

**PREACHING AS INTERACTION
BETWEEN CHURCH AND CULTURE: WITH SPECIFIC
REFERENCE TO THE KOREAN CHURCH**

By

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DECLARATION

I the undersigned hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university for a degree.

Signature:

Date:

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ABSTRACT

The Korean church, famous for her rapid growth, has begun to notice a downward trend in her growth rate since the mid-eighties. Although many reputable investigations have recently been carried out with regard to this downward slide, these investigations have overlooked the full meaning of preaching in the interaction between church and culture. In view of this, this study sets the following four aims: (1) to investigate the reasons behind church decline in terms of preaching in the interaction between church and culture in Korea; (2) to interpret preaching in the interaction between church and culture biblically, historically and theologically in order to understand the normative Christian perceptions and practices of preaching; (3) to attempt an integration between the descriptive and the normative; and (4) to propose developmental strategies for the Korean church.

To achieve these purposes, two kinds of methods are employed in this study: (a) an analysis of preaching in the interaction between church and culture both in Korea and in the normative Christian sources, with the model advocated by D Browning (1991); and (b) qualitative interviewing as an empirical interpretation with a model based on the findings of Rubin & Rubin (1995).

Five claims emerge from this study: (1) How do we reset the context of preaching? (2) How do we revise the present preaching theory of the Korean church? (3) How do we define and defend conversion preaching that is seemingly exclusive in contemporary pluralistic Korean society? (4) How do we rethink and re-establish the ecclesiology of the Korean church? (5) How do we formulate the Christian culture against or in the rage of worldly thoughts and cultures in Korea? This thesis concludes by proposing preaching as interaction and the preacher as an inter-actor between church and culture. Practical strategies are developed to answer the claims.

OPSOMMING

Die Koreaanse kerk, bekend vir haar snelle groei, het sedert die middeltagtigerjare 'n afwaartse neiging in groeikoers begin merk. Verskeie betroubare navorsingsondersoeke is onlangs hieroor uitgevoer, maar hierdie studies neem nie prediking in die interaksie van kerk en kultuur in ag nie.

Met die kennis van hierdie feite, stel hierdie studie die volgende doelstellings: (1) om redes te ondersoek vir die kerk se afname in die lig van prediking in die interaksie van kerk en kultuur in Korea; (2) om prediking in die interaksie van kerk en kultuur in Korea Bybels, histories en teologies te interpreteer om normatiewe Christelike persepsies en praktyke van prediking te verstaan; (3) om die beskrywende en die normatiewe te integreer; en (4) om ontwikkelingstrategieë vir die Koreaanse kerk daar te stel.

Om hierdie doelstellings te bereik, gebruik hierdie studie twee metodes:

- (a) 'n analise van prediking in die interaksie van die kerk en kultuur in Korea; met gebruik van normatiewe Christelike bronne, aan die hand van die model van D Browning (1991); en
- (b) kwalitatiewe onderhoudvoering as empiriese ondersoek aan die hand van 'n model gebaseer op the bevindings van Rubin & Rubin (1995).

Die volgende vyf stellingvrae word gestel: (1) Hoe word 'n konteks vir prediking (her)ingestel? (2) Hoe kan die huidige geskiedenis van predikingsteorie in die Koreaanse kerk hersien word? (3) Hoe kan bekeringsprediking, wat skynbaar eksklusief is, in die kontemporêre pluralistiese Koreaanse samelewing omskryf en verdedig word? (4) Hoe kan die kerkboukuns van die Koreaanse kerk heroorweeg en herstel word? (5) Hoe kan die Christelike kultuur teenoor of te midde van die oproer van wêreldlike denke en kulture in Korea geformuleer word? Hierdie studie word afgesluit deur prediking voor te stel as interaktief en die prediker as interaksie-agent tussen kerk en kultuur. Praktiese strategieë word ten slotte ontwikkel om die stellingvrae te beantwoord.

KEY WORDS / PHRASES

Korean church

Interaction between church and culture

Practical theology

Cultural initiative

Ecclesiology

Preaching in the interaction between church and culture

Preaching context

Conversion preaching

Participation

Christian culture

Preaching as interaction between church and culture

Preacher as an inter-actor

ABBREVIATIONS

Old Testament	Abbreviation	New Testament	Abbreviation
Genesis	Gen	Matthew	Mt
Exodus	Exo	Mark	Mk
Leviticus	Lev	Luke	Lk
Numbers	Num	John	Jn
Deuteronomy	Deut	Acts	Act
Joshua	Jos	Romans	Rom
Judges	Jud	1 Corinthians	1 Cor
Ruth	Ru	2 Corinthians	2 Cor
1 Samuel	1 Sam	Galatians	Gal
2 Samuel	2 Sam	Ephesians	Eph
1 Kings	1 Ki	Philippians	Php
2 Kings	2 Ki	Colossians	Col
1 Chronicles	1 Chr	1 Thessalonians	1 The
2 Chronicles	2 Chr	2 Thessalonians	2 The
Ezra	Ezr	1 Timothy	1 Tim
Nehemiah	Neh	2 Timothy	2 Tim
Esther	Est	Titus	Tit
Job	Job	Philemon	Phm
Psalms	Ps	Hebrews	Heb
Proverbs	Pro	James	Jam
Ecclesiastes	Ecc	1 Peter	1 Pet
Song of songs	SS	2 Peter	2 Pet
Isaiah	Isa	1 John	1 Jn
Jeremiah	Jer	2 John	2 Jn
Lamentations	Lam	3 John	3 Jn
Ezekiel	Ezk	Jude	Jude
Daniel	Dan	Revelation	Rev
Hosea	Hos		
Joel	Joe		
Amos	Am		
Obadiah	Oba		
Jonah	Jon		
Micah	Mic		
Nahum	Nah		
Habakkuk	Hab		
Zephaniah	Zep		
Haggai	Hag		
Zechariah	Zec		
Malachi	Mal		

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Problem and theme

As a Christian worker, I involved myself for several years in church ministry, the mission field in Canada, and teaching at university level. During this time I have experienced that the more I concern myself with ministry, the more I find the need to do research on preaching in the interaction between church and culture. The reason for my interest in this issue is based on my conviction that all church-related work, especially preaching, should be done in the knowledge and understanding of church culture.

I have been involved in planting a church among the Korean congregation in Regina, Canada. This church was planted in 1995 and my work as a part-time missionary was accomplished in 1996 after two years of preparatory work and one year of ministering in that newborn church. The three years I had spent for planting the church in Canada were the hardest years of my life, not only because church planting in itself was hard work, but also because I was unaware of the culture that surrounded the church and its members, who were mostly Koreans living in Canada. Half of those members were adults who came to Canada between the 1960's and 1970's. Even though they were living in the late 20th century, their thoughts and ideas seemed to have remained somewhere between the 1960's and 1970's. The other half of them, formed part of the second generation of the adult members who came to Canada recently to study, and they were already following the postmodern thoughts and trends. There was thus conflict between the two groups. This complicated situation

challenged me to create harmony by using my preaching to hit the target between the two different groups of people in the church.

Measuring myself against the criteria for a good preacher, as set out by L Tisdale (1997:xi), I can conclude now that I was not a good preacher at that time. The reason for this is that “good preaching not only requires its practitioners to become skilled biblical exegetes, but also requires them to become adepts in order to exegete local congregations and their contexts, so that they can proclaim the gospel in relevant and transforming ways for particular communities of faith.”

With regard to the Korean church¹, the same problem is unfortunately currently happening. The Korean church, which had been famous for her rapid growth, is beginning to see the downward trend of her growth. Recent government statistics indicate the church growth rate as follows (Ro 1995:350): 1989: 9.0%; 1990: 5.8%; 1991: 3.9%; 1992: 0.6%; 1993: -4.0%.

This shocking data led to an investigation for reasons why the explosive church growth suddenly turned to a downward slide. According to C D Kwak² (1999:3), the Korean church has been losing her credibility to society for a number of reasons. These reasons have the following common consensus: “excessive competition and conflict among neighboring churches for increasing membership; secularization, in which the church has been flattered by modernism and has attempted to pander to human being’s need; negative images of Christianity as immature and hypocritical; group egoism like denominationalism, disunity, separatism; and the church’s silence on social problems.”

¹ This study limits its scope to the Korean Protestant church. The Korean church here means, therefore, the Protestant church as a whole in Korea and Korean refers to South Korea.

² In this thesis the names of Koreans are written with the first names followed by the family names. For example, if the first name is Chang Dae and the family name is Kwak, the name is written as Chang Dae Kwak or C D Kwak.

In my opinion however, there is more to it than that. Although many reputable studies concerning this crisis have recently been carried out, they have tended to be insufficient and stereotypical because most of them have studied quantitative church growth and decline without the full understanding and challenge of the interaction between church and culture. I believe the problem lies in the interaction between church and culture.

Similar to my experience in the newborn church in Canada, the Korean church also has different groups of people whom behave differently, believe differently, and belong to different subcultures. There is a serious difference especially between the old generation and the new generation. The new generation acts in the postmodern world of today and is the main character of the future Korean church. This great problem can be observed in almost all the churches in Korea. It is not just the problem of generation conflict, but the problem of multi-targets or multi-subcultures in a congregation.

D Buttrick (1994:54) introduces one of his students who complained that he served four different congregations that were all wrapped up in one:

“There were the 1950’s Christians who couldn’t understand why the church wasn’t expanding; they wanted more members and bigger buildings. Then there were the 1960’s Christians who kept talking about getting involved. They were followed by 1970’s Christians, many of whom were still keeping faith-journey diaries. Mostly, he was stuck with 1980’s Christians who, filled with nostalgia, wanted to turn back to old-time religion. I have four congregations!”

This student is not alone. Buttrick (ibid) rightly argues that churches in the 21st century are still haunted by cultural styles from the past. Nevertheless, we never preach the gospel to empty heads – the gospel addresses all sorts of well-formed culture faiths in any congregation. The following question arises from the problem of preaching in the interaction between church and culture: How

does the preacher hit the multi-targets and deal with the multi-subcultures in a congregation? It is more difficult if there is no conversion purposed preaching. The Korean church cannot deny the fact that there are not many converted new members in her church today: Most of the members are church people who move from one church to another. At this stage of the thesis, I am not quite sure whether this happens because churches and pastors do not preach to convert.

What I am sure of, however, is that there is the problem that many preachers in the Korean church today theologically assume that their congregations are Christians. In relation to this, Lloyd-Jones (1998:146) warns that such tendency is dangerous because preachers will then tend to preach to them in a manner suited to Christian believers, and their messages will be instructional without any evangelistic element. As a result, there will be no conversion. I also believe for sure that this problem is due to preaching. If preaching has lost (or at least weakened) the vocation of conversion, it happened not accidentally but purposely to have a taste for people and not for God. This is done in the name of church growth.

This is not far from the reason why the Korean church is declining. Does the present preaching theory of the Korean church have the solution to this? We also have to ask: Does the present ecclesiology of the Korean church (in which there is too much concentration on church growth without careful interaction with her society and culture) have the answer to this?

No church can survive if preaching cannot hit the right targets to convert people. Without conversion, preaching means nothing and the church has no reason to exist. The Korean church is currently struggling very hard to deal with these problems. The lack of knowledge of her surrounded culture both inside church and outside increases the problem. Since these problems are not on the surface, but remain deep inside, we have to rethink the present ecclesiology and preaching theory that the Korean church holds in the interaction between church and culture.

1.1.2 Purpose and delimitation

The first purpose of this study is to investigate the reasons behind church decline in terms of preaching in the interaction between church and culture in Korea. The aim is to discover the roots of the existing problems that makes our practice problematic, makes our preaching miss the target, and makes our church misunderstand the culture around it. As mentioned before, previous refutable research studies have been done before, but these have tended to be insufficient, stereotypical and without a clear understanding of the interaction between church and culture. In this study, I will examine the present ecclesiology and preaching theory of the Korean church and how these relate with the problem of the Korean church.

The second purpose of this thesis is to interpret preaching in the interaction between church and culture biblically, historically and theologically, in order to understand the normative Christian perceptions and practices of preaching. For this purpose, classic sources (such as biblical texts, church history, including some sayings of classical church figures) and the writings of contemporary Christian thinkers are used.

The third purpose of this thesis is to attempt a critical synthesis and comparative integration between understanding preaching in the specific situation in Korea and understanding preaching in the Christian normative sources.

The fourth purpose is to propose developmental strategies for the Korean church as “a metaphor of God’s love” (Browning 1991:279).

Many people today are questioning the role of preaching. I believe, however that preaching has the responsibility to convert people. To convert people should therefore be the aim of preaching. I also strongly sense that the church has a responsibility towards the society that is mediated by culture. This thesis

starts from the above confession to help the church, especially the Korean church, to understand her responsibility towards people and the society mediated by culture and to encourage her to correct ecclesiology and preaching theory.

This study's scope is limited to the Korean Protestant church. It is done from my own theological standpoint that comes from the Korean evangelical theological perspective.

1.1.3 Methodology and structure

To achieve the purposes of this study, two kinds of methods are employed: (1) an analysis of preaching in the interaction between church and culture both in Korea and in the normative Christian sources and (2) qualitative interviewing as an empirical interpretation. For the first part, the model advocated by Don S Browning in his book, *A Fundamental Practical Theology*, is adopted. This model is studied through four categories of general research questions. These categories can be explained as follows: *Interaction* is a descriptive practical theology (Browning 1991:48) for understanding preaching in the interaction between church and culture in Korea. *Interpretation* is a historical practical theology (:49) for interpreting preaching in the interaction between church and culture from the normative Christian classic sources. *Integration* is a systematic practical theology (:51) for fusing horizons between understanding the implicit in contemporary practices of preaching and the interpretation implied in the practices of preaching in the normative Christian sources. *Insight* is a strategic practical theology for a return to contextual experience, so that guidelines and specific plans that have been developed can be tested for their relevance in real life (:58; Poling & Miller 1985:93). For the second part, qualitative interviewing, a model based on the findings of Herbert J Rubin & Irene S Rubin (1995), is used in order to give reference to the first work.

This thesis is structured in five chapters. Chapter 1 points out clearly introductory matters for this study, including the problem and theme discussion, purpose and limits, and methodology and structure. There is the weakness of practical theology and the lack of its methodology in the ministry and theology of the Korean church. It resulted from the lack of critical theological reflection in employing the Western theology such as preaching theory, ecclesiology and church growth theory. For example, the American ecclesiological models that came into the Korean church without serious theological consideration seemed to suit the Korean culture and society for a certain time, but eventually proved to be inadequate because of its own flaws and some cultural and social change in Korea (Kwak 2000:5). With regard to this, Chapter 1 will attempt to give a practical theological overview for the church in general (with particular focus on the Korean church).

In the search for a root problem(s) of church decline in Korea, the following has to be borne in mind: “all our practices have theories behind and within them” (Browning 1991:6) and “a problem cannot be solved with the same type of thinking that created it” (Einstein in U Y Kim 1999:1). In line with this, Chapter 2 will examine the present ecclesiologies and preaching theories of the Korean church led by the historical, socio-cultural and theological overview of the interaction between church and culture in Korea.

In Chapter 2 and onwards, I will therefore argue that there is dynamic interaction between church and culture: If culture undergoes crisis, church will undergo crisis, because the church accommodates her host culture. Concurrently, if the church is in crisis, culture will also be in crisis, because the church has a responsibility towards her culture (Kreider 1995:91). Chapter 2 will also attempt to examine the decline of church growth in Korea in relation with the problem of preaching in the interaction between church and culture. This view suggests that preaching is the most powerful agent between the church and culture and that its main task is conversion as a transforming power. The

power of conversion causes not only change to an individual, but also to a community, and possibly to a culture as well.

After examining the context of preaching in the Korean church, interpretations of classic sources will be discussed (Chapter 3). For Christians, the texts that guide and direct normative Christian perceptions and practices are found in the Bible, church history and in the views of contemporary Christian thinkers (Browning 1991:49). This argument will be addressed to give this study a normative Christian perception. Three practices of preaching are presented, namely the biblical, historical and theological practice in the interaction between the church and culture.

Following the results of Chapter 2 and 3, Chapter 4 will attempt an integrative comparison between the understanding implicit in the contemporary practices of preaching and the interpretation implied in its practices of the Christian normative sources. This will be followed by a proposal of a development of strategies to be tested in the actual preaching context of the Korean church.

The concluding chapter will review the study and offer some recommendations for further study.

1.2 Practical theological overview

This study favors the term “practical theology.” Practical theology in this study is not used to convey an applied theology that aims merely to effectively utilize theories constructed by theoretical theologies such as philosophical, systematic or historical theology. Instead, the concept is viewed here to represent an activity in which theory and praxis are hermeneutically interrelated and where church and society are contextually interrelated.

This section (1.2) will first begin with a historical overview of practical theology and determine its nature, characteristics and methodologies. Thereafter practical theology in Korea will be examined in the light of a practical theology.

1.2.1 Historical overview of practical theology

James W Fowler (1999:75) describes the contemporary movement of practical theology as “a quiet but deep-going revolution”:

For the last two decades, we have been involved in a quiet but deep-going revolution in the self-understanding and work of practical theology. This is leading to changes in theological education and in the role of theology in the churches and societies from which the members of this conference come. This revolution centers in the recovery and re-emergence of practical theology as a discipline.³

I agree with C D Kwak (2000:84), who states: “The revolution in practical theology, which Fowler referred to, must be deeply involved in the history of theology as a whole.” In this sense, it is useful to examine the evolution of theology in order to trace the historical change of practical theology.

