who spoke through the prophets is still speaking today through preaching which passes on the messages of God's prophets and apostles.

3.4.2.2.3 Preaching and church

Preaching the Word of God is the primary task of the church and of the Christian pastor (Lloyd-Jones 1998:19; Lee 2003:122). It is based on the evidence of the Scriptures, and the supporting and confirming evidence of the history of the church (:25). In Christian scriptures, for example, preaching is subdivided: there is the out-church preaching that proclaims good news to the world and there is the in-church preaching that shapes the community in faith, hope and love (Buttrick 1994:36-7). According to scripture, all preaching, in-church or out-church, is empowered by God. Ultimately, preaching is God's Word, not our word.

In the Reformation, as another example, the Reformers did not use categories such as in-church or out-church, because they were trapped in a Christendom. They rather emphasized God's Word over the church. The church is subservient to the preached Word of God. Calvin is quite emphatic on this: "The power of the church is not unlimited, but is subject to the Word of God"

(Institutes 4.8.4 in Buttrick 1994:41). For Luther, it is no exception: "Since the church owes its birth to the Word, is nourished, aided, and strengthened by it, it is obvious it cannot be without the Word. If it is without the Word, it ceases to be a church" (LW 40.37 in Buttrick 1994:42).[81] Why is preaching so important? Because the character of the church is shaped by its preaching. Preaching calls the church to repentance. The absolution of God comes through preaching.

Comparing the Reformers and D Buttrick in terms of the primacy of preaching, Lloyd-Jones (1998:59-61) seems to over stress and lack some cultural sensitivity. He uses the biblical story in Acts 3:1-6, in which Peter and John healed the man sitting at the gate of the temple. He concludes that there are certain things that the churches or the Christian pastors are not to do (give), and also certain things that the Christian preachers are called to do in terms of the content. He defines the former as "silver and gold," and means here the headlines in the newspapers, political matters, or anything preachers like. He then clarifies the latter as that what is called in the New Testament the Word (:59-61).

I understand the point that is stressed here: It is clear what he wants to emphasize or what he wants to avoid as bad habits in preaching. Nonetheless, it is difficult for me to accept his total ignorance of congregational needs (ibid), including almost all recent homiletic issues and theories on congregation studies (:121-25).

There are, of course, other voices on this. Jane Rzepka and Ken Sawyer (2001:3), for example, who are lifelong unitarian universalists and who co-teach a preaching course at Harvard Divinity School. They state, "They are part of a faith tradition in which references to God, Jesus and biblical passages are

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[81] For Luther, the Word does everything in the church. As his successor, K Barth in this regard sees that preaching and worship belong together not as merely part of the liturgy, but as something larger than liturgy because he believes that preaching happens beyond liturgy as well as within liturgy. See K Barth, Homiletics. trans. G W Bromiley & D E Daniels. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991:58-9).

usually perfectly welcome if they serve to make or illustrate the points of a sermon-but they are not required. What is required-or at least hoped for, and ardently sought by the preacher-is a sermon that will touch and even move the heart and minds and souls of those in the congregation… for us the theme of the sermon is not determined by any particular text, but by the particular needs of a particular congregation at a particular time being addressed by a particular preacher. Sermon must address the themes that arise, not so much out of any textual passage, but out of human lives"

In my opinion both Lloyd-Jones and the two unitarians, are extreme in their standpoint. There is some need of balance between them in terms of preaching and culture relation.

3.4.2.3 Preaching and culture

Does the preacher need to be aware of his/her culture? If we understand the main task of preacher as preaching and teaching the Word of God, then culture seems not meaningful to us at all. Culture seems to belong to people in the world, not to Christians or preachers. If a preacher has to deal with culture, it seems that we should allow it in a very limited way because if we just let it happen, the church seems to lose its mysterious power and preaching seems to become secularized. It is not difficult to find such pastors today who think in such a negative or orthodox way about culture (cf J S Ann 1996; J S Kim 1997; Lloyd-Jones 1998).

At the same time, however, many pastors are very interested in culture. I believe that most pastors think that preaching the Word of God is what they, as preachers ought to do. I also believe that not many of them consider that they can present sermons absolutely regardless of their culture. The problem here is that they are interested, but do not know how to deal with it. They are also unaware of what happened in the history of preaching in terms of the relation between preaching and culture.