Edward Farley, a systematic theologian, identifies four major phases in the evolution of theology as the central activity and concerns of the church, and later, the university. According to Fowler (1999:76), Farley’s examination had shaken up our assumptions about “pure” and “applied” theology. The four phases in theology’s evolution that Farley identifies, can briefly be outlined as follows:

The first phase began with the New Testament church and continued until the

³ This was originally presented at the conference of the International Academy of Practical

early Middle Ages. In this era, theology involved personal and existential inquiry into the mysteries of divine revelation, undertaken for the sake of helping the Christian community live toward truth. Farley (1983a:31) calls this approach *theology habitus* - theology as knowledge of God pursued through the disciplines of prayer, study, liturgical participation, and the practices of discipleship. *Theology habitus* aimed toward the formation of persons and communities in accordance with the revealed knowledge of God.

The second phase in theology's evolution began to emerge in the second to the fourth centuries as intellectual responses of the church to the challenges of 1) heresies within and of 2) competitive intellectual ideologies from without. The joining of Christian doctrine with the philosophical perspectives of neo-Platonism in the work of Augustine provides a powerful example (Farley 1983a:31). Farley calls this phase *Theology Science*. He regards its height in the great *Summas* of Thomas Aquinas, with the rational reconciliation of the recovered philosophy of Aristotle with Augustinian theology (Fowler 1999:77). In this era, theology emerged as the dominant ordering framework for grounding all human knowledge in the West.

The third phase lasted from the rise of the medieval universities of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries to the era of Enlightenment. During this period, there was a subtle shift in the emphasis of theology: from knowledge of God to knowledge about God. Farley (1983b:25) calls this shift "a fundamental equivocation in the genre of theology" which resulted in "the modern narrowing of theology."

In the fourth phase, from the Enlightenment up to the present time, Farley (1983a:39-44) explains that the unifying rubric of *theologia* disappears. Theology as discipline disintegrates into many separated and self-sufficient academic disciplines. The theological-encyclopedia movement deepened the

Theology in 1995.

loss of both theology as *habitus* and theology as a unified discipline. This movement emerged in early nineteenth-century Germany and in later nineteenth-century America, and produced the fourfold pattern of the theological curriculum, namely: Biblical studies, church history, systematic theology, and practical theology, which is still found today in nearly every seminary prospectus in the world (Kwak 2000:85).

Fowler argues that it has not been too long since practical theology was regarded as a basement operation in most divinity schools and theological seminaries (not just in the States where he lives, but also in Europe).⁴ Furthermore, the more academically prestigious the school of theology, the greater the status difference between the so called classical disciplines of biblical studies, church history, and systematic theology, on the one hand, and the so called *applied* disciplines, on the other. Indeed, the university study of theological disciplines had little place for practical theology. Most often the actual work of preparation of pastors for church leadership was completed in more practically oriented seminars (Fowler 1999:75).⁵

Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) exercised a major influence on practical theology. Farley (1983b:25-26) compliments Schleiermacher's contribution under the influence of the "theological encyclopedia movement" in his time as follows:

It proposes a way of conceiving theological study that justifies its presence in a modern university, retains the independence of fields of scholarship, and founds it in the church and ministry.

⁴ It is not different in Korea.

⁵ Most of seminaries and universities in Korea do not have a well-organized curriculum in practical theology, while they do have it in other disciplines such as Biblical studies, church history, and systematic theology. As a result, (as Fowler points out) many pastors or theological students are wandering from seminar to seminar in order to be equipped. The irony is that while the Korean church has been experiencing church decline for last 15 years since mid of 1980's (according to J K Park & S H Myung - 2000:57), there has been more than 600 seminars every year. We call it *seminar syndrome*.

I, however, have to argue that Schleiermacher failed to offer a fundamental solution to the disunity of theological disciplines and to the narrowing of the nature of theology (Farley 1983b:25-26; cf Kwak 2000:86). The narrowing of theology also brought about the “alienation of theology and practice,” initiated by the narrowed understanding of practice, which Schleiermacher did not discard (:29-30). According to Farley (:30), three dimensions of practice are especially prominent and correspond to the renewal of theology. They are: the personal existential, the social political, and the ecclesiastical. The aim of theology is articulated through these dimensions. However, the problem in theological education, from the time of Schleiermacher until now, is that the ecclesiastical dimension of practice or the clerical paradigm has so dominated theology, that it has excluded the other two dimensions (:31).

The limitation of Schleiermacher’s understanding of practice was also exposed by his understanding of practical theology, which was closely related to the narrowing of theology. He divided theology into the following three fields: philosophical theology, as being the root of the theological tree; historical theology, the stem or body of the tree; and practical theology, the crown of the theological tree (Dingemans 1996:82). This division of theology indicates an order of theologizing: the best way to theologize is to start with philosophical theology, to proceed via historical theology, and to end by applying theories to practical theology.

According to J E Burkhart (1983:55), Schleiermacher argues that theoretical theologies (philosophical and historical theologies) cannot become theological until they are applied to practical theology. However, in reverse, his argument implies that if philosophical and historical theologies could provide sufficient and valid theories for church ministry, then practical theology did not have to elaborate its own theories but could effectively utilize the theories constructed by theoretical theologies. This shows that he limited himself from enlarging the horizon of practical theology widely and failed to understand that practice influences theory. As a result, he presumed that practical theology does not

affect philosophical or historical theology but seems to be a kind of *applied* theology.

By running counter to the situation in which both theology and practical theology were increasingly being narrowed, a revolution has occurred in theology and among theologians on an international scale for the past three decades (Kwak 2000:88). Naming this revolution “the practical theology movement,” Don Browning (1988:83; cf 1999:53) characterizes some features of the movement as follows:

The movement has attempted to go beyond, while still including, what Edward Farley has called “the clerical paradigm.” Whereas the older practical theology was seen primarily as theological reflection on the practices of the ordained minister, the newer movement ... sees practical theology as primarily reflection on the church’s practice in the world. The movement to varying degrees also strongly emphasized beginning theological reflection with descriptions of contemporary practices and the situations of these practices, correlates these descriptions of practices and situations with normative Christian sources, tries to be critical in its practical reflection, and sees theological ethics as a core component to the larger practical enterprise.⁶

Dingemans (1996:83), a Dutch practical theologian, writes that an important shift took place with regard to the inner direction of practical theological study:

Whereas formerly, practical theologians had first studied the Bible and the doctrine of the church in order to apply the results of their findings to the practice of the church, more recently, under the influence of social studies

⁶ This new efforts to redefine practical theology can be found in Germany, Holland, England, Canada, and Latin America, as well as in the United States. In the United States, two volumes of essays plus several books dealing explicitly with the re-conceptualization of practical theology by Browning, Fowler, Gerkin, Groome, Schreiter, Winquist, Miller and Polling, and McCann and Strain all point to the breadth and vigor of this renewed interest in practical theology (cf

they have changed their approach: in recent decades practical theologians worldwide have agreed on starting their investigations in practice itself. Practical theology has become description of and reflection on the “self understanding of a particular religious tradition.” This approach moves from practice to theory, then back to practice.

According to Kwak (2000:88), this practical theology movement has affected the so called revisionist or constructive theologians, such as Peter C Hodgson⁷, Douglas John Hall⁸, and David Tracy⁹. They no longer view practical theology as a sort of applied discipline. Rather, they appreciate the practical features of theology. They avoid the traditional fourfold division of theology, and prefer to seek a comprehensive understanding of theology.

In conclusion, the understanding of theology by revisionist theologians, as well as by the contemporary practical theologians of the already discussed practical theology movement, can be summarized by James Whyte’s words:

“... Practical theology takes its place as a critical theological discipline. It is the theology of practice. The systematic theologian asks critical questions about the way faith expresses itself in language; the practical theologian asks critical questions about the way faith expresses itself in practice, and about the relation between the practice and the language. Since the church’s life and action is related not only to its own self

Browning 1999:53).

⁷ P C Hodgson (1994:10) defines theology as follows: “Theology, as a practice of the Christian community, is a constructive activity that requires critical interpretation and practical appropriations of faith’s language about God in the context of contemporary cultural challenges and their theological implication.” His definition shows that theology employs two closely and constructively related ways of thinking: critical reflection and practical application.

⁸ D J Hall (1993:32-39) emphasizes the integration of the three dimensions in theological thinking: the historical, critical, and constructive dimensions should be exposed in creative tension with one another.

⁹ D Tracy (1983:62) defines theology as “the discipline that articulates mutually critical correlations between the meaning and truth of an interpretation of the Christian faith and the meaning and truth of an interpretation of the contemporary situation.” I value in this thesis his *mutual respect* between the two interpretations. However, as Fowler (1999:303) stresses, I think it should be done *under theological control*. I will discuss it further later in 1.2.3.2.

understanding and comprehension of its faith, but also to the changing society in which it functions, practical theology is triadic, concerned with the interrelationships of faith, practice and social reality, and is aware that the lines of force flow in both directions.”¹⁰

1.2.2 The nature and characteristics of practical theology

In view of my discussion of a historical overview of theology and practical theology, I clearly sense that all theology is “practical theology.” It means that the distinction between practical theology and theology as a whole disappears. Duncan B Forrester (1999:16) explains it this way: Practical theology as a distinct theological discipline is comparatively young, but the idea that theology as such is a practical science, has been there from the beginnings of Christian theological reflection. Wilhelm Grab (1999) understands this discussion by using the terms “integration” and “identification.” In brief, practical theology as a discipline within theology cannot be understood without setting it within the nature and function of theology as a whole.

It will be useful to summarize some of the marks that distinguish the emerging new directions in practical theology from other approaches:

1.2.2.1 Praxis-theory-praxis

A theologian as recent as Karl Barth (1936:47-70) saw theology as the systematic interpretation of God’s self-disclosure to the Christian church. According to Browning (1991:5-7), there was no role for human understanding, action, or practice in the construal of God’s self-disclosure in Barth’s view of theology. In this view, theology is practical only by applying God’s revelation as

¹⁰ James Whyte. “Practical theology in Alistair Campbell.” *A dictionary of pastoral care* (London: SPCK, 1987); Paul Ballard. “Practical theology as the theology of practice” in Friedrich Schweitzer and Johannes A van der Ven (eds). *Practical theology-international perspectives*

directly and purely as possible to the concrete situations of life. The theologian moves from revelation to the human, from theory to practice, and from revealed knowledge to application. This is a classical expression of the *theory-to-practice* model of theology. Such a model dominated most of the theological education in both Europe and North America in the middle decades of the twentieth century (Farley 1983a: 159-61)

Fowler (1995:1-11), however, claims that the practical theological method has its starting place from some context or contexts of praxis. It arises in reflection out of the context of ongoing practices in which communities of faith engage. Browning (1991:5-6) agrees with Fowler by stating the following: “theology can be practical if we bring practical concerns to it from the beginning. We come to the theological task with questions shaped by the secular and religious practices in which we are implicated.”

Practical theology starts from practices, goes to theory and returns to practices. Its aim is not the formation of theoretical understandings or principles. Instead, it aims at the modification toward greater faithfulness and adequacy of the practices with which it begins (cf Browning 1991:5-7; Fowler 1995:1-11; G Heitink 1999:267-8).

1.2.2.2 Empirical orientation

Of all the theological disciplines, practical theology is the most clearly and necessarily linked to a particular historical and geographical context (Ballard 1999:141). Present day practical theologians, therefore, are largely agreed that their discipline is empirically oriented (Pieterse 1993; Heitink 1993; Van der Ven 1993). The notion empirical does not stand in opposition to the notion hermeneutic. They are in line with each other. Practical theological research of the relation between text and context is hermeneutical by nature, but empirical

(Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1999).

by design (Heitink 1999:266):

It is hermeneutical by nature, because the research is directly to a process of understanding: the understanding of the significance of the Christian tradition in the context of modern society. It requires an empirical design because practical theological research chooses its starting point in the actual situation of church and society. This situation has to be understood as a situation of action that has to be explained by means of empirical research and has to be interpreted by means of theological theories.

Practical theologizing stays close to reality, not up in the air. This in itself can be considered “empirical.” Heyns and Pieterse (1990:69) assert that communicative actions in our time can only be studied by means of empirical methodology. It sounds very narrow. We, however, have to understand that in practical theology the term “empirical” is interpreted very broadly. A wide range of scientific methods can be used to fathom concrete praxis, such as historical, philosophical and literary methods. Academic work requires sound scientific methods to research a chosen theme in praxis. Solid empirical methods include both qualitative methods like interviews and case studies, and quantitative methods like the use of questionnaires and statistical processing of the result (Pieterse 2001:14; see Van der Ven 1993; 1998:52-58). Qualitative and quantitative methods, therefore, are not opposites but complement each other (Van der Ven 1998:58-60).

1.2.2.3 Interdisciplinary approach

By its very nature, practical theology has an interdisciplinary approach. This means it engages in academic discussion with social sciences like sociology, psychology and communication studies. Besides this, practical theologians will consult any other science and learn from it, depending on the nature of their research topics or problems. They also have close relations and debates with other theological disciplines such as the biblical studies, church history and

systematic theology, without which they cannot do practical theology – even though it is an independent discipline with its own field of study and research methods (Pieterse 2001:14).

The other theological disciplines in their turn need inputs from practical theology to do their theology properly. In addition, philosophy and philosophical thought is essential for clear conceptualization and theoretical insight in our field. Philosophers like H G Gadamer, J Habermas Paul Ricoeur are very influential in practical theology. Action theories, theories of metaphor, societal theories and the like are all rooted in philosophy on a meta-theoretical basis. In its contacts and communication with other disciplines, practical theology is continually reflecting on its own methodology as well (Pieterse 2001:14).

1.2.2.4 Integration and identification

Wilhelm Grab, a German theologian, argues that practical theology finds itself at this point in a process of reviewing and recognizing its topics and fields of study. According to him, the discussion of its identity as a field of study and a science has intensified. In addition, practical theology today has again turned to the question about its own identity as an independent and separate discipline within theology as a unified science (Grab 1999:177).

The history of practical theology as a discipline, separated from other theological disciplines, is explained from its beginnings with Schleiermacher up to our own time. Beginning with the late 1960's, the development of theory in the practical theology has been characterized by an increasing specialization in different fields of praxis. A first attempt to reformulate the theoretical foundation of practical theology in the post-dialectical era was already undertaken in the late 1960's and early 1970's (Grab 1999:178). Growing awareness of the world of everyday life, in which the Christian religion is rooted both in and outside of the church, led to a discussion about the theoretical foundation of practical theology in the context of the social sciences. A number of authors such as H D

Bastian, G Krause, H Schroer, R Zerfab and K F Daiber began to explain the “new” practical theology as a “Handlungswissenschaft” (theory of action).¹¹

It is obvious that the concept of the “Handlungswissenschaft” belongs to the socio-technological context. It must be noted, according to Grab (1999:179), however, that in regard to its adoption by practical theology, no critical reflection of this relationship occurred. That is why there was in the 1970’s a second attempt to redefine practical theology as a *critical* theory of action – as opposed to a merely technological, empirical functional theory of action (:181). Nevertheless, from these attempts one can see that the tendency of practical theology as “Handlungswissenschaft” was still dominating. This theology can particularly be regarded as a direct task-oriented theory to stimulate the church in the practical fulfillment of its tasks of preaching, education and pastoral care.

While the practice-orientated sectors of practical theology were becoming more specialized, the theoretical discussion in the 1980’s turned towards a new definition of the concept of practical theology as a whole. It maintains, according to Paul Ballard (1999:142):

There is no sharp distinction between practical theology and theology in general. All theology is in the service of the community of faith, and, therefore, all theology is essentially practical. Indeed practical theology takes its primary mandate from this fact. Practical theology, as a special activity, explicitly carries responsibility for the mandate that is given to all; and, at the same time, works definitely at the point of practice, while other theological disciplines may properly see themselves acting more indirectly on the basic theological agenda.

Ballard gives a well-condensed summary on this: Practical theology as a discipline within theology cannot be understood without setting it within the

¹¹ They are all German practical theologians because Grab limits his article to the German

nature and function of theology as a whole (:141). Pieterse (2001:86) clearly distinguishes this emerging new direction in practical theology from other and old approaches. Therefore, I believe practical theology includes (but it not limited to) reflective work in the functional areas of ecclesial practices.

1.2.2.5 Language behind the wall and language on the wall

Walter Brueggemann, an Old Testament theologian, excellently observed 2 Kings 18 and 19 regarding the story of when Jerusalem was surrounded by Assyrian troops sent by King Sennacherib while Israel was under the reign of Hezekiah. In this story two languages are observed between Hezekiah's men and the Rabshakeh, Sennacherib's ambassador. The one language is Aramaic, the language of international diplomacy, that Hezekiah's men wished the Rabshakeh to use when they conversed with him, so that their people on the wall would not hear him. The other language was Hebrew and was used by Rabshakeh.

Brueggemann (1989:1-34) has used this story as the basis to offer a powerful set of observations on the formation in faith that is required "behind the wall". This is for people of faith to offer their witness and to challenge the values and assumptions of secular societies "on the wall." In other words, if the churches want to offer their witness and guidance "beyond" the wall in a credible and relevant way, they have to relate Christian normative judgments and visions in language that is intelligible and that has bite for those who have no Christian background or commitments.

Fowler (1999:88) borrows concepts from Brueggemann and asserts that practical theology of this sort works in two languages: the languages of prayer, praise and proclamation "behind the wall," and the languages of public discourse "on the wall."

speaking countries or German-speaking sphere.

I agree with both Brueggemann and Fowler's argument that practical theology is rooted in praxis and is contextual, local, and close to experience. There is no doubt that this new practical theology links the study and strengthens the practices of ministry to the larger tasks of forming and guiding faithfulness in communities of faith.

1.2.2.6 Human partnership with God's praxis

James Fowler (1999:88-90) assumes that in the religiously pluralistic context in which we work, people exhibit high levels of spiritual hunger and ethical anomie. Therefore, we are to develop new forms of apologetic theological communication and formation addressed to those who are drawn to spirituality and to ethical awakening. In other words, we need to knit together cosmology and compelling metaphors for *God's praxis* in human society and culture.

At the same time, Fowler (:90) stresses more urgently that members of Christian communities must have support and metaphorical clarity for understanding how their vocations and faithfulness can be *part of God's praxis*.¹² He knows how we, as a result of these factors, find and formulate ways of offering the witness of Biblical faith on God's involvement in the processes of nature and history. Fowler however argues that we cannot afford to build theological approaches around a commitment to praxis without finding theological ways to help communities of faith correlate their own efforts at faithfulness with the ways God's spirit is present and active in our world (:89).

Fowler's argument challenges the need for intelligible and convictional metaphors to depict *God's praxis* in our time and in our society, and for equally compelling and co-related metaphors for patterns of *human partnership with God's praxis*:

¹² He calls it human partnership with God's praxis (1999:88).

I am calling for a theology, which arises out of, and returns to the local, the concrete and the contextual situations in which we work. It should make a serious effort, through intercourse with the Bible and with the works of others from different contexts and settings, to avoid ideological captivity and entrapment in abstractions. At the same time, it should endeavor to offer a relevant and powerful depiction that will enable us to see the subtle depths and awesome patterns of God's suffering presence and providential power in preserving, healing and redeeming God's beloved creation. Through such a practical theological witness we and those whom we teach, may be moved, empowered and guided in making ourselves more fully a part of God's work in our time and in our places (Fowler 1999:90).

1.2.3 Methodology of practical theology

The issue of the methodology in practical theology has been at stake. I agree with van der Ven (1994:29), a Netherlandic theologian and research fellow at the department of practical theology of the University of South Africa, when he says: "Some argue that practical theology has no methodology at all, and even should not have one... Others say that methodology is not to be considered as the alpha and omega of practical theology, but at least as a necessary condition for it. Without a sound and clear methodology, practical theology cannot fulfill its task."

The first concept refers to practical theology from the tradition-based perspective of theology as "sapientia." The second refers to practical theology from the tradition-oriented viewpoint of theology as "scientia."¹³ This research is based on the second view, the "scientia" perspective. Like van der Ven (1994:29) and S H Kim (1999:23-4), I define methodology as a frame of

¹³ Van der Ven, "Empirical methodology in practical theology: Why and how?" *Practical theology*

reference that one could look through, understand, and assess specific praxis or context. Then I have to ask which methodology is relevant for practical theology. There have been various attempts to develop meta-theoretical models to describe and shape the relationship between practical theology and the social sciences. Friedrich Schweitzer (1999:311-313) is excellent in giving us a brief historical outline of these developments in four models from the critical and constructive perspective. I will discuss three of the models below (the fourth one can be reduced to the second or third model).

1.2.3.1 A brief historical outline of the relationship between practical theology and the social sciences:

a. The first model is the model of *ancilla* that considers the social sciences as “ancillary sciences” of theology. A famous example of this model is presented by Eduard Thurneysen’s understanding of the role of psychology in religious education and pastoral care. According to Schweitzer (1999:311), psychology is with regard to anthropology, harshly refused as irrelevant to all questions of faith. With regard to the methods, however, psychological models and insights are to be drawn upon.

This model has rightly been criticized for its theological absolutism and isolationism (cf S H Kim 1999:29-33; Schweitzer 1999:311). Because of this it does not do justice to insights from non-theological sources. Schweitzer (ibid) also points out that the model’s distinction between questions of anthropology and methods of instruction or care has been accused of being artificial and inadequate because it overlooks the actual interdependence of anthropological and methodological assumptions.

I agree with the above critique that Schweitzer and others like S H Kim make. However, it would seem realistic to assume, and therefore to acknowledge,

in S.A. 9(1) 1994:29-44.

that the social sciences will, in part, continue to play an ancillary role in theology, just like all sciences may contribute ideas and methods to other fields of study, without ever becoming more than a subordinate source of ideas for them (cf Schweitzer 1999:311-2).

- b. The second model is the *social scientific critique* of assumptions, methods and procedures that may be found in practical theology, church and religion. Good examples of this are Sigmund Freud's psychology of religion or the critical sociological analysis of the social reality of church and religion (: 312). In other words, psychological and sociological methods are used to investigate the personal and social processes that are addressed by practical theology.

This is the first phase of two phase model Kart Rahner and others described in 1964: In the first phase, the theologian works together with the social scientist in order to get enough relevant, reliable and valid empirical information with regard to the topic concerned (Van der Ven 1996:33).

In the 1960's and early 1970's, this kind of critical social scientific approach was widely appreciated as a necessary contribution to practical theology (for example, Vierzig and Lammermann in Germany and William James and Carl Rogers in the United States). We understand that this appreciation emerged because it was considered a legitimate expression of the theological interest in liberation. It could not ignore church or religion as social realities, even though it was not based on theological assumptions.

This approach massively challenged churches and theology. There were many questions and arguments on methodology. The questions were interestingly enough, not related to content, which was more important for ministry and pastoral counseling between the two different disciplines of, theology and psychology, using different methodologies and traditions.

It can be concluded that this approach lacked a theological reflection on those empirical research methods and results from a theological point of view.

- c. The third model can be called *intentional cooperation* between practical theology and the social sciences. It is much more positive and constructive in using other disciplines' methods and results than the above two models are. Moreover, it is often stressed (although Schweitzer does not agree with this), that practical theology and the social sciences are to be considered equal partners (Schweitzer 1999:312-3).

In a general epistemological sense, Van der Ven (1996:34) calls it intra-disciplinarity. He determines that it refers to the borrowing of concepts, methods and techniques of one science from another and the integration of these elements into the other science. He argues that such intra-disciplinary processes occur in all scientific fields¹⁴ and that the history of theology is an example of intra-disciplinary borrowing, adaptation and integration.¹⁵

Nevertheless, as Van der Ven (1999:328) points out, the critical questions about the legitimacy of this kind of intra-disciplinary innovation or intentional cooperation are omnipresent. We have to carefully consider significant questions, such as: Is theology putting its identity at risk by such a venture?

¹⁴ For example the following: biology and chemistry (biochemistry), physiology and psychology (psychological psychology), linguistics and sociology (sociolinguistics), history and psychology (psychohistory), the linguistic sciences and philosophy (philosophy of language), and so on (see Van der Ven 1996:34; 1999:327).

¹⁵ For example, the moral theology of Thomas Aquinas is unthinkable without Aristotelian ethics; the Tubingen school of the first half of the 19th century could not have existed in the absence of philosophical idealism; Tillich's systematic theology is inconceivable without depth psychology and existential philosophy; Rahner's fundamental theology would be impossible without Hegel, and Metz's political theology incomprehensible without the Frankfurt school (See Van der Ven 1996:34; 1999:327-8). Regarding this, Schweitzer (1999:312) divides what Van der Ven explains as a model into various sub-models: for example, correlational models which often are related to the theology of Paul Tillich and that for the most part are to mediate between theology and psychology (cf Muller-Pozzi 1975; Klessmann 1980; Werbick 1983) and models of converging social, ethical and political options for example for peace, liberation and ecology (Nipkow 1975; Mette 1990). Here the main reference is to sociology and especially to the Critical theory of the Frankfurt School.

Will theology remain theology?

In reviewing these three models, and some sub-models, it becomes clear that all three have been developed within the context of overcoming the theological isolationism towards the social sciences. All three models are concerned with making sure that practical theology will not lose contact with the social sciences or contemporary culture (Schweitzer 1999:313).

It has to be pointed out that in spite of these meta-theoretical pleas for partnership, actual cooperation with the social sciences, as Schweitzer identifies it in a German situation (ibid). The reason for this is examined in the next section. The way to manage the tension between the demand for partnership with the social sciences and the demand for preserving identity of practical theology will also be discussed.

1.2.3.2 Critical and constructive perspective of the partnership between practical theology and the social sciences

While the social sciences contribute methodologically and materially to the work of practical theology, cautions can however be anticipated momentarily here:

According to James Fowler (1999:301), there is firstly a danger to allow the language and concepts of the social sciences to flow over into all kinds and realms of discourse in unexamined and uncritical ways. Secondly, Fowler (ibid) warns that the lines between theology and social scientific perspectives are further put at risk because the theory claims to be not only empirically descriptive, but also, in a strictly formal sense, normative as well. If this claim is correct, we have to face the potential of a serious dimming of the lines between theological and social scientific perspectives.

Thirdly, Friedrich Schweitzer (1999:307-14) points out that practical theology's partnership with the social sciences has worked against the unity between

practical theological sub-disciplines. There has been a strong impulse towards specialization and differentiation within practical theology. Schweitzer (:319) explains fourthly, that this is not simply for the reason that there was cooperation with the social sciences, but rather because of a unilateral,¹⁶ single track,¹⁷ application-oriented use of social scientific methods and results by individual sub-disciplines of practical theology.¹⁸

In accordance with Schweitzer (1999:319), it can be concluded that the main constructive criticism of this section is to create a different use of social scientific methods and results. The results should be more analytical and include more than one social scientific approach. It should definitely refer to practical theology as a whole and not just to an individual sub-discipline as its frame of reference.

Fowler's (1999:303) decision on how to manage the tension between the demand for partnership with the social sciences, and the demand for preserving identity of practical theology, is accepted. Interpretations of present situations and challenges, and interpretations of the Christian scriptures and tradition, should be constructive and critical. There should be a determined intent to keep the methods and perspectives from the social sciences *under theological control*.

¹⁶ Schweitzer (1999:314) uses this term *unilateral* to figure out the relationship between practical theology and the social sciences. What he means by the term is that in this relationship practical theology is exclusively on the receiving end and the social sciences are exclusively on the giving end. Methods and results of the social sciences are taken up and used by practical theology while there is no corresponding attention to practical theology on the part of the social sciences.

¹⁷ The term *single track* is to convey that only one route or only one social scientific approach is singled out for being used in practical theology. Sociological functionalism or systems theory, the Critical theory of the Frankfurt School, psychoanalysis or structural developmental stage theories of various types are the examples for this.

¹⁸ Schweitzer (1999:314-5) criticizes here *immediate application orientation* in using social scientific methods and results and stresses the importance of more analytic orientation based

1.2.4 Practical theology in Korea

Since this study is based on the church (theology)'s relationship with its culture, the reality of practical theology observed in the relationship between the Korean church and Korean culture will be clearly revealed (as critically described by practical theologians in Korea).

1.2.4.1 Contextual crisis

Those who enjoyed the miracle of church growth in Korea may be disturbed by the report that the Korean church is sinking and in deep trouble. Theologians and sociologists of religion in Korea perceive it as a prevailing and deep-rooted crisis in the Korean church today. J K Un (1999b:427) analyzes that this is not a crisis of decline of membership, programs, or volunteer leaders, but a crisis of the desperate loss of context as a result from the increased dichotomization of church and the world. He calls it a “contextual crisis” that confronts the church and practical theology in Korea.

J K Un (1999b:427-9) argues that three major historical phenomena contributed to the formation of this crisis: *the collapse of the communist empire* that caused the Korean church to lose the target of her spiritual war, *the decline of the Christendom of the West* that caused the Korean church to lose her spiritual and theological basis, and *the rise of technocracy* that instigated the Korean church to seek the Church Growth Syndrome in the economic growth period and to increasingly move in the direction of consumer orientation of the Gospel.

For this study, the term “dichotomization” is preferred instead of “contextual crisis.” To avoid misunderstanding, I would like to mention that my argument is not that J K Un is wrong, or that the term “contextual crisis” should be avoided. I advocate the use of the term “dichotomization” rather, because it is more

on the concerning specific situation to which the methods and results may apply.

accurate and inclusive to represent the crisis. It explains not only what happened on the surface, but also makes clear what is behind the underlying stories in the Korean church today.

1.2.4.2 Dichotomization of church and the world

The Korean society has radically changed since the economic development in the 1970's. This change created the possibility of a modern, open, democratic, and pluralistic society (Son 2002:9). J K Un (1999b:427-9) considers these changes in light of a series of historical phenomena such as the collapse of the communist empire, the decline of the Christendom of the West, and the rise of technocracy. In this process of transformation, Koreans have experienced the fading of past traditions and the emergence of new possibilities in the realm of social structure, the value system, political awareness and religious consciousness. We cannot simply say these phenomena are problems; they should rather be seen as possibilities and challenges.

The problem is however, the fact that the Korean church has found her identity in crisis. Today many theologians and religious socialists agree that the irrelevance of the church's presence and style in society is the main reason behind the all phenomena described above (W G Yi 1987:13; Y S Park 1987:354-58; B S Kim 1989:328; S S Kwon 1997:379-81; 1998:65-74; J K Un 1999a:299-232; S H Myung & J G Park 2000:58; C M Son 2002:9). Son (2002:9) argues that all these diagnoses offer one primary message: Despite its growth, the Korean church has lost touch with the ordinary people, society, and perhaps with history at large.

Accordingly, J K Un (1999b:427) points out that all these are not crises of decline of membership or programs, but crises of the loss of context as a result of the increased dichotomy between the church and the world. The church therefore is no longer attractive to people, especially those who were economically, socially and spiritually deprived in Korea. This raises the question

of whether it is possible for the Korean church to transform the Korean society by itself.

1.2.4.3 Dichotomization of church and church

Having experienced Korean society's transition from an agricultural society to an industrial society; and from a traditional consciousness to a new consciousness, the Korean church has dichotomized into two groups: The conservative, representing an orthodox theology (Yesung, Yekam and Yejang) and the liberal/progressive, representing a liberal theology (Kisung, Kikam and Kijang).¹⁹ Almost two thirds of the total number of Christians in Korea belongs to the Presbyterian churches, and most of the Presbyterian churches are conservative in outlook.²⁰

Son (2002:15) defines the trend of practical theology with reference to the conservative and liberal churches. Before considering anything else, one has to remember that the Korean church was divided into denominations by means of their biblical perspectives. "Scripture" was the norm most often appealed to by both conservative and liberal sides for laying down operational guidelines. The analysis of the trend of practical theology will be limited to the Presbyterian churches that cover two thirds of the total number of Christians in Korea:

1.2.4.3.1 The confessional approach

The group of conservative churches undoubtedly followed the theological line of Hyung Nyong Park²¹ and Yun Sun Park.²² These two heads of conservative

¹⁹ These represent the names of the denominations in Korea: every name that has "Ye" in it, usually refers to its conservative characteristic while every "Ki" refers to its liberal side. "Sung," "Kam" and "Jang" refer to the Sungkyul church (Holiness church), Methodist church, and Presbyterian church of Korea in sequence.

²⁰ See Kwon 1998:15; Son 2002:15.

²¹ H N Park as a systematic theologian wrote a seven volume series that was based on Louis Berkhof's work according to the Calvinistic and Reformed theological tradition. According to Jong Sung Rhee, he followed the tradition of Alexander, Hodge, Warfield, and Machen and consequently was fascinated with a Calvinistic orthodox theology with highly doctrinal and

churches are still characterized as mainline protestant in thought. Their theological character can be defined by their the use of scriptural norm that is largely applied deductively to various contexts. In the scriptural norm, practical theology applies God's word to the church in the world. Methodologically speaking, this deductive approach is applied by the principle of the scriptural norm. It cannot be denied that the line of conservative churches in Korea still uses a confessional approach (Son 2002:15-6).

1.2.4.3.2 The contextual approach

Contrary to H N Park, Jae Joon Kim²³ was a representative of theological liberalism. After J J Kim and Chang Keun Song contributed theological articles to the *Theological Review* (Sinhakjinam) of the Pyongyang Seminary in the early 1930's, the theological conflict in the Korean church was visible. H N Park, who had deliberately observed the theological activities of liberals for a long time, concluded that the liberals not only rejected the five fundamental doctrines of Christianity, but also emphasized, particularly, higher criticism and the fallibility of the Bible (H N Park 1964:32; H M Yim 1996:46-7). These two theologians' acute theological confrontation led continuous theological controversies for years among many theologians on both sides. As a result, the Korean Presbyterian church divided into two different camps in 1953.

Son (2002:17) argues that J J Kim actively promoted social participation, while H N Park and the conservative church developed faith in personal salvation and the future life after death. Some schools (Hanshin and Kamshin) that followed

speculative characteristics. Because he studied apologetics instead of exegetical theology, he concentrated in defending and supporting rather than on reinterpreting Calvinistic orthodoxy. And with the same reason he condemned liberal theology not as a different option but as a heresy (cf Hee Mo Yim 1996:38-40; Son 2002:16).

²² Y S Park wrote a commentary on the 66 books of the Bible. He is well known for his Calvinistic interpretation of the Bible (see Son 2002:16).

²³ He was one of well known liberal leaders such as Young Joo Kim, Joon Bae Kim, Pil Soon Chun, Pil Keun Chai, Kwan Sik Kim, and Chang Kyun Song. He studied at Princeton and Western Theological Seminary from 1929 to 1932 and formed his theological view while he was in Japan where theological liberalism was already prevalent (cf H M Yim 1996:46-7; Son

Kim's thought have been rapidly developing their thought on social issues. As mentioned earlier in this section, the Korean church was divided into denominations by means of their biblical perspectives (as we see from the example above). According to a directory of the churches in Korea, the number of Protestant denominations in Korea in 1993 was 165. Among them, 130 were Presbyterian denominations and 35 were other.²⁴

1.2.4.4 Dichotomization of human praxis and God's praxis

Sung Choon Oh (1999:47), influenced by Seward Hiltner, defines that practical theology considers the delivering of faith. This entails caring for people with the power of faith, and organizing the church with faith to encourage works of faith as its study object. Accordingly, the main theme of practical theology therefore depends how we understand faith. From this insight, offered by Oh (ibid), I have to argue that the Korean church has been confusing this faith with human praxis. They have lost the faith as God's initiative and God's praxis, and are talking another faith with human effort and human praxis.

As a result of this dichotomy between human praxis and God's praxis, practical theology in Korea has concentrated not on what God is doing, but on what we as human beings are doing. Practical theology in Korea needs to make "the fusion of horizon" between the vision of God's praxis and the vision of humans that God works through. In other words, as Fowler suggests (1999:88-9), we as practical theologians have to seek to develop co-related metaphors for the patterns of human's partnership with God's praxis.

2002:16-7).

²⁴ 1994 Hankuk Kyohoe Chusorok: Directory of the churches in Korea 1994, Seoul 1993). See also The National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK), Kidokkyo Yeonkam 1990 (The Yearbook of Churches in Korea 1990), Seoul 1991, 540-43. This book states that there were 60 Presbyterian denominations with 7.2 million members, 3 Methodist denominations with 2.2 million members, 3 denominations of the Holiness church with 1.0 million members, 5 Baptist denominations with 0.7 million members, 8 Pentecostal denominations with 1.5 million members, and 9 other denominations with 400,000 members.

1.2.4.5 Trichotomization of practical theology

Looking back over 100 years of the Korean church, S C Oh (1999:57-9) found as main factor, the great awakening movement, which started from Pyongyang in 1907, proceeded throughout the Christian history in Korea. This movement became a strong character and merit of Korean church growth. It placed communicating or delivering ministry (preaching and teaching) in the center and withdrew other ministries such as caring and organizing. I am not pleased with such a trichotomized division, claimed by S Hiltner and activated in an unhealthy and problematic manner in the Korean church today. I have to challenge the Korean church to integrate these three ministries with one another in creative tension.

1.3 Conclusion and remarks for the next chapter

In this chapter, I have proposed how to undertake this thesis (Introduction 1.1). I have also attempted to describe practical theology in general through determining its history, nature, characteristics, methodology, and practical theology situated in Korea (1.2).

The findings of Chapter 1 (understanding of practical theology, especially in Korea) will be applied to the study of preaching in the interaction between church and culture in Korea in Chapter 2. The first movement of Browning's (1991:47-8) four phased methodologies (Descriptive practical theology) will be used.

CHAPTER 2 INTERACTION: PREACHING IN THE INTERACTION BETWEEN CHURCH AND CULTURE IN KOREA

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the methodology of this study. This chapter is a critical description of the interaction between the church and culture in Korea (2.2) and of preaching with regard to this interaction (2.3). Empirical interpretations based on a qualitative interviewing give relevance to this study (2.2.5 & 2.3.3).

2.2 Interaction between church and culture in Korea

2.2.1 General historical trends

The church's standpoint on her culture depends on the historical time and context. At times, the church takes a position that is positive to her culture, at other times, it has a negative attitude towards it, and at times, it stands in between. Christianity's social status and the domain culture type affect this trend. In the early church history, for example, the church took a negative standpoint to Greco Roman and Jewish culture. However, later on, the church took a positive view of the Christian culture constructed during the time in which Christianity had become one of the state religions in the Roman Empire and evangelized most European countries. When the Western society was secularized, the church went back to its negative standpoint towards the surrounding culture (S W Cho 2001:31).

This relationship between church and culture is also based on realistic and existentialistic trends: for example, the church would take a negative position against culture if the church's social participation was prohibited or at least not welcomed by her culture (H R Niebuhr 1951; 1996:143-191).²⁵ In brief, historical trends of the interaction between church and culture depend on (1) the historical time and context, (2) Christianity's social status and the domain culture type, and (3) realistic and existentialistic trends.

2.2.2 Historical trends in the Korean church

What about then the Korean church? Where does the Korean church stand between the models discussed above? Is the Christian culture marginalized among cultures in Korean society? Is there vital contact between the Korean church and the Korean people? Does the Korean church give positive and constructive influence to Korean culture?

This section will search for the answers for the questions above. If I had to respond briefly to the last two questions, however, the answer would unfortunately be "No." I without doubt notice that there are many churches which have some vital contact and impact on their communities and surrounded cultures. I do not deny that. I am not referring to a particular church or to some churches, but I refer to the Korean church as a whole. This response does not come only from myself as the researcher, but from many others. In Chapter 1 (1.2.4.2) I have already pointed out the following common agreement among many contemporary theologians and socialists in Korea: The irrelevance of the church's presence and style in society is one of the main reasons behind all these crises phenomena (W G Yi 1987:13; Y S Park 1987:354-58; B S Kim 1989:328; S S Kwon 1997:379-81; 1998:65-74; J K Un 1999a:299-232; S H Myung & J G Park 2000:58; and C M Son 2002:9).

²⁵ He deals with this issue more politically in his book. He edited unpublished writings by W S

This section will attempt a historical sketch of the Korean church in order to examine historical trends of the interaction between the church and culture. In doing so, this study limits its scope to the Korean Protestant church. A brief history of the Roman Catholic faith in Korea will however also be considered because it was first introduced into Korea before the Protestant missions. After this discussion, the interaction between the Korean church and the Korean Culture (2.2.3) will be studied. This includes the cause effect relationship between some findings from 2.2.3 and the present ecclesiologies of the Korean church (2.2.4).

For classifying the period this study adopted K Y Shin (1999:851-81)'s time frame and modified it to use as follows: 2.2.2.1 The period during which the Korean church takes the cultural initiative (1884-1945), 2.2.2.2 The political and social chaotic period (1945-1970), and 2.2.2.3 The period during which the Korean church lost her cultural initiative (1970 to the present).

2.2.2.1 The period during which the Korean church takes the cultural initiative (1884-1945)

The following first two clauses describe the related history holistically, but mainly in terms of the interaction between the Korean church and her culture. Each topic is studied, such as Korea and the Korean Catholic church. The next two clauses and the summary, depict its history within a certain time frame.

2.2.2.1.1 Korea

Before the Korean War in 1950, not many people around the world knew what the word "Korea" meant. Virtually a hermit nation,²⁶ Korea's doors to the West

Johnson in 1996 (especially Chapter 5: Religion and the democratic tradition).

²⁶ The whole peninsula became united under the Kingdom of Chosen, meaning "The Land of Morning Calm," in 1392. At that time, the nominal protectorate of China was acknowledged by Korea, and for hundreds of years this land was closed to all outside influence except China, The name of the "a hermit nation" came out of this historical background. For further detail, see

gradually opened with the Open Door Treaty in 1882. However, because of the 88 Summer Olympic Games, the eyes of the world were at last fixed on Korea. There has been special interest in Korea's remarkable economic growth, especially since the devastation of the country during the Korean War. Similarly, Christians worldwide are amazed at the explosive growth of the Korean church, especially over the last two decades (B R Ro 1995:336).

How has a tiny suffering church from a century ago been able to evangelize one quarter of the total population of 46.8 million in Korea and to send over 10,000 Korean missionaries in 156 other countries?²⁷ Many Korean Christians today believe that Korea has become a *chosen* race (1 Pet 2:9) for God's purpose of evangelizing the world with the gospel in this generation. In fact, during the Yi Dynasty (1392-1910), Korea had been called the *Chosen* Dynasty (ibid).

Culturally speaking, before the transmission of Christianity, Korea could boast of a culture tested and refined through a five thousand year history. The Koreans spoke one common language. There were no dialects causing the kind of barriers seen in other countries like China and Japan. They wore the same kind of clothes, ate the same kind of food, and lived in the same kind of houses. In the villages, people still worshiped spirits and maintained burial mounds of their ancestors. The men worked in the fields and the women assumed the responsibilities of house keeping and caring for the children at home. Such homogeneity was an incentive to the maintenance of a single culture. It was into this homogeneous Korean culture that Christianity has been grafted (S J Lee 1995:230). It is believed that such homogeneity could be the fertile ground for the seed of the gospel to be sown.

Stanley T Soltau, *Korea: The hermit nation*, (Toronto: World Dominion Press, 1932).

²⁷ These figures are based on the estimated data given by Patrick Johnston & Jason Mandryk's *Operation world* (21st century edition) published in 2001. Figures of population given are for 2000: these figures are not rounded but are exact quotes of estimates from the 1998 UN population database. According to this, the population of Korea in 2000 is 46,843,989. The estimated number of Korean missionaries is about 12,000 in 166 agencies of which an estimated 10,646 are serving in 156 other countries. These figures are different from the data of the KWMC (8,206), according to *Operation world*, because many Korean missionaries were not part of that survey.

Politically speaking, however, there was also a serious disadvantage. From the time of the foundation of the Chosen Dynasty, its rulers adopted the Confucianism of Zhu Xi (1130-1200) as their political philosophy in all areas of religion and politics. By replacing the Buddhist Koryo regime, by eradicating Buddhism, and by elevating Confucianism to the national religion the founder of the Chosen Dynasty, all realms of society were regulated. In this process, Confucianism also oppressed and expelled Shamanism (H M Yim 1996:6; see J M Han 1986:108; D W Kim 1988:33-41; D S Ryu 1985:164). In the course of time, the Confucianism of the Chosen Dynasty developed into a highly rigid system based on the orthodox mentality. This happened because Confucianism did not allow any alternative idea, trivial deviation, or any divergent school or faction. Therefore, its schematic dogmatism, which dualistically defined truth and heresy, was solidified (Yim 1996:7; see C S Park 1982:23).

Under the dualistic principle of the Confucian truth or heresy, the Chosen Dynasty of the 18th century began to isolate itself from foreign countries. It expelled foreigners and banned all foreign ideas.²⁸ When the foreign powers asked the Chosen Dynasty to open its ports, political conflicts²⁹ could not be avoided (H M Yim 1996:8). The orthodox dogmatic character of Confucianism prevailed in the Chosen society for over 500 years. The mentality which distinguished heresy from orthodoxy pervaded the life of all the people living under the Chosen Dynasty, especially the ruling class and the educated people in all the areas of politics, society, culture, and religion (ibid; cf Y S Park 1986:133).

²⁸ The strict policy of isolation of Korea towards foreigners and foreign forces was expressed as follows: "Signposts along the way as late as 1880 said, 'If you meet a foreigner, kill him; he who has friendly relations with him is a traitor to his country'..." (George T B Davis, *Korea for Christ*, London: 1910, 44; quoted in H M Yim, *Unity lost-unity to be regained in Korean presbyterianism*, Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1996, 8)

²⁹ For example: against French warships (1866), against the American commercial vessel General Sherman (1866), American warships (1871) and against the Japanese warship Unyangho (1875).

It is clear, however, that Confucianism did not prevent the oppression of the masses. Neither did it prevent general poverty, treachery and corruption of officials, and the degradation of womanhood, which were so characteristic of Korea at that time in history. L George Baik (1929:21) comments on this as follows:

In the last century, there was much that was splendid and admirable in Confucianism at its best. As practiced in Korea, however, it had many deplorable results. It nourished pride, it taught no higher ideal than that of a superior man, and was agnostic and atheistic in its tendency; it encouraged selfishness, exalted filial piety to the position of the highest virtue and made this hide a multitude of sins; and it imbued every follower with a hunger for office that resulted in simony and sinecure. Religiously, the system taught nothing that goes beyond what is known and seen.

In this deteriorating situation, “the people were ready for any new religious appeal” (Hagwonsa 1960:353). They began to realize that one of the reasons for the unrest. Disorganization and weakness in their nation was the factionalism and the corruption of Confucian politics (Y B Kim 1981:84). They became concerned that the only way to save themselves from these disasters and misery was to turn to a new religion (S J Lee 1995:240). It was just at this time that Christianity presented itself as the bearer of a new religion, a new civilization, and a new political hope.

2.2.2.1.2 The Korean Catholic church

The Korean Catholic church mission began in Korea a hundred years ahead of the Protestant church mission through China in the 17th century. The Catholic church was established in the 1780's by a small group of politically reformed minded literati and religiously Confucian scholars called *Sohakza* (Shilhakza or Shilhakpa), such as Yak Chon Chong, Il Shin Kwon, and Tok Cho Lee. Since they were deeply attracted to Catholicism (which had already been introduced

in China), they studied Matteo Ricci's *Tianzhu* (The True Doctrine of the Lord of Heaven) brought into Korea by Doo Won Chong in 1963. This enabled them to get a taste of and grip a new religion, a new civilization, and a new political hope. The first Korean diplomat, who was baptized in Beijing in 1783, was Sung Hun Lee who came back to Korea to spread his faith. Catholicism, therefore, officially started in Korea in 1784 before any foreign missionary entered Korea (cf B R Ro 1995:336; A E Kim 1995:35).

Since then, Catholicism was identified as a religion by the Korean government. When it spread among the noble class, however, some conflicts arose. This was due to the differences between the orthodox characteristics of Confucianism and of Catholicism. The main reason for the persecution of the Catholics was a challenge to the orthodoxy of the Confucian Chosen Dynasty (cf K B Min 1982:67). For example, in order to maintain the doctrine of the Catholic faith, Catholics from the noble class abolished ancestor worship called *chesa* because they regarded it as a spiritual act of idolatry. At the same time the government understood it as a violation of the cultural property (cf H M Yim 1996:8). This was the first hermeneutical conflict between culture (tradition) and gospel (theology).

In addition to this, there were severe persecutions of the government due to the involvement of some Catholic elites in factious politics. These were: the Shinyu persecution (1801), Ulhae persecution (1815), Chonghae persecution (1827), Kihae persecution (1839), Bongo persecution (1846), and the Bongin persecution (1866-1873). The Bongin persecution in particular was the cruelest and lasted for seven years during the time that three foreign military powers from France, Russia and America invaded and resided illegally in Korea. Thus prince Taewongoon (1820-1898), who carried out this long and harsh persecution, identified the Catholic missionaries and their followers as agents of foreign powers. For over a hundred years of persecution, more than 10,000 Catholic missionaries and followers were martyred (cf A E Kim 1995:37-38; Rhee 1995:228).

In spite of these brutal persecutions against the Catholics in the early history of Korea together with other historical factors, such as the Japanese colonial period (1910-1945), Korean War (1950-1953), military dictatorship (1961-1987), and modernization (industrialization) in Korean society, the Catholic church continued to grow numerically to 2.1 million today (see P Johnston & J Mandryk 2001:387). C D Kwak (2000:17) however, criticizes this numerical growth because of the Korean Catholic church's neutral attitude during the first decade of the twentieth century when the Japanese dominance increased in Korea. According to Kwak (ibid), this attitude was in contrast to the Korean Protestant church, which attempted to protest against Japanese colonial rule (see S K Kim 1991).

I cannot fully agree with Kwak because what he argues is only a half-truth. It can be proposed that the Korean Protestant church protested against Japanese rule (1910-1945), while the Catholic church did not. It can also be proposed that while the Catholic church protested against the extension of the military regime in another time (1961-1987), most of the Korean Protestant church did not (see B R Ro 1995:337). As mentioned earlier, the irrelevance of the church's presence and style in society is surely the main reason behind all the phenomena described as crises, regardless of which the church was numerically growing or declining.

2.2.2.1.3 The Korean church³⁰ in the beginning (1884-1910)

The beginning of the Korean church was similar to that of the Korean Catholic church. Before American missionaries actively carried out their missionary work in Korea, the Christian Gospel had been transmitted to the Korean people by various channels. A few European missionaries, such as Carl A F Gutzlaff (a German of the Netherlands Missionary Society who had worked for the East

³⁰ Since this study defines the Korean church as the Protestant church as a whole in South Korea, the Korean church will refer to the Korean Protestant church from this point onwards in this thesis.

India Company), had visited Korea shortly and tried to distribute religious tracts and Chinese Bibles (see Y H Lee 1985:57-69; I S Kim 1994:67-85; C D Kwak 2000:17).

However, most of the missionary works were irregular attempts in order to preach the gospel to the Koreans who were residing in Manchuria, the northeastern part of China, and not in Korea. In fact, a native of Wales, Robert Thomas, landed at the river Taedong in North Korea in September 1865 to witness to Koreans but he was arrested and executed by the government. John Ross and his brother in law, John McIntyre, who were missionaries of the Presbyterian church of Scotland, witnessed to Koreans in Manchuria and baptized two Seo brothers, Sang Yoon Seo and Kyung Jo Seo, in 1878. In 1883 Sang Yoon Seo brought a Chinese New Testament to Korea. With his brother, who became one of the first seven ordained ministers in Korea, he started the first Korean church in the village of Sorae in the spring of 1884. This was before the foreign protestant missionaries even founded their first church (B R Ro 1995:337; H M Yim 1996:10).

After the persecutions of the Catholics, the pioneer Protestant missionaries from Western Europe experienced the following difficulties: indifference, martyrdom, and the limitation of their activities. As a result, they could hardly plant the Gospel or establish a church in Korea. Protestant churches of the European style could therefore not take root in the soil of Korea (H M Yim 1996:10).

Official Protestant missions began in 1884, exactly a hundred years later than Catholicism started, with Northern Presbyterian missionaries from the United States, Drs J W Heron, Horace J Allen, and Horace G Underwood and the first American Methodist missionaries, Drs H G Appenzeller and W M Scranton. The first medical missionaries, Drs Heron, Allen, and Scranton, with Western medical knowledge made an enormous impact on the royal families, as well as on Korean society. Other foreign missions agencies sent their missionaries to Korea at the end of the 19th century: Plymouth Brethren (1886), the Australian

Presbyterian Mission (1889), Canadian Baptists (1889), Church of England (1890), Southern Presbyterian church in the United States (1892), Canadian Presbyterian Mission (1893), Southern Methodist Episcopal church in the United States (1896), Seventh Day Adventists (1904) and the Salvation Army (1908) (C D Kwak 2000:19; see Y J Kim 1992:68-71; A E Kim 1995:39; B R Ro 1995:337).

The Korean church mission led by these foreign missionaries contributed mainly indirectly and culturally. They built many schools and hospitals to provide educational and medical services.³¹ They diligently enlightened and mobilized intelligent young leaders who were converted into Christianity. These young leaders later worked for political, social and cultural transformation in the Korean society, through the YMCA, and the Independence Society or the All People's Cooperative Association. They even held a huge party for celebrating the Korean king's birthday and displayed a Korean national flag at the churches every Sunday (K Y Shin 1999:864). Such inculturation³² did not just happen because direct preaching of the gospel was difficult due to the government's hostility towards the foreign religion. It happened rather because it was purposefully well planned and practiced with careful endeavor.

As a result, the foreign missionaries began to earn the devotion of the Korean people. Their work towards inculturation had a positive influence on preaching the gospel. The spiritual awakening of the Korean church, historically called the

³¹ The Methodist missionaries especially stressed education. Dr Appenzeller opened the first school (Paejae Hakdang) in 1886 to teach boys English. In the same year, Mrs Scranton started the Ehwa Girl's School, which was developed into a college (1910) and later, into one of the largest women's universities in the World. Presbyterian missionaries also soon established schools of their own. By 1910, there were some 800 Christian schools spread all over Korea and accommodating over 41,000 students, which was about twice the total enrolment in all Korean government schools. See for more A E Kim (1995:40-41) and C D Kwak (2000:19).

³² In recent years a new term has surfaced to describe a style of mission that allows for an aggressive promotion of the Jesus tradition without seeking to dominate or destroy another culture. Pedro Arrupe (1978:172-81) defines inculturation as "the incarnation of the Christian life and of the Christian message in a particular cultural context, in such a way that this experience not only finds expression through elements proper to the culture in question, but becomes a principle that animates, directs and unifies the culture, transforming and remaking it so as to bring about 'a new creation.'" See more on this G F Snyder (1999:1-5).

Great Revival of 1907 in Pyongyang, ignited a nationwide revival movement and occurred while the church was preaching the gospel with such cultural sensitivity. This period therefore shows that the Korean church had kept the sound and balanced ministry of preaching the gospel spiritually and culturally both in church and society.³³

2.2.2.1.4 The Korean church in Japanese oppression (1910-1945)

The year 1910 marks a fatal disgrace and deep grief to Koreans because it was during this year that Japan annexed Korea. Korea became a victim of Japanese imperialism. Many of them left their country to Manchuria, China, and America, in order to fight for the independence of the nation. Many of them came to church during this period in order to divert their minds from sorrow. Christian leaders were prominent in organized societies such as the YMCA, the Independence Society, and the All People's Cooperative Association, in order to enlighten Korean resistance to colonization. Many regarded the church as a refuge from Japanese oppression (U Y Kim 1999:23).

During this period, the Korean church led by foreign missionaries tried to preserve political neutrality and concentrated more on religious efforts in order not to create conflict with the Japanese government. The Japanese administrative policy towards the Korean church was friendly at first and everything was seemingly fine. However, the Japanese government gradually changed its policy to an open policy of oppression and hostility toward Korean people and the Korean church (K Y Shin 1999:864).

In the beginning of the year 1919 there were two memorable events that took place in a month's time. The first event was the March First Independence Movement that proclaimed the Declaration of Independence by 33

³³ With the influx of American Protestant missionaries into Korea in 1884, there were potential problems of the church division later in Korea. H M Yim (1996:10) prophetically points out. In a sense they came from various Protestant denominations and imported their own confessions

representatives of the people, and engaged in a nationwide peaceful protest demonstration. The Korean church took the initiative of this movement: 16 of the 33 representatives were Christians and the church's preparation was very self-governed and secret. There was no prior consultation of the missionaries. From this day, in Seoul, more than two million people participated in 1,542 demonstrations. It was at the churches that Koreans gathered to read the Declaration and to begin their demonstration in practically all towns and villages. In addition, the Christians insisted on non-violence. However, the Japanese government responded brutally to these peaceful demonstrations by killing 7,509 Korean people, injuring 15,961 and arresting about 47,000 (Yang 1993:179; Rhee 1995:263; C D Kwak 2000:23).

The second event was the most tragic incident. It is known as the Jaeamri Methodist church Incident and that took place on April 15 1919. Japanese police officers locked congregations inside the church and burned them to death. The fire killed about 30 believers. The Korean church experienced severe persecution from the Japanese government since then because of her initiation and active involvement in the independence movement (U Y Kim 1999:24; see The Institute of Korean church History Studies 1990:35-41; I S Kim 1994:219-21). As a result, many Korean Christian politicians and intellectuals went abroad to continue promoting the independence movement, and the sending of mission boards, mostly theologically conservative, who demanded that their missionaries should preserve political neutrality (cf The Institute of Korean church History Studies 1990:59-63). By actively paying attention and participating in cultural and contextual issues around her, however, the Korean church was able to attain not only a priceless tradition of deep sympathy with the nation's suffering, but also great confidence from the Korean people, who began to recognize Christianity as a religion for the people (:40; C D Kwak 2000:24).

into Korea. The Korean church accepted them without any serious theological reflection.

The Korean church, however, was not just active in contextual matters culturally, but also desperate in keeping her faith spiritually. During 1935 when the Japanese government ordered all schools and churches to participate in Shinto shrine ceremonies and to bow down to the gods,³⁴ the Korean church and the missionaries refused to do so. The result was that the schools and churches were closed. Lives were threatened.³⁵ Many missionaries were deported to their home countries. Due to the restricted missionary works, nearly 200 local churches were closed. About two thousand Christian leaders who were involved in the anti Shrine worship movement were imprisoned, and more than 50 Christians suffered martyrdom for preserving their faith (The Institute of Korean church History Studies 1990:294-99, 337-8).

2.2.2.1.5 Summary

The period (1884-1945) during which the Korean church took the cultural and social initiative was reflected on so far. Although this initiative and the Korean church's healthy growth during the period were God's will and divine providence, the following observations can be made from the discussion above:

First, the Korean church's initiative came from her partnership with foreign missionaries that resulted in the spreading of the Christian (not the Western) culture into Korean society. The Korean church is often criticized for that she needs to repent her worship of Western culture (cf S W Cho 2001:33). Such an attitude of the Korean church can be argued, started much later than this period

³⁴ All Koreans, including Christians, were compelled to worship "Kami" and "Amaterasu" at Japanese Shinto shrines. "Kami" designated a deity, which the Japanese believe to be revealed in awesome natural phenomena, mythological figures, historical heroes, and the spirits of their ancestors. Shintoism, therefore, can be said to be a polytheistic and syncretistic religion of Japan. Among all the gods, "Amaterasu," the sun-goddess, was worshipped as the highest deity, and at the time was identified with the ancestor-deity of the imperial family of Japan. For further detail, see The Institute of Korean church history studies 1990:285ff).

³⁵ This Shinto shrine worship issue later on resulted in the division of the churches in Korea between those who considered them as preservers of faith during the Shinto shrine crisis and those who failed to do so. After the liberation of Korea in 1945, for example, the aftermath of Shinto shrine worship caused chaotic conflicts that resulted in the divisions of the Koryo group and the Jaegun group in the Presbyterian church (see H M Yim 1996:52; H K Kim 1998:111-2).

(1884-1945). It may be argued that the early missionaries led the first efforts of indigenization and that the Korean leaders were second (see S J Lee 1995:231; D S Ryu 1980:12). However, according to my own understanding, it started as a partnership between the two on a large scale and in some cases, the Korean leaders even took the initiative. For example, Sung Hun Lee officially initiated Catholicism by in 1974 before any foreign missionary came to Korea (cf B R Ro 1995:336; A E Kim 1995:35). The first Korean protestant church was also established by Sang Yoon Seo in 1984 before the foreign protestant missionaries founded their first church (B R Ro 1995:337; H M Yim 1996:10). Likewise, two Koreans, Bin Jung and Sang Jun Kim founded the Korean Holiness church in 1907 (M J Lee 1929:51 in S U Jeong 2000:75).

Secondly, the works of inculturation, such as the educational, medical, and evangelical ministries of the Korean church in the Korean society during this era have become the tradition of the Korean church and provided the background for the later development of the indigenous church of Korea. Accordingly, D S Ryu (1980:13) analyzes rightly the characteristics of the early Korean church as follows: “The first is the establishment of the church for the spiritual liberation of human beings... The second is medical work for liberation of human beings from a disease... And third is educational work making possible intellectual liberation.”

Finally, by actively and deeply paying attention to and participating in Korean society and culture, the Korean church was able to earn great confidence from the Korean people, who began to recognize Christianity as a religion for the people and the Korean church as a refuge that deeply sympathized with the nation's suffering.

2.2.2.2 The political and social chaotic period (1945-1970)

After the liberation from Japanese oppression in 1945, Korea faced not only the great task of restoring its sovereignty, but also great political and social chaos.

The agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States, to participate jointly in the surrender of Japan (regardless of the Koreans' strong opposition movement) split the country into two opposing sides, namely the communist government of the North, supported by the Soviet Union, and the democratic one of the South promoted by the United States in 1948. The division of the two Koreas was perpetuated through the Korean War (1950-1953) and caused by the struggle between the two powers (A E Kim 1995:45).

During this chaotic and melancholy period, the church in the North was severely persecuted by the Communist government since it viewed the church as a great threat to its rule. Shortly before and at the time of the outbreak of the Korean War, many Christians in the North thus fled the South for freedom of faith. The Communist invasion of the South, however, took place so quickly that many church leaders were killed or carried away back to the North. During the Korean War, many churches were destroyed, for example about 152 Presbyterian churches, 84 Methodist churches, 27 Korean Holiness churches, 4 Salvation Army churches, and so on. There were the kidnapping of church leaders by the Communist North government: 177 (Presbyterian), 46 (Korean Holiness), and 44 (Methodist) (ibid: see K W Kang 1999:107).

The Korean church in the South, however, had high privilege and status because of the different political and social atmosphere from the North. Accordingly, in this period, the Korean church began to develop her close relationship with political culture (see S K Lee 1995:65-98; H S Kim 1997: 289-307). There are various interpretations on this. One finds the cause in the free and different atmosphere created by the Christian President and leaders in the Democratic Parliament (Rhee 1995:270). Others insist on the influence of the American churches and missionaries as a main reason (I C Kang 1996:270-74; C D Kwak 2000:32). Others consider anti-communism as a product of the period that related to the existential motive of the Korean church. During this period both government and churches experienced the brutal massacre by the communists during the Korean War and observed the severe persecution of the

North Korean communist government towards Christianity after the War (H S Kim 1997:289-307; K Y Shin 1999:804-5).

In my own opinion, all three of these factors affected the Korean church's close relationship with political culture. According to the earlier three points on historical trends involving the interaction between church and culture (2.2.1) Rhee's argument is well based on my second point, *Christianity's social status and the domain culture type*. Kang and Kwak too are clearly right in relating it to my first point, *the historical time and context* which the United States initiated and politically and militarily dominated over the Korean government. Kim and Shin's argument is fair enough and depends on my third point, *the realistic and existentialistic trend*.

However, because of her positioning in that pattern, the Korean church could not easily criticize the government and the Christian president when they practiced injustice and misused their political power. In addition, the Korean church was often accused of being a pro-government group (Rhee 1995:270). It is very ironical that before she was a symbol of the religion of the nation and a refuge of people, and now she was called pro-government. Although the Korean church flirted with the government for a certain time, she began to lose her cultural initiative since then. It is not certain whether she realized it or not.

There was yet another issue where the Korean church began to mislay her cultural initiative: in the divisions of the churches. By the end of the 1950's, the Korean church experienced three great divisions in the Presbyterian church: the division of the Koryo and the Jaegun in 1952, the split of the Kijang and Yejang in 1953, and the division of Hapdong and Tonghap in 1959 (H M Yim 1996:52-73). The first division was ascribed to the issue of the Shinto shrine worship that was mentioned above. The second and third division, however, emerged from the theological conflicts between conservatives and liberals. The major reason for the second split was the difference in understanding the inerrancy of the Bible and its inspiration. The third split was as a result of the conflict between

the pro-ecumenical group based on tolerant evangelistic theology and the anti-ecumenical group based on fundamentalist theology (:85-98).

Later many other denominations also experienced the painful schism: For example, the Korea Holiness church was divided into two groups, namely the Yesung (anti-ecumenical group) and Kisung (pro-ecumenical group).³⁶ The Protestant church continued to split into officially 43 denominations (see D H Kim 1986: appendices; H M Yim 1996: xvii). Such denominationalism inside church caused the Korean church to fail to pay attention and participate in national issues outside the church. With these two major characteristics, pro-government and schism, the Korean church began to lose the cultural and social initiative and confidence that she gained from the Korean people and society in the early history.

Nevertheless, the Korean church continued to grow explosively during this period (1945-1970). This is abnormal and problematic because this growth was not based on sound theological foundation or sincere participation in the surrounding culture and context as discussed above. During the 1970's, many people in Korea and all over the world celebrated the marvelous growth of the Korean church as God's blessing. Now many inside and outside Korea obviously notice the stagnation of the growth since the mid of 1980's and are in quest of the reason for this. Someone may argue from the religious sociological perspective that the sufferings experienced by Korean people during the Japanese occupation in Korea (1910-1945), the Korean War (1950-1953), and the constant threat of Communism from North Korea, have encouraged them to find their security in God and from this point the Korean church continuously and rapidly grew (C J Ro 1998:21).

³⁶ Generally speaking, the Korean church has dichotomized into two groups: conservatives, representing an orthodox theology (Yesung, Yekam and Yejang) and liberals, representing a liberal theology (Kisung, Kikam and Kijang).

According to what has been discussed until now, I however consider it as a forecast tragedy. No church can continuously grow if it ignores its context. No church can even survive if it loses contact with people. Although the Korean church kept growing during that time, however, at the same time she kept on creating many problems that can now be observed both in the Korean society and the Korean church.

2.2.2.3 The period during which the Korean church lost her cultural initiative (1970 to the present)

This period in Korean history can be described as an era of change in every aspect. Firstly, on a political level, there were dictatorship and political struggle for democracy. Secondly, on an economic level, there was the prominent development of the industrialization of the nation. Thirdly, socio-culturally, there was the rapid change of lifestyle (using all kinds of high technology and electronic media freely), with an increasing interest in the Korean traditional culture and increasing critics on the Western culture (see B J Jung 1989; H Y Cho 1994). Fourthly, on a religious level, there were the multi-religion phenomena, created by the emerging interest of traditional cultures, while Christianity became marginalized. This was in a society that suddenly changed the religious atmosphere. It gave no religion the absolute authority or influence over the Korean society (see E Yun 1994; K Y Shin 1999:866-8). Fifthly, inside the Korean church, polarization took place between the conservatives and the liberals³⁷. The emergence of Korean theology or the indigenization of theology such as the Minjung theology,³⁸ the rapid and famous church growth movement

³⁷ During this period, the difference of these two sides was obvious. The conservative churches more concentrated on extending their church influence by quantitative membership growth while the liberal churches involved in various social and cultural movements based on Minjung theology in 1970's (K Y Shin 1999:865).

³⁸ Minjung theology has emerged out of the Korean situation and of the involvement of Christians in the struggle for social justice in Korea since 1970's. *Minjung* are those who are oppressed politically, exploited economically, alienated sociologically, and kept uneducated in cultural and intellectual matters. For more on the minjung theology see my discussion later in this thesis (2.2.2.2.3); N D Suh, "Toward a theology of Han," in *Minjung theology*, ed. The Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia (Maryknoll: Orbis

(U Y Kim 1999:34), mass evangelical meetings,³⁹ and the arising need for a re-engagement between the Korean church and the Korean culture that she had lost (K Y Shin 1999:867).

J H Kim (1991:120) insists that the Korean church's growth in this period had doubled each decade and that she was internationally evaluated as the model of a growing church. In 1960, the Korean church's population numbered only about 700,000. In 1970, however, membership exceeded 3 million, which was more than four times of that in the 1960's. The 1970's and 1980's were no less remarkable for membership growth: 7 million in 1980 and 12 million in 1990 (Gallup Korea 1998:218). Since the mid 1980's, however, the church growth began to decline.

Why did the Korean church grow so rapidly in this period? Why did the number of Korean Christians decrease from the mid 1980's? There would be no single factor of church growth in Korea. Several factors may combine to create a fertile environment for church growth in all dimensions, not just in the numerical growth of the Korean church. With regard to this, S K Lee (1998:96; 1995:3) analyzes the reasons of church growth in Korea as follows:

Although the reason for the Korean church's growth was basically God's will and divine providence, some explanations have been given for its leveling out: 1) It originated in the mission policy of the early missionaries in Korea, which undertook mission by means of education, medical aid, the Nevius Method, the division of the mission field and so on. This assertion was strongly made by the missionaries in Korea, such as C A

Book, 1981); W S Han, *민중사회학 (Minjung Sociology)* (Seoul: 종로서적, 1984); and A S Park, "Minjung theology: A Korean contextual theology," in *Pacific Theological Review* 18 (1985).

³⁹ During this time, mass evangelical meetings permeated into the Korean church: Billy Graham Crusade of 1973, Explo '74, '77 Evangelization, '80 World Evangelization Crusade and Protestant Centenary Celebration in 1984 (A E Kim 1995:48; E S Cho 1996:348). These mass crusades had a great impact on the Korean church which exploded into zeal for soul-winning and in fact had earned a great number of souls: for examples, Explo '74 led around 272,000 people to the decision to believe in Christ and in '80 Crusade about one million people became new Christian believers (J G Kim 1995:59).

Clark and Samuel Moffett. 2) It was caused by the Korean mentality-religiosity, religious emotion and peculiar religious zeal. This was emphasized by the Methodist theologians, such as S B Yoon and D S Ryu, and S Palmer who had worked as a missionary in Asia. 3) Another opinion is held by those who explain the growth in terms of religious syncretism in the Korean church, which accommodated an understanding of the Korean traditional religions with the Shamanistic world-view. David Chung, who argues for it in his thesis, entitled “Religious syncretism in Korean society” in 1959. 4) The most persuasive reason of all is that of the social contextualization or historical contextualization theory. This explains the Korean people’s receptivity of Christianity in the context of the historical lives of Koreans. A representative of this contention is C S Chung. The theory that the growth of the church has a deep relationship with the contemporary social context has already been ratified in the history of the Western church as well as of the Korean church.⁴⁰

As mentioned above, the Korean church’s growth and decline, was affected by many reasons, arising from not only a spiritual or theological dimension, but also from the sociological and contextual dimension. At the same time, however, there is agreement that the problem facing the Korean church was her negligence of social responsibility and service. This is very clear especially when I compare the early Korean church to the present one: The early Korean church (1884-1945) grew steadily and soundly in all dimensions because of her healthy and balanced ministry (spiritually and culturally) in both the church and society. On the contrary, since 1960, the Korean church concentrated more on her own issues and needs and church growth has only been in numerical growth (cf C D Kwak 2000:41).

Many criticize today that the Korean church was much grown but little matured. In my own opinion, such a problem is closely related to the Confucian orthodox

⁴⁰ This was originally written in Korean, translated into English by C D Kwak (2000:43-4) and

mentality. This state of mind does not allow any alternative idea or trivial deviation, and possibly caused the Korean church to isolate herself from all other new and fresh ideas because of her lack of serious theological reflection on them. This prevailed for long enough in Korean society to influence all the areas of politics, society, culture, and religion (H M Yim 1996:7-8; cf C S Park 1982:23).

In relation to this, I C Kang (1996:270-74) rightly argues that another factor, namely the American churches and their missionaries, also decisively influenced the Korean church. This can be understood when considered that most of the missionaries were educated in the conservative seminaries in the United States.⁴¹ The Korean church under the auspices of the USA government after the Korean War tended to be a conservative political position, whether theologically conservative or liberal (:259-70). Since then this trend has become a socio-cultural tradition and has impacted continuously on the formation of the theological tradition of the Korean church. In contrast with it, here I strongly feel the need for the formation of Christian culture and ultimately the necessity of regaining the cultural initiative of the Korean church.

2.2.3 The Korean church and Korean culture

The historical trends of the interaction between church and culture in the Korean church have been discussed above in large. To avoid repetition, I will briefly but specifically summarize my interpretation of the relation between the Korean church and the Korean culture as follows:

modified by me for the emphasis in this thesis.

⁴¹ There were 144 missionaries of the Northern Presbyterian Missions in Korea: 8 unordained men, 40 ordained men, 9 male doctors, 32 single women, and 55 wives. Among the ordained men, 7 theological seminaries are represented: Princeton comes first with 16, McCormick next with 11, San Anselmo with 4, and Union in New York with 3. About 10 Bible institutes are represented, Moody easily leading with the Bible Seminary in second place. For more detail see H M Yim (1996:16).

Firstly, the Korean church has a weak set up regarding the relationship with her culture. S B Lim (1997a:4-5) argues that the Korean church's crisis is a result of this weak set up. More specifically, he insists that the Korean church has difficulty to relate to the traditional culture as well as to mass culture (:4). This is a significant observation, because as noted before, many Koreans today are interested in the traditional culture. They understand that it would give an idea of how the Korean church understands and connects with people. The relationship with the traditional culture can also provide a historical basis to understanding the Korean church and mass culture influences. In addition, this relationship influences the present and future Korean church.

Looking at the Christians in Korea, the question may be asked: Are they really Christians? The reason why I ask this is because Christians in Korea have often heard that they are not like true Christians, especially when their traditional rituals and life styles are exposed. For example, if someone goes to church only to be blessed, then I may think his or her faith is not a genuine Christian faith, but rather a Shamanistic type of faith. S W Cho (2001:31-2) critically points out that this Christian's dualistic attitude shows no relevance between their lives in faith (church) and their lives in culture.

The problem is however, that no one, in real sense, can throw away his/her identity as a Korean because he/she becomes a Christian. Regarding this, M J Lee (2000:65) argues rightly that the Korean church needs to go beyond such a single lined theological thought and attitude that tries to reject all traditional factors. M J Lee (:66), however, is not insisting that the Korean Christian identity is multifold such as Shamanistic Christian or Confucianistic Christian as the liberal theologians claim in relation to religious pluralism. He argues that such a twofold or multifold identity does not fit to Korean religious ethos (:67). After all, it is the task of the Korean church to help Korean Christians to have their Korean Christian identity.

Secondly, the Korean church has no serious theological reflection when she rejects or accepts a new culture. The previous discussion helps me to understand that this trend of the Korean church is related to the Confucian orthodox mentality that does not allow any alternative idea, trivial deviation, any divergent school or faction, or the American missionaries who were mostly conservative. As a result, the conservative Korean church tends to be against new trends of culture when she encounters them for the first time and accepts them eventually without serious theological reflection on them.

Thirdly, pastors and Christians in the Korean church are interested in and even eager to know about culture, especially those on the liberal side. They however do not always know how to deal with it, especially those who are on the conservative side. Society is the place for human activities and consists of culture as a production of the human activities. It is very right, therefore, for the church to have an interest in society and culture. Church exists in the world. Although the church is universal and mysterious, as far as she exists here on earth, she cannot be free from the influence of the world. At times, worldly culture emerges into the church and at other times, the church takes the initiative of the history and culture of the world. It is again very just for the Korean church to know more about this significant interaction between the church and culture and to act more effectively in it.

The Korean church's diakonia trend, shown in the early Korean church, has been lost as the church has become too busy to deal with social and cultural issues. It does not necessarily mean, however, that she needs some cultural outreach for the community or society. It would rather be from inside the church. S C Moon (2001:133; see L T Tisdale 1992:5-9) stresses that the Korean church also needs to look at the inside of the church from a multi-cultural perspective. According to Moon (*ibid*), there are multi-subcultures in a single local church. The Korean church needs to seek a balanced attitude both in the church and in society, locally and globally.

Fourthly, the Korean church is often criticized that she has not been rooted well in Korean culture (S B Lim 1997b:189-90). This is the tendency among many Koreans as they still consider Christianity as a western religion. This was not a problem at all when the Korean church participated actively and deeply in Korean society and culture, especially in a dark and hopeless age under the Japanese oppression. The Korean church was able to earn the great confidence from the Korean people, who began to recognize Christianity as a religion for the people and the Korean church as a church that deeply sympathized with the nation's suffering. This thought became serious among young people, who did not know and experienced the early Christian history, and marginalized the Korean church from the social trends emphasizing nationalism that emerged since the 1980's.

In brief, I conclude that the deficiencies in the Korean church's relationship towards her culture are as follows:

The Korean church firstly has a weak set up of the relationship with her culture (the deficiency of set up). Secondly, the Korean church has no serious theological reflection when she rejects or accepts a new culture (the deficiency of theological reflection). Thirdly, the Korean church was unfaithful to equip the pastors and members to deal with their culture properly because she thought that to do so was not her responsibility (the deficiency of knowledge and responsibility); and fourthly, the Korean church has not been rooted in Korean culture well (the deficiency of contextualization or indigenization).

From these findings, it has to be asked whether the Korean church lacks an obvious and healthy ecclesiology. In the next section, this study will investigate the present ecclesiologies in the Korean church and whether there is a cause and effect relationship between the deficiencies found and the ecclesiologies in the Korean church today.

2.2.4 The present ecclesiologies of the Korean church

Many pastors, theologians and religious socialists in Korea, who insist on the renewal or revival of the Korean church, see the present ecclesiology of the Korean church as problematic and that it needs to be changed. In order to define the present ecclesiology of the Korean church, I will critically adopt the five models of the ecclesiology based on Avery Dulles (1978; 2002).⁴²

The first model is *the church as institution* (A Dulles 1978:39-50; 2002: 26-38). The notion of the church as society by its very nature tends to highlight the structure of government as the formal element in the society. Thus it leads easily, though not necessarily, to what I shall call the institutional vision of the church, that is to say, the view that defines the church primarily in terms of its visible structures, especially the rights and powers of its officers. A characteristic of the institutional model of the church is the hierarchical conception of authority. The church is not conceived as a democratic or representative society, but as one in which the fullness of power is concentrated in the hands of a ruling class from God.

This is the very characteristic of the present ecclesiology of the Korean church. The Korean church has been very hierarchical: pastors have been authoritative and treated as divine as Pharaoh. The Confucianism, that respects elders and teachers, accelerated this atmosphere much more – both in church and society. Even though the Korean church and society are experiencing rapid changes in every aspect, (except for a few recent growing churches), this is still one of the main characteristics that became the tradition and ecclesiology of the Korean church and reduces the laity to a condition of passivity that makes them a mere appendage of the apostolate of the hierarchy.

⁴² J K Un (see 1999c:36-40) also uses these models for suggesting a new paradigm of the Korean church, but here I adopt them for defining the present ecclesiology of the Korean church.

Dulles' second model, *the church as mystical communion*, is obviously different from the first one. In modern sociology, according to Dulles (2002:39-54), it has become commonplace to contrast two types of social relationship: a formally organized or structured society, and an informal or interpersonal community. The two types are often referred to by their German terms, *Gesellschaft* (society) and *Gemeinschaft* (community).⁴³ *Gesellschaft*, in this categorization, corresponds approximately with the kinds of grouping we have analyzed in the first model under the heading of institution and visible society. It is a human association characterized by formal organization, structures and office, such as the secular state, the school, the hospital, and the hotel. The organization is maintained by competent authority, which is normally institutionalized in the form of office. Such societies are governed by explicit rules, often written.

Since the institutional categories, as we have seen, cannot do justice to the full reality of the church, it is to be expected that we would turn to the other member of the pair to illuminate the nature of the church. Charles H Cooley (1967:23-31) further developed the notion of *Gemeinschaft* in Tonnies' classification. It was done according to the description of "primary groups."⁴⁴ The main characteristics of a primary group, according to him, are as follows: 1) face to face association; 2) the unspecialized character of that association; 3) relative permanence; 4) the small number of persons involved; and 5) the relative intimacy among the participants.

As examples of primary groups, I understand that Cooley referred to the family, household, and the old fashioned neighborhood like the early church community in the biblical era we can imagine. Since Dulles writes his book and introduces these models from a Roman Catholic point of view, some Protestant arguments have to be considered as well: In some Protestant circles, this model has been

⁴³ This antithesis owes its popularity to Ferdinand Tonnies, who in 1887 published his classic work, *Gemeinschaft und gesellschaft* (English translation, *Community and society*, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963).

⁴⁴ See Charles H Cooley, *Social organization* (1909; reprinted New York: Schocken Books, 1967).

developed in an anti-institutional sense. Rudolph Sohm, for example, teaches that the essential nature of the church stands in antithesis to all law.⁴⁵ Emil Brunner (1952:17) argues that the church in the biblical sense is not an institution but a brotherhood. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1963:123) develops the notion of the church as an interpersonal community.

This type of ecclesiology has a better basis in the biblical notion of communion. And this makes room for the mystical and spontaneous initiatives aroused by the Holy Spirit, who gives to each according to His good pleasure without prior consultation with the hierarchy. Moreover, this model has great appeal in our day because they meet a human need that is acutely experienced by many of the faithful. This type of ecclesiology has been found in many churches in Korea with, unfortunately, some negative factors as Dulles (2002:52-3) indicates first of all, this type of ecclesiology tends to exalt and divinize the Korean church beyond its due, especially when the church is seen totally as a free and spontaneous gift of the Spirit. This phenomenon is often seen in some charismatic churches in Korea. Secondly, this type of ecclesiology fails to give Christians a very clear sense of their identity or mission. Since we cannot take it for granted that evangelization, baptism, or church membership coincides with the bestowal of the Holy Spirit; the motivation for Christian mission is left obscure. This may cause them to be exclusive to those who are outside the church and make them escape from the reality especially when they consider this relates to eschatology as it happened in October 1992 in Korea.⁴⁶ With this type of ecclesiology, the Korean church has lost her contact with her society and culture along the way on her journey with Korean people.

⁴⁵ Such is the view of Rudolph Sohm, as summarized and accepted by Emil Brunner, *The Misunderstanding of the church* (London: Lutterworth, 1952). 107.

⁴⁶ There was a happening in October 1992 in Korea created by a group of people in some churches associated with Dami Mission Society who acted as they believed: challenged by some prophecies they insisted they received, they expected Jesus Christ to comeback to the earth in the specific day, the 28th of October and it became a social issue that degraded the Christianity's social status.

The third model, *the church as sacrament*, appealed by many twentieth century Catholic theologians, establishes the theological meaning of the sacraments as based on the incarnation. Christ, as the sacrament of God, contains the grace that He signifies. Conversely, He signifies and confers the grace He contains. In Him, the invisible grace of God takes on visible form. However, the sacrament of redemption is not complete in Jesus as a single individual. In order to become the kind of sign He must be, He must appear as the sign of God's redemptive love extended toward all humankind, awaiting the response of all humankind to that redemptive love (Dulles 2002:60).

The church therefore is in the first instance a sign. It must signify the redeeming grace of Christ in a historically tangible form. It signifies that grace as relevantly given to men of every age, race, kind, and condition. The church thus must incarnate itself in every human culture (ibid).

This type of ecclesiology rose against the Protestant theology. It overemphasized the "word" instead of the "sacrament" which has been no exception in Korea. According to H M Yim (1996:219-221), the Korean church has neglected the sacraments or understood partially only. The Korean church emphasized baptism from the beginning, but partially, i.e. stressed its didactic and disciplinary character. This means that the church neglected the aspect of fellowship in baptism. This fellowship was essential in baptism because baptism is based theologically on the incorporation into the body of Christ. The Korean church also has neglected the celebration of the Eucharist from its beginning. Therefore, the fellowship aspect of the Eucharist could not be emphasized.

As a result, the Korean church could not develop theological concepts such as fellowship with one another. Because of the lack of fellowship, the church could not prevent conflict between the church leaders or overcome divisions. Accordingly, the Korean church needs to consider this ecclesiology in both historical and theological cases so that people may not experience again a

narrow sacramentalism that allows insufficient place for *diakonia* in the church's mission to the world.

The church as herald, as the fourth model, considers the "word" primary and the "sacrament" secondary and sees the church as gathered and formed by the Word of God. The mission of the church is to proclaim that which it has heard, believed, and been commissioned to proclaim. This type of ecclesiology is kerygmatic, for it looks upon the church as a herald, one who receives an official message with the commission to pass it on. The basic image is that of the herald of a king who comes to proclaim a royal decree in a public square (Dulles 2002:68-9).

The goal of the church, in this style of theology, is simply to herald the message. The ecclesiology goes with a strong evangelistic missionary thrust. The church's responsibility is therefore to evangelize all the nations in accordance with the great commission of Mt 28:18-20 (:76).⁴⁷As a result, this ecclesiological type emphasizes preaching the word and places the preacher in the center of the church practices. In addition, this preacher-centered model, one of the most Korean ecclesiologies, tends to pursue a one-way communication to the congregation and neglect the importance or possibility of community and the laity ministry. This model can easily be observed in many churches in Korea today.

The fifth, *the church as servant*, is quite different from the previous four models in terms of the church's position to the world. In other words, all the models give a primary or privileged position to the church with respect to the world. In the institutional ecclesiology, the church teaches, sanctifies, and rules with the authority of Christ. In the communion type, the church is viewed as God's

⁴⁷ One aspect that I cannot agree with Dulles (2002:76) on here is that he says, "The church's responsibility is not necessarily to produce conversion (only God can do that), still less to build the kingdom of God." Theoretically it is true that the work of conversion is not our work, but God's. Practically, however, it is not right because what he says seem to be based on a dualistic sense that separates the work of church and the work of God; and divides to convert people or

People or Christ's Body, growing into the final perfection of the Kingdom. In the sacramental model, the church is understood as the visible revelation of the grace of Christ. In the herald type, the church takes on an authoritarian function, preaching the divine word to which the world must humbly listen (Dulles 2002:81).

In all these ecclesiological models, the church is seen as the active subject while the world is portrayed as the object that the church influences. The church is produced by God's direct action, and stands as a kind of mediator between God and the world. God comes to the world through the church, and the world likewise comes to God through the church (:81-2). The fifth ecclesiology, however, brought with it a completely new understanding of the relationship between the church and the world of our day, a servant church, which set off from the Vatican Council II (1962) and was later challenged by the Uppsala Report of the World Council of Churches in 1968 (*missio Dei*). According to Dulles (:87), nearly all the ecclesiologists who had emerged into prominence have been, since the early sixties, representative of this new style of secular-dialogic theology. In English-speaking Protestantism and Anglicanism, the best-known representatives of this ecclesiology are Gibson Winter,⁴⁸ Harvey Cox,⁴⁹ and John A T Robinson.⁵⁰

build God's kingdom and to evangelize all the nation.

⁴⁸ Gibson Winter, in his *The new creation as metropolis* (New York: Macmillan, 1963), calls for a "servant church"-one that is no longer an institutional structure of salvation alongside the worldly structures of restraint but one that is that community within the worldly structures of historical responsibility in which recognizes and acknowledges God's gracious work for all mankind. The servant church is the community who confirm mankind in its freedom to fashion its future, protesting the pretensions to the ultimate in any human structures and suffering with men in the struggle against the power of evil.

⁴⁹ Harvey Cox, building on the work of Gibson Winter and others, included in his *The secular city* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), a characteristic chapter, "The church as God's avant-garde." "The church's task in the secular city," he wrote, "is to be the *diakonos* of the city, the servant who bends himself to struggle for its wholeness and health."

⁵⁰ Following up on Harvey Cox and upon his own previous work on the notion of the Kingdom of God, the Anglican bishop John A T Robinson, in *The new Reformation?* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965), argued that the church is in drastic need of a stripping down of its structures, which can be an obstacle to its mission. To be of service the church must work within the structures of the world rather than build parallel structures. "The house of God is not the church but the world. The church is the servant, and the first characteristic of a servant is that he lives in someone else's house, not his own."

Like other models of the church, this servant ecclesiology has influenced in many areas such as the structure of preaching, Minjung theology (see I S Chang 1991), human rights missions, Urban-Industrial missions and world missions through the Korean church for last thirty years. These efforts were challenged by an idea that the modern world very much needs something that only the church can give: faith in Christ, hope in the ultimate coming of God's Kingdom, and commitment to the values of peace, justice, and human brotherhood, all of which are dominant biblical themes (:90). The servant ecclesiology reflects a consciousness of these needs of both the church and the world. It seeks to give the church a new relevance, a new vitality, a new modernity, and a new sense of mission.

Despite the strengths mentioned above, this ecclesiological model could not be rooting in the Korean church as a whole that is very conservative because of its somewhat extreme and radical nature: rather it is partially practiced on the liberal side, like in the Methodist church and among Methodist scholars.

I have critically analyzed the five ecclesiological models of Avery Dulles in order to define the present ecclesiology of the Korean church. What I found from this work can be concluded as follows: First, all five types exist in varied form in the Korean church. Positively speaking, It means that the problem here is not "either or" but "both and." The church needs all five factors for the ways she exists. Negatively speaking, however, it shows that the Korean church has not been taking serious and theological reflection for constructing a sound and healthy ecclesiology as I mentioned at the end of 2.2.3. If the Korean church can overcome this deficiency of serious reflection, she will be able to leave the abundant historical and theological property to the next generation.

Secondly, the present ecclesiological types of the Korean church show that the Korean church has been very hierarchical and mystical. It is known that there were the influences of Confucianism and possibly, of Shamanism and that such trends are related to the deficiency of contextualization or indigenization.

However, it cannot simply be concluded that such influences are right or not because it may also function as secularization or inculturation. It has also been my observation that the Korean church has been conservative and that it tends to reject new culture or thought. She is not willing to take the risk or responsibility to accept the new, but rather easily rejects it. It is therefore not only a deficiency of contextualization, but also a deficiency of responsibility of the church for the world.

Thirdly, the largest part of the present ecclesiologies of Korean type is *The church as herald* that emphasizes preaching the word and places the preacher in the center of church practice. This model can be seen in almost every church in Korea today. It has the tendency, however, to pursue a one-way style of communication to the congregation and therefore neglects the importance or possibility for participation by the community and laity ministry. It has become a tradition in the Korean church that reduces the laity to a condition of passivity that makes them a mere appendage of the apostolate of the hierarchy. The continuously growing churches among the many dying churches in Korea are all overcoming this problem, for example the Sarang Community church (cf Y K Park 1998).

The above concluding statements all point out that there is inevitable interaction between church and culture in Korea in terms of ecclesiology. To better understand this fact and to secure relevance of the previous work that was done, data from qualitative interviews with some individuals in *focus group* will be documented in the next section. These interviewees are viewed as conversational partners sharing their sentiments and experiences.⁵¹

⁵¹ In conducting and documenting these interviews, the approach taken was adopted from Herbert J Rubin & Irene S Rubin, *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 1995).

2.2.5 The empirical interpretation of the interaction between the church and culture in Korea

This section is based on the research carried out by qualitative interviewing. Qualitative interviewing is a way of finding out what others feel and think about the world around them. Through qualitative interviews, we can understand experiences and reconstruct events in which we did not participate (Rubin & Rubin 1995:1). Indeed, through what I heard and learned from the selected conversational partners, I was able to extend my intellectual scope over what I described and defined previously in this chapter.

2.2.5.1 Profiles of the conversational partners

The purpose of these conversations was to be better informed and to understand the interaction between church and culture in Korea through the life experiences and stories of some Christian leaders. Consequently, these conversations would also secure the relevance of the previous discussions. Since the interviewees were required to be knowledgeable on this specific issue, they were selected from Koreans living in Pretoria, South Africa. Four of these are pastors and one is a layperson missionary. They are all doing their postgraduate studies at the University of Pretoria in South Africa.

The general condition that interviewees should have different perspectives on the subject was satisfied because the group was formulated with four pastors and a layperson. Furthermore, academic balance was sought: one interviewee studies the New Testament, one the Old Testament, two study Practical theology, and one studies Law. They have not only the academic careers, but also experience in ministry: all have over 6-10 years of church ministry or campus mission experience. All are married men aged in between 35 and 43.

2.2.5.2 Hearing the sentiments

The data gathered from the conversations can be categorized under the following themes formulated by the questions asked:

(General)

-What is your understanding or experience of the significant problems in the Korean church?

-What did the Korean church do in order to deal with the problem you pointed out or experienced?

(Church and culture)

-What do you think about the relationship between these problems between the church and the culture that is changing rapidly? Are they related to one another? How?

(Preaching in the interaction between church and culture)

-Do you think the problems that you and your colleagues identified of the Korean church towards her culture are related to the problems of preaching?

The only first three questions will be dealt with here in terms of the interaction between church and culture. The last question on preaching will be discussed in *The empirical interpretation of preaching in the interaction between church and culture in Korea* (2.3.3).

Q1 What is your understanding or experience of the significant problems in the Korean church in general?

M1 sees the problems categorized in three areas: laypeople, ministers and church:

The most crucial problem is syncretism – that Christian principles and traditional religious mind, i.e., Shamanism, exist as a mixed form in an individual believer's life. In addition, such a problem often leads believers to only seek earthly blessings.

Ministers are not far from this tendency because of their poor philosophy of ministry, that is to say ecclesiology, and their distorted interpretation of the Word of God that results to the problems of preaching. Besides, the church in relation to her society is not participating much in her surrounding culture and context and is not exercising any positive role over the society.

M2 hesitates before answering for a while because he wants to first clarify what the problem is indeed. He finally says:

Before I talk about the problem of the Korean church, I want to recognize the problem that the Korean church might think concerns quantitative and numerical decline or qualitative issues. I am not saying numerical decline of membership is not problematic. Certainly, it is a problem. Nevertheless, more importantly, we have to argue why this happens. From my own experience and knowledge over years of church ministry, I know that it comes from the preachers and their preaching, which fail to answer the spiritual questions rising in congregations' hearts and tend to be merely ethical. People might say that we can hear such words outside the church, too.

There is also another fact – that the church is not taking her responsibility properly to her culture and society.

M3 believes that there is unbalanced church growth that is too much limited to numerical growth in Korea:

The problems that we⁵² as Christians see as the problems of the Korean church come from the unbalanced church growth. Our churches focus far too much on quantitative growth. In such situation, the decline of church and membership might not be surprising at all.

M4 feels the problems that his colleagues are talking about, are nothing serious and nothing new:

The so called problems of the Korean church are nothing serious and nothing new because there have always been problems in Korean Christian history and in other countries as well. Despite this fact, there is the problem of identity: Individual Christians have a self-identity problem while the church has her identity problem, which is the problem of ecclesiology. The Korean church does not give her congregation a clear understanding of where they are and where they are going.

When people choose to go to a church in Korea, they very much depend on the preaching or the preacher. I believe that these problems today are related to the lack of our own theology in Korean Christianity and the historical background of the early Korean church had accepted the Western dogma without critical evaluation.

M5, a layperson missionary working with UBF (University Bible Fellowship), agrees with the point that M4 made above. He sees the Korean church's mistreating of her historical age and context as the most significant problem:

For example, the method of evangelism that worked in the past no longer works today. Nevertheless, taking good and extra care of the new generation at the same time often results in some negative phenomena.

⁵² Using the plural pronoun (we) instead of the singular (I) is a general language habit among Koreans who place more value on the community than on the individual.

Therefore, I rather place myself in a strong or charismatic character like teacher or herald in relation to them.

Q2 What and how did the Korean church do in order to deal with the problem you pointed out or experienced?

Most of the conversational regarded this question with the feeling that the response of the Korean church has not been proper and not good enough. M4 however did not agree here. He regards it positively in the transitional state. Some of the participants however, gave specific reasons why it was not good enough. M1, for example, pointed out the Korean church's problem of attitude or mindset:

Many churches now attempt to contribute to their neighboring community by opening their facilities for their neighbors to use, offering medical services, and providing music concerts or seminars for both the community and pastors. The problem is however, that they do these things not because it is the right thing to do, but because it is a good means of church growth or because other churches do.

M2 basically agrees with M1 and says the following:

The problem that most Korean pastors usually identify is the numerical decline of their church membership. If their churches would keep growing quantitatively, I am sure that they would say they have no problem at all.

Q3 What do you think about the relationship between these problems between the church and the culture that is changing rapidly? Are they related to one another? How?

Conversational partners show various views on this. But M1 and M5 seem to be in one position while M2 and M3 share the agreement. M4 differs from the

others. M1, first of all, says that, “Society or culture is the object of ministry. Church should minimize the negative function of it and show it where to go.” M5 warns of sinful factors in culture and society that may influence our attitude.

Concerning the positive role of the church towards her culture, M2 says: “We are in culture and society and we have to be the salt and light in our culture and society.” M3 agrees with M2, but refers to the negative or passive function of church: “The church should not ignore her surrounding culture, and at the same time should not follow it. The church is rather to be an oasis in the desert.”

M4 is more open enough to say that we as church people should not differentiate the Christian culture from secular culture. Rather, we need to confess that we are in the same pool and nothing different.

2.2.5.3 Interpreting the data

Having heard the sentiments of the conversational partners, the next task was to interpret the data expressed in order to secure the relevance thereof and to extend my intellectual scope over the previous discussions in this chapter. The following are the thematic interpretations of the data:

On the significant problems in the Korean church

The conversational partners gave three crucial problems: syncretism, too much focus on numerical growth and the identity problem. I had also argued this, although I did not use the term *syncretism*, except one occasion where I quoted the words of S K Lee (1998:96; 1995:3) when I criticized the abnormal and unhealthy church growth during the time of 1945-1970 (2.2.2.3). I do not prefer the term syncretism for the reason that I cannot simply conclude that the influence of the traditional culture or religion is bad. On the contrary, I believe it could function positively as an act of inculturation. I have also discussed identity

crisis and argued that helping Korean Christians to have their Korean Christian identity should be the task of the Korean church (2.3.3).

I value the sentiments of the conversational partners because the three problems influence badly on believers, the church, preaching and community. For example, syncretism changes the Christian principles with the traditional or pagan religious factors and exists in an individual Korean Christian and affects his or her belief, belonging and behavior. Pastors are no exception to this. It also affects them, their philosophy of ministry, their ecclesiology, and their preaching. It may cause a dual attitude or dual thought (proclaiming heavenly things but seeking earthly ones), and an identity crisis for both the individual and the church itself. As a result, people outside church and community cannot see any difference between the church and other institutes in their society.

On the response of the Korean church to the problems indicated

Most conversational partners see what I also see in this study – that the response of the Korean church towards the problem expressed is not proper and not good enough. They warned that many churches in Korea respond in many ways but with the wrong motivation: they do this because of church growth as a management strategy. If there was no church decline, the conversational partners argue, there would be no such efforts toward their neighboring community and society.

On the interaction between church and culture

What the conversational partners said is related to not only what I have done, but also to what I will do in the next chapter. James M Gustafson (1974:73-96) sets out three models of the role of theologian (church) towards society (culture): *preserver*, *prophet* and *participant*. The *preserver* tries to maintain the existing social value and system, while *prophet* questions the moral and spiritual health of the society. The *participant* criticizes society, but at the same

time exerts influence to change and construct it (:73). I align with the *participant* model for the Korean church that stands between the two models of *preserver* and *prophet*, and participates within the process of social construction. The conversational partners presented different views on this:

M1 and M5, first, seemed to align with the *prophet* model for church because they see society and culture as the object of ministry and warn against sinful factors in culture and society. M2 and M3 both selected the *participant* model but have different perspectives: M2 sees the positive role of the church towards her culture, while M3 places the church in a passive function towards her culture. Choosing the *preserver* model, M4 saw no difference between Christian culture and secular culture.

Despite such various sentiments among the conversational partners, there was consensus that the Korean church is not participating much into her surrounding culture and is not exercising a positive role over the society. It has happened all the time in Korean Christian history except for the period of Japanese oppression (1910-1945) when the Korean church experienced a national crisis. As M2 points out, this is an ecclesiological problem (the Korean church does not have the solid and healthy ecclesiology).

The problem regarding preaching will be discussed in more depth in the following sections when I mention *Preaching in the interaction between church and culture* (2.3) and *the empirical interpretation of the interaction between preaching and culture in Korea* (2.3.3).

2.3 Preaching in the interaction between the church and culture in Korea

2.3.1 Preaching in the Korean church

In Christian history, church and preaching have been in mutual support or in a mutually controlled relationship towards one another. The church's crisis cannot be thought separately from preaching's problem. In other words, poor preaching could be the cause of church decline and the church's decline could cause the decay of preaching.

In this regard, preaching has been in the very center and driving force of all church activities and missions for the last century in the Korean church. The church has been growing marvelously through preaching. Especially in times of national crisis, the church encouraged and edified people through preaching. The last century of the Korean church has been the golden age of preaching. Preaching became, as Charles H Spurgeon (1980:96) states, the genuine experience of the sacred anointing to the preachers, the divine power to the congregation, and the absolutely primary factor above all other things in the Korean church.

There is, however, also a dark side to preaching in the Korean church. The stagnation of church growth forced the Korean church to reconsider her preaching historically, socio-culturally and theologically. The following findings from such effort are based on my own interpretation of the previous work (2.2), and on an analysis of the related recent literature. These findings will give the present address of preaching in the Korean church:

In the first place, preaching in the Korean church, has been following and practicing the traditional paradigm of preaching that is logical, propositional,

topical, and with three ideas in form.⁵³ It does not deliver the message as it rises from the text, but the message rather becomes, from the Bible as a mere proof text, an extraction of the preacher's own ideas and what he/she wants. The sermon is usually constructed according to the deductive method because it values logic. As a result, stories only function as the illustrations (U Y Kim 2000:169-73). Preaching in the Korean church thus remains on the level of teaching and transmitting as one can see in the lecture room or court. Its one-way communication overlooks the preacher's homiletical journey with the congregation and has difficulty to appeal those who live in the age of the visual, emotional and electronic communication (:173).

This traditional paradigm emerged from the earlier American missionaries who could not speak Korean well and were so young and that they used the topical sermon that had been popularized in the American churches in the early twentieth century (H M Yim 1996:154). It matched somehow with the Korean church in its hierarchical and authoritative structure created from 500 years old the orthodox Confucian society and culture (See H M Yim 1996).

It can be concluded from such an understanding that preaching in the Korean church is not much influenced by theological frame and change, but by historical and sociological and political situations. It is even more obvious when there is reflection on the history of the Korean church in relation to her preaching.⁵⁴

⁵³ About 80% of 1,100 sample sermons are topical with three ideas in form. See for the further detail 성서교재간행사 편집부 편, *한국설교대전집 (The Great Encyclopedia of Korean Preaching)* 1-12. Seoul: 성서교재간행사, 1978.

⁵⁴ Relating to preaching, U Y Kim (2000:164-8) classifies the history of the Korean church in five phases: 1) Missionary preaching period (1885-1910), 2) Growing church period (1910-1930), 3) Suffering church period (1930-1945), 4) Free church period (1945-1960), and 5) Contemporary church period (1960 to present). See for the further details: Unyong Kim, "Faith comes from hearing: A critical evaluation of the homiletical paradigm shift through the homiletical theories of Fred B Craddock, Eugene L Lowry, and David Buttrick, and its application to the Korean church". (PhD Thesis. Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education, 1999, 18-38).

In the second place, there is the lack of hermeneutical balance between text and context in preaching. If a preacher delivers his/her sermon in text-priority position, which has been the main flow in the Korean church, he/she will forget about the human reason and neglect human condition and present culture in her congregation (see P H Yum 1985; D W Lee 1998; D Y Kim 1998; H W Lee 2001b). However, if a preacher takes a context-priority position and gives a sermon based on it, (this has been the new phenomenon today), preaching will lose its purpose and the church will become one that exists for congregation's need and convenience only, not for God's need and call (see S T Kim 2000:73-77).

Up to now, the Korean church has been endeavoring hard to hold one of these two, one at a time, so that there would be no healthy balance between the two extremes. The subject of preaching in the past was to provide hermeneutical ground for harmony between text and context. This is also the assignment of preaching in the contemporary and future Korean church.

In the third place, in relation to this, there is the problem of assumption that many preachers in the Korean church today assume that their congregations are Christians. Lloyd-Jones (1998:146) warns against this: "The main danger confronting the pulpit in this matter is to assume that all who claim to be Christians, and who think they are Christians, and who are members of the church, are therefore of necessity Christians." He also gives the right reason why it is fatally wrong: "This is dangerous and wrong for this reason, that if you assume that, you will tend therefore, in all your services, to preach in a manner suited to Christian believers. Your message will always be instructional, and the evangelistic element and note will be neglected, perhaps, almost entirely" (ibid).

It is even worse in the Korean church with its church growth syndrome when believers move around from one church to another. Because pastors want to have more members in their churches, they tend not to preach on sin too seriously. There is not much of a chance therefore to save people by preaching

the Word of God today. Since there are lately so many believers moving around from one church to another to choose a church where they want to go, preachers naturally think there is no need for conversional or evangelistic effort in their preaching. Flowing down this abnormal and not biblical stream, the Korean church has lost the proclamation of the gospel before she even realized it.

Thompson (2001:13) argues that although the new homiletic movement⁵⁵ is still new in Korea, it is indeed already 30 years old in America. In light this, it can be said that the well up-dated churches with it will add even more problems. Narrative preaching, for example, is reluctant to speak with authority or to make concrete demands for change in the listeners' lives. It is especially more irresolute in such an abnormal and unbiblical situation as in Korea, as pointed out above. The gospel cannot be preached without authority because the gospel makes claims on our lives.

To avoid misunderstanding, I would like to clarify that my argument here is not that the new homiletic movement is old and no longer useful or that narrative preaching is ineffective. I value very much the paradigm shift brought by the new homiletic movement and the narrative-centered or story like preaching that narrative theology provides. To be more precise, what I am trying to emphasize, is that one needs to consider the context of preaching before one preaches, whether one uses narrative preaching or not.

Another example: Inductive preaching, the new homiletic movement praises, which many young pastors in Korean like to grasp, serves best in a Christian culture in which listeners are well informed of the Christian heritage. However,

⁵⁵ The New Homiletic Movement occurred in reaction to traditional homiletical theory and became mainstream in North American preaching. This claims the paradigm shift in homiletics, as E L Lowry (1994:95-6) well summarizes, from deductive to inductive, from rhetoric to poetic, from space to time... from science to art... from direct to indirect... from theme to event, from description to image... from authoritarian to democratic, from truth to meaning, and from account to experience. See my discussion in Chapter 3 and U Y Kim (1999:96-129) for more on this.

the problem is that, as mentioned above, some of the people who are in the pew are not really Christians. So to adapt merely a new homiletic theory or method, that becomes a trend or fashion, regardless of serious theological reflection on their relevance to the local church, is irresponsible to God and His church. This is a crucial problem of preaching rising in the Korean church today in the name of the recovery of preaching. Nevertheless, it just adds another problem (see M S Yang 1995:126-34; Lloyd-Jones 1998: 143-64; S T Kim 2000:68-85; J Thompson 2001:1-14).

In the fourth place, there is the lack of communal conversion in preaching in the Korean church. Ironically, this happens much often in the churches that emphasize sin and conversion in preaching not like what I discussed above. There are conversions happening in the individuals, but not much happens in the communal sense as a local church. This could answer the common critical question that is often asked, namely why does the Korean church, with such a great membership and world church-growth record, not influence her society.

I believe that the essence of the church's credible witness is her own ongoing evangelization. As the love of God in Jesus Christ is incarnated in the faith community, that love is demonstrated to the world. Witness happens in all that the church is, does, and says, but always in and through its forgiveness and its dependence upon God's grace. Unfortunately, however, the reality in our churches, including the Korean church, is different. The following statements are quoted from Guder's students' field reports in their local congregations (D L Guder 2000:149):

“The congregation I am in does not want to grow; it does not want new members; it does not want to change. They want the pastor to ensure that things will continue to be done the way they have always been done.”

“My congregation is divided into opposing camps. Meeting of the council is a battlefield. Everyone is trying to get the pastor to take sides.”

“The people are really nice in my congregation; they’ve made me feel very welcome. Nevertheless, they really want their church to be a religious social club... what they mean by evangelism is, in most cases, new member recruitment. There is virtually no sense of the calling of the entire community to be an evangelizing community in every dimension of its life”

These cases in a few American churches also represent the situation in the Korean church. Such congregations will really present questions concerning their conversion and their own evangelization, because there is the lack of the communal character of faith and there is the reduction of conversion to the experience of the individual.

In the fifth place, there is a certain tendency that values more on prayer than on the transforming power of preaching in the Korean church. It is more serious especially these days with the intercession movement. The intercession movement is a recent emphasizing program of prayer for others. This movement has spread over the country in Korea. Accordingly, in an article based on an interview with a well-known Korean pastor, he explains his difficulty of not having enough time to read and pray for preaching due to his busy schedule. However, because of the intercession team who prays for his preaching while he is preaching, he says, he is able to continue his preaching ministry. It is not surprising that the Korean church considers the prayer as one of the most powerful motives of church growth and as the very Korean Christian heritage (see A Park 1998).

However, a pastor without prayer and preparation for preaching cannot be excused. This cannot be biblical because preaching does nothing but prayer. In this regard, I agree with Lloyd-Jones (1998:274) who states: “There should be no such disjunction between prayer and preaching.” S T Kim (2000:75) also correctly argues such disjunction between preaching and other factor, i.e. believers’ moving one church to another. His answer to the question, “does good preaching result church growth?” is: “not always, because the church

growth we see today is mainly from the believers' moving from one to another and has nothing to do with preaching the Word of God." Consequently, giving value to other things rather than preaching in determining the work of preaching in the Korean church is wrong and not biblical.

In the sixth place, as many have indicated, congregations experience floods of preaching in Korea. They can hear the specific speaker's sermon they want and compare it with another through mass media such as radio, television and Internet. This change may challenge preachers but, at the same time, may also discourage them with too much demand and expectation created in that environment. It is thus absolutely not easy for a Korean pastor as a solo or senior pastor to manage at least 11 official preaching events a week (including a daily early morning service, a Wednesday evening service, a Friday prayer meeting, and a Sunday morning and evening service) without counting the special services during parish meetings, bible studies, and special occasions like birthday parties, wedding ceremonies, opening ceremonies, and so on (see H W Lee 2001a:1).

Finally, the severe and conservative atmosphere of worship may distract people to lead smoothly to and concentrate on preaching especially when they are visitors with a non-church background. Such a mood comes from the thought that the church has to be stern to be holy (cf S B Kim 1998:85). This was discussed in the section on the history of the Korean church, with the Orthodox Confucianism that went on for almost 500 years in Korean society and the early puritan and conservative missionaries who might have influenced it. Many criticize that the Korean church cannot experience the joy of worship. A worshipping community, however, binds the diversity of our culture, education and background, and brings us together into a corporate expression of worship. One of the most powerful appeals to people's mind today is a worshipping community (Ravi Zacharias 2000:27). Creating such a new atmosphere through worship may strengthen the church community that have become weak due to the many reasons presented up to now.

Although it is true that there are many weak points and limits when one looks at preaching in the Korean church from a preaching theological perspective, it is also true, as U Y Kim (2000:168) rightly points out, that the Korean church overcame them by preachers' complete devotion to God and their blazing enthusiasm to His Word. Based on these findings, the next section determines the present preaching theories of the Korean church.

2.3.2 The present preaching theories of the Korean church

The word "theories" in this section's title might well be "theologies." This means that the theological understanding of preaching in the Korean church based on the discussion and findings so far will be concluded here. For this purpose, the following themes adopted from U Y Kim (2000:169-173) are used as categories: 1) purpose of preaching, 2) form of preaching, 3) content of preaching, and 4) theology of preaching.⁵⁶

2.3.2.1 The purpose of preaching

In the Korean church, preaching in relation to its purpose mostly functions to persuade and advise with the biblical teachings and ethical guides. In this purpose, preaching is mainly a one-way communication with the preacher's authority. The preacher is a master or herald model of the knowledge and

⁵⁶ "Purpose of preaching" here includes aim, outcome, focus, function of preaching, and preacher-listener relationship. "Form of preaching" means language, form and style of preaching. "Content of preaching" covers content and hermeneutical method of preaching. In addition, "theology of preaching" contains theological frame or paradigm and the relationship between text and context or Word and sacrament. I adopted U Y Kim's three categories (why, how and what) and added "theology" to them. For this I also referred to *The Great Encyclopedia of Korean Preaching* sampling more than 1,100 sermons of the early missionaries and famous preachers and U Y Kim's PhD thesis based on the sermon analysis of 40 contemporary figures' sermons. See U Y Kim, "Faith comes from hearing: A critical evaluation of the homiletical paradigm shift through the homiletical theories of Fred B Craddock, Eugene L Lowry, and David Buttrick, and its application to the Korean church". (PhD Thesis. Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education, 1999, Chapter two).

practice of the Word with charisma.⁵⁷ The relationship between the preacher and the audience is vertical and hierarchical. Such understanding had smoothly accepted without much trouble or conflict in the Orthodox Confucian culture in Korea (U Y Kim 2000:170). This affected the form and the content of preaching and resulted in the lack of understanding of congregation's condition and context, and of social ethical concern (P H Yum 1985:250-1; H W Lee 2001b:2-5).

However, we cannot deny that this structure has also been very strong and played a positive role in establishing the powerful pulpit and ongoing church growth for last a hundred years of Korean Christian history.

2.3.2.2 The form of preaching

As discussed earlier above, preachers in the Korean church have been using a single style of preaching, regardless of the diversity of form that is mainly logical, propositional, and topical with three ideas. According to *The Great Encyclopedia of Korean Preaching* (Biblical Text Publisher 1978), about 80% of 1,100 sample sermons are topical with three ideas in form. Contemporary preachers who like to use the expository preaching also tend to be excessively addicted to the expository preaching only (U Y Kim 2000:171).

In developing its logic, most Korean preachers take the deductive method because it values logic and as a result, stories only function as illustrations. Deductive here means stating the thesis, breaking it down into points or sub-points, explaining and illustrating these points, and applying them to the particular situations of the hearers (Craddock 1971:54). The problem with this, in Craddock's view, is what it does for the hearers. "There is no democracy here," he charged, "no dialogue, no listening by the speaker, no contributing by the hearer" (:55).

⁵⁷ Thomas Long introduces this is well-accepted model in the traditional homiletics. See

The language of preaching is usually argumentative and rational. It is more imperative than indicative. The preaching of the Korean church is thus not like helping the congregation to experience the Word of God, but like transmitting the information of it. Again this form has been influenced by the earlier American missionaries who could not speak Korean well and were so young that they used the topical sermon that had been popularized in the American churches in the early twenties century (H M Yim 1996:154). Nevertheless, it matched somehow with the Korean church in the hierarchical and authoritative structure.

2.3.2.3 The content of preaching

The traditional understanding of preaching (that is preaching the Word of God and the proclamation of the gospel) has not changed much for last two millenniums of Christian history. There are a few characteristics of the content of preaching in the Korean church:

Firstly, preaching is more concerned about the individual than communal aspects. It touches for example significantly on the individual Christian's moral perfection, conversion and spiritual growth, but not much on communal faith or conversion in the congregation or local church (see 2.3.1). According to S K Lee (1999:208), since Confucianism influenced the early Christians in Korea, the early churches attempted something similar to the Confucian teaching that is moral and lawful in their preaching. This became the tradition. In addition to this, U Y Kim (2000:172) indicates the lack of social aspect in preaching.

Secondly, there is the strong tendency to emphasize the earthly success and prosperity of the individual and church as the blessings of God. This is influenced by traditional religion such as Shamanism, and the church growth syndrome led by the biggest church in the world, Yoido Full Gospel church

Thomas Long, *The witness of preaching* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1989).

(700,000 membership as a single church) and Fuller church Growth School (S K Lee 1998:220-1). In this whirl, especially in the 1970's, people neglected dogma and did whatever was needed for church growth. It was a non-dogmatic age. As a result, it is very difficult today to find the dogmatic preaching, but very easy to hear the non theological in the Korean church today (:225-6; cf S T Kim 2000:74).

Thirdly, in a hermeneutical sense, the content of preaching depends, in many cases very much on the literal and allegorical interpretation, without serious observation of the background and biblical language of the text (U Y Kim 2000:172). It does not deliver the message that rises from the text, but rather extracts the preacher's own ideas, and what the preacher wants, from the Bible as a mere proof text (:173). Attempts of textual sermon been made of course. However, they are not beyond the literal verse-by-verse interpretation. As a result, they depended mainly on the allegorical method according to which the Bible texts are interpreted in an *eisegetisch* and not an *exegetisch* manner (H M Yim 1996:156).

Moreover, preaching the Old Testament text is more rare than preaching the New Testament text (S K Lee 1998:224-5). Having said that, there is the serious lack of the biblical preaching that the Korean church needs to take responsibility of.

2.3.2.4 The theology of preaching

The preaching of the Korean church is not much influenced by theological frame and change, but by historical, socio-cultural and political situations. According to the findings from the discussion above, there was not much theological knowledge and sensitivity among individual preachers and the church itself in Korea. This was due to her short history. There is also no correlation or the axis of unity between worship, preaching, teaching, and sacrament in the Korean church. In the early church of Christian history, they were an organic whole in

praising (worship), proclaiming (preaching), experiencing (sacrament and fellowship), and edifying (teaching) the Kingdom of God. The Korean church has a preacher-centered and preaching-centered structure and is missing the others (J K Un 1999c:253-4; 495-8).

There is the problem or theological assumption, that many preachers in the Korean church today only assume that their congregations are Christians. This theological assumption is not based on the right theology and creates the danger that they might preach in a manner suited to Christian believers in their services. Their message will be instructional without an evangelistic element. As a result, there will be no conversion, which in essence is the work of the Word of God (cf Lloyd-Jones 1998:146).

There is a trend that places more value on prayer than on the transforming power of preaching itself in the Korean church. This can however not be any pastor's excuse for lack of prayer or preparation for preaching. This trend cannot be biblical because preaching does nothing but prayer. It is therefore wrong to assign value to anything other than preaching to determine the work of preaching in the Korean church. It is therefore wrong and not biblical or theological at all.

2.3.3 The empirical interpretation of the interaction between preaching and culture in Korea

This is the result due to the qualitative interviews with the conversational partners (as attempted in 2.2.5 under *The empirical interpretation of the interaction between church and culture in Korea*). The expectation is that it should give relevance to the work discussed until now.

2.3.3.1 Profiles of the conversational partners

Conversational partners were chosen according to two criteria: that they should be knowledgeable and that they should have varied perspectives from the rest on the specific subject. With these criteria in mind, the participants were chosen among Korean postgraduate students at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. It was required that they resided in Pretoria, had 6-10 years of church ministry or campus mission experience. The participants were four pastors and a lay missionary who are all experts in different academic fields: one in New Testament studies, one in Old Testament studies, two in Practical theology studies, and one in Law studies. They are all married men aged between the age of 35 and 43.

2.3.3.2 Hearing the sentiments

The following data were gathered from the conversations led by a theme question and follow-up questions for clearer understanding. The follow-up questions to one were different from the other and were given when they were needed. The following is the actual statement expressed:

Q1 Do you think the problems that you and your colleagues identified of the Korean church towards her culture are related to the problems of preaching?

The conversational partners agreed that there was an inevitable relationship between preaching and church problems. Although they agreed, they nevertheless had different perspectives. M1 said:

Because the church's function is much affected by preaching and most of people adapt the Word of God through preaching, the wrong function of preaching results inevitably the problem of church.

M2 sees such the wrong function of preaching as the cause of church decline in Korea today:

One of main reasons of church decline is related to preaching that is not functioning properly. I believe the preacher needs to be able to answer the spiritual questions that people ask and wonder about. People want to secure the certainty of salvation, of eternal life after death, and why they should keep their faith in the uncertainty life. The reality, however, is not like that. Preachers do not give them the right answers but depend too much on moral sermons.

M3 expressed the concern that cultural change may affect preaching:

It might be OK so far but not any more. Concerning the young and new generation, we have to ask how we as modern preachers deal with the postmodern congregations. We are living in the age of preaching crisis in which we cannot deliver the absolute truth as strong as we could, although there is a lot of preaching methods recently developed and proposed.

M4 sees the problem in terms of continuity and the consistency of preaching:

The most important problem of the preachers in the Korean church is their sermon's discontinuity towards their lives. Whether they live according to what they preach or not, is more significant than whether they preach well or not. This is yet another issue related to preaching's consistency to helps preachers to identify who they are in what they are doing. N J Kim, for example, a well-known pastor, can preach on and on and on the blaze of prayer, because he is consistent in his preaching.

M5 also agrees that there is very close relationship between church and preaching:

The church's problem comes from preaching that is far away from the gospel and that is not spiritual at all today. It is rather full of the preacher's own story, psycho-therapeutic words and earthly values.

2.3.3.3 Interpreting the data

Having been informed by the sentiments of the conversational partners, I asked follow-up questions to each participant to clarify the meaning and find the theme of what they said. The following is a thematic interpretation:

On preaching in the interaction between church and culture in Korea

For this interpretation, I once again borrowed the model of James M Gustafson (1974:73-96) that classifies the role of theologian (preacher) alongside society (culture). Using his model, I categorized what the conversational partners expressed on this theme.

M1 and M3 here assign themselves to the *prophet* model, emphasizing the essence of the preacher and preaching. M1 finds the reason why people leave church in the absence of exegetical ability among preachers because they do not know and do not preach what the Bible really says. As a result, people follow the earthly fashion and pattern. It can be compared to an echo of the need of biblical preaching (suggested at the end of 2.3.2.3) and the context of preaching ahead of the pattern of preaching (emphasized in 2.3.1).

Accordingly, M3 argues that the most important role of preaching is to build mature and spiritual Christians who could reject the evil that comes through secular culture. As *prophets*, they consider the world as an object to transform or to overcome.

Assigning themselves to the *participant* model, M2 and M5 see the world as an object to understand. M2 challenges preachers to better know their culture and

society while M5 stresses the importance of a preaching method besides preaching content in the age of change without authority. M2's statement is a basic issue that is continuously claimed throughout this thesis. M5's emphasis gives relevance to the discussion of form (in 2.3.2.2).

M4, the always *preserver*, defines the world as an object to serve and the preacher as a servant. M4 reminds of one of Dulles' models, (the church as servant in ecclesiological discussion - 2.2.4) and relates it to preaching. Although the participants (two *prophets*, two *participants* and a *preserver*), have different views on a theme here, the result from the wrong function or the missed function of all their claims and suggestions would be the same: people will leave the church and never come back.

2.4 Conclusion and remarks for the next chapter