3.4.2.3.1 Preaching and culture in history

For the purpose of this study, the classification of D Buttrick (1994:56-75) on preaching and its culture-relation as disclosed in Christian history, is adopted. It can be briefly categorized as follows:

1) There are times when Christian faith moves into culture evangelically. Looking back at the first century, the early Christian expansion involved moving into a Greco-Roman world. At the outset, Christianity was essentially a Jewish sect. However, even in Scripture, Christian faith is moving out from itself towards a different cultural milieu.[82] Supposedly, the book of Acts records the beginning of the shift from a Jewish sect to a Gentile mission (:56-7; see Ludemann 1987). Preaching has to explain the faith. In explaining, preachers reach for metaphors and similes. They draw analogies saying: "Christian faith is like…" and then they describe an image, idea or an event with which listeners are familiar.[83]

2) There are other times when Christian faith and culture go together. These are happy times when most people everywhere share a common worldview. The Christian church had experienced such happy moments known as the Christendom, for more than 1,000 years since the conversion of Constantine. Over the time, preaching patterns were elaborated and firm rules of rhetoric were established. Preaching in these periods was quite good but also fairly stereotyped with hardly any innovative theology (:67-9).

3) There are times when cultural syntheses can come tumbling down. For example, in the late seventeenth century, Europe had experienced a religious

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[82] Conflict over a Gentile mission can be traced through the Christian Scripture. See Johannes Munck, *Paul and the salvation of mankind* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1959), 87-134, 210-46, 247-81).
[83] Faith must employ figurative language-metaphors for God and metaphors to express the inwardness of faith. See Sallie McFague, *Metaphorical theology: Models of God in religious language* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982); D Buttrick, *Homiletic: Moves & structures* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 113-25, 187-98.

war after the Reformation, emerging human experience and reason, and the fading away of the culture of Christendom (Willimon & Lischer 1995:212-4). Preaching suffers during times of breakdown, because not only has language become impoverished, but also traditional rhetorical conventions no longer hold true (Buttrick 1994:69-71). Contemporary preaching seems to show this tendency.

3.4.2.3.2 Contemporary preaching and culture

Contemporary preaching is shorter and less demanding of listeners. Preachers today seem to be producing little Bible homilies. Their preaching offers easy insight, but seems incapable of invoking any real presence of God. It contains little metaphor, and the subtle evocative precisions of the poet are largely absent. Preachers may communicate, but they no longer seem to reveal. Their language no longer relates to how people actually hear and understand meaning (Buttrick:71-75).

Moreover, the mass media is so invasive and pervasive that church leaders simply cannot afford to ignore them. Pastors can respond to this reality in one of two ways: 1) they can be so threatened by it that they remain silent; 2) they can learn to think like missionaries and use popular culture as a source of insight and information for ministry (Mattingly 1998:82).

Popular culture is a distorted mirror of our lives, but yet a mirror. To attempt approach No. 1 is to be merely negative. No. 2 combines the criticism of the mass media content and seriously recognizes the power the media today has in our lives. It is realistic, critical and ultimately constructive (ibid).

Haddon Robinson (2001:74) rightly says that the expositors must be aware of "the currents swirling" across our their own times for each generation develops out of its own history and culture and speaks its own language. In other words, Christian preachers who speak effectively for God must first struggle with the

questions of their age and then speak to those questions from the eternal truth of God. Otherwise, they may stand before a congregation and give exegetically accurate sermons, but they are powerless because they ignore the life-wrenching problems and questions of the congregation. Their hearers may feel that God belongs to the long ago and far away (ibid). Preachers therefore need to exegete their culture as well as exegete the Word of God (Robinson 1991 in Mattingly 1998:82).

Ronald Allen (1998:19-61) introduces three contexts for preaching today such as church, world and life of the preacher while Haddon Robinson (2001:73) gives three worlds: the world of the Bible, the world we live, and the particular world in which we are to call to preach. They are basically the same except one stressing point that Allen emphasizes preacher's own life experience when Robinson accents the world as shepherd's flock. I consider both equally valuable. That is not the main concern here. Our urgent and significant concern is what Christian preachers ignore most among the three contexts or worlds: that is the world we live and culture that has been shaping our value and thought for years whether we realize it or not.

We are living in the century of change. Reality is not what it used to be.[84] The concept of culture has been changed. Culture is no more limited to mental or professional activities like philosophy, science, arts, and religion. Culture means everything and everyday experience or event (see Y A Kang 1995:93-5; 1997:19-25). How did we get where we are today?

Ravi Zacharias (2001:20-24) argues that five major shifts in this century have brought us to where we are. Of course, no doubt there are others. A shift out of the five that is closely related to our subject, culture, is the power to inform through the visual. The visual has changed the way people arrive at truth.

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[84] This is also a book title written by Walter Truett Anderson (Middleton & Walsh 1995:132-33).

Accordingly, Robinson (1991 in Mattingly 1998:85) in a sermon at Denver Seminary rightly says, "most of you, pastors and theological graduate students, cannot conceive of a world without television and television has come to dominant the life of men and women throughout the world as books did three and four hundred years ago… Television is omnipresent. We have now moved in our society into a post-literate society. The way, in which people get ideas, the way in which they shape their ideas, comes not because they read books, but because they see it, they visualize it. It is on television."

Every culture is partially shaped by the dominant communication media. P M Legg (1997:30) correctly argues, like Robinson above, these media shape people: people learn from them, shape their values, and express their ideas in them. Like R Zacharias, U Y Kim (1999:53) is quite right to assert that communication systems today are characterized by a reliance on visual rather than acoustic perception. Many have said that this electronic culture is a new stage beyond oral communication, script and print. I think, however, any communication culture does not entirely replace another and each can be subsumed and can co-exist with the others, and we live between the times, literary and electronic cultural times simultaneously. In this sense, I agree with W Ong (1967:87-8) who clearly defines that this electronic culture is a return to oral communication and steps up the oral and aural. Sound returns to the world of words. The voice, muted by script and print, has come newly alive.

Visual images are especially effective at telling stories and stirring emotions. They paint in broad, symbolic strokes, with the images building in layers, shaping opinions and attitudes. "We are in an antagonistic environment, Robinson (1991 in Mattingly 1998:87) points out rightly, that communicates with images. It does not come out and argue. It just simply shows you pictures day after day after day after day. Before you realize it, in the basement of your mind, you discover that you have shifted your values and many times, you have lost your faith. That is a change."

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What Robinson observes is quite true. Indeed, when we watch the visual images, whether they are on the television, video, movie or Internet, people are robbed, raped, and murdered and they never pray. They never seek out a preacher. They never bother going to church. That world of visual image is a world in which God has no place. However, we live in the world.

3.4.2.3.3 The contemporary preacher and culture

At the very beginning of this chapter, a little was mentioned about the images of the preacher and enumerating models such as herald, ambassador, pastor and witness. These will be elaborated on now.

The *herald* was the most prevalent image advanced by scholars of the last generation when they sought to describe who preachers were and what the function of a preacher should be. This is a biblical image, derived from one of the several Greek terms used in the New Testament to describe preaching (*kerusso*). It is important to note that the message to be delivered does not originate from the heralds but from their master. In delivering their master's message, therefore, heralds represent their master. The herald image received its modern homiletical stimulus not only because it is a biblical term, but also because of the prominence given to it by the neo-orthodox theological movement, especially among those who sought to be followers of Karl Barth. Barth himself employed this image in his definition of proclamation, a term that is larger than preaching but which includes it (see Long 1989:24-30; Greidanus 2001:4).

The same idea comes to expression in the word *ambassador*. In 2 Cor 5:20 Paul writes of himself and his fellow preachers: "so we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God (NRSV)." Ambassadors, of course, do not speak for themselves nor act on their own behalf, but speak and act on behalf of their sender (see Greidanus 2001:4).

The *pastor* comes from an idea of preaching which as J Randall Nichols (1987:16) puts it, "deliberately sets out to touch and involve people's personal concerns." Other images such as priestly, therapeutic or educational, could also describe this idea of preaching. In all these terms, the underlying assumption about the purpose of preaching is the same: "such preaching seeks to enable some beneficial change in the congregations, attempts to help them make sense of their lives, and strives to be a catalyst for more responsible living on the part of those who hear" (see Long 1989:30-36; D C S Lee 2003:122).

The *witness* is a legal metaphor compared to the first two, which are political and the third that is a more domestic term. The crucial aspect of this image is about authority. It gives another sense of authority in the age of no authority. In this sense, one could say it does concern contemporary people and culture. In this idea, the preacher is authoritative, not because of rank or power, but because of what he or she has seen and heard from/through God. For example, when the preacher prepares a sermon, he or she is listening to a voice and looking for a presence of God to be encountered through the text. When it happens, the preacher can speak what he has seen and heard. In that sense, the preacher is a witness (see Long 1989: 41-7; Stott 1996:53-70).

The *storyteller* has emerged out of increasing interest in the new homiletic movement that considers story or narrative as an effective medium for preaching the gospel today. As P Berger (C I Fant 1987:45) argues, the *herald* or the *ambassador* would be adequate in the ages of faith that are characterized by proclamation, not by dialogue. From the perspective of the age of faith, the *pastor* probably objects less and the *storyteller* would lack the sharp purpose in preaching. This model, however, indeed blends the best traits of both the *herald* and the *pastor*: the *storyteller* can be just as adopted to the biblical message as the *herald* and just as sensitive to the context and culture of congregation as the *pastor* (see Long 36-41).

From this discussion, it can be concluded that all the above models were obviously affected by and at the same time influenced the interaction between church and culture. Besides these, there are, of course, many other metaphors such as the steward, father, servant and so on. The following chapter will investigate what model of preacher would be adequate to our church and related to contemporary culture.

3.4.3 Summary

In this section, the basic role of preaching was sought, as well as some criteria for its practice, and its dynamic relation to church and culture. Theology plays a central role in preaching. Preaching is the primary task empowered by God in the church that is subservient to it. Cultural and historical trends affect preaching with its pattern and language.

A problem that can be noted in our church and in our preaching is that we ignore or remain unaware of these changes and dynamics, and that we respond with silence. There is however a more serious and deeper-rooted problem behind the superficial dilemma: Our Christian preachers have not been taught how to respond to what happened in history. Rather they have often been taught that they should not attempt to do so. If this is a significant problem of preaching in the American church as an example, then it is obviously also a crisis of preaching in the Korean church, that is much more orthodox and conservative.

3.5 Conclusion and remarks for the next chapter

In this chapter, I have attempted multi interpretations of preaching in the interaction between church and culture biblically, historically and theologically

from classic sources. For a biblical interpretation (3.2), I started this quest from the Old Testament where the root of Christian preaching can be found for the New Testament. This establishes the origin of preaching. From the search through these two books, it can be concluded that there are similarities between the preaching of the prophets and that of the apostles. Both represent God, both proclaim His Word, both are aware of God's Word to be God's action, both preach on what they had seen and heard, and both preach to people in the specific time and culture.

The characteristics of Old Testament preaching have been concluded as follows:

1) Preaching God's Word is making God's action known and revealing His purpose to people and to the world mediated by culture. God Himself used this revelatory action, known as preaching to us, by His own word before He used the prophets in the specific time and culture.
2) The basic structure of God's revelation in the Bible is dialogic.
3) The Bible does not separate God's Words from His actions.
4) The Word of God is the object of preaching and the subject of authority in preaching.
5) An expository relationship between the Scriptures and preaching emerges when the Scriptures become the source of preaching.

The characteristics of New Testament preaching can be defined: There is no distinction between missionary (conversion) preaching and congregational preaching, dialogical preaching, inspired preaching, Christ centered preaching, biblical preaching, and expository preaching. In the relation of preaching to culture in the Bible (although culture is not an explicit subject of the Bible), biblical studies have made it clear that human cultures have played a far more significant role in biblical history. In the Old Testament, it seems clear that God indeed spoke through Moses and the subsequent prophets and biblical writers in the context of the surrounding cultures. Many agree that Judaist and

Hellenistic culture mainly influenced the development of the Christian preaching. This cultural context of preaching not only appeared both in the synagogue and in the New Testament, but it also influenced both synagogue practices and New Testament writings.

For a historical interpretation (3.3), I have sought a historical survey of the interpretation of preaching in the interaction between church and culture by adopting the time frame of O C Edwards Jr. This includes the early church, Middle Ages, Reformation, modern era 1 (pre World War II) and modern era 2 (post World War II). This survey demonstrates, as Stott maintains (1982:47), how long and broad the Christian tradition is which accords great importance to preaching. Preaching, especially in its form and style, tends to move like the swing of the pendulum between the two extremes such as experience, passion, and emotion on the one side (context) and reason, knowledge, and dogma on the other side (text). This is because it has been influenced by the historical and cultural trends as discussed above. However, no matter what situation and thought we might face, the purpose and task of preaching should remain to link human sin to God's forgiveness, human need to God's provision, and human search to God's truth.

Theological interpretation (3.4) was attempted to form the basic role of preaching and to present some criteria for its effective practice, both in church and culture. From this, the dynamic interaction between theology and preaching, preaching and church, and preaching and culture can be explained as follows: Theology has a central role in preaching. Preaching the Word of God is the primary task of the church and of the Christian pastor. Preaching is empowered by God and the church is subservient to it. There are times when Christian faith moves into culture, Christian faith and culture go together, or the cultural syntheses go tumbling down. In addition, these times will affect the patterns and language of preaching.

Chapter 4 will consist of two parts, *integration* and *insight*. *Integration* as a systematic practical theology (Browning 1991:51) will aim to fuse the horizons between the understanding implicit in contemporary practices of preaching described in Chapter 2 and the interpretation implied in the practices of preaching in the normative Christian sources (Chapter 3). In addition, *insight* as a strategic practical theology (:58; Poling & Miller 1985:93) will propose a return to contextual experience. This is to make sure that the development of guidelines and specific plans in Chapter 4 can be tested for their relevance in real life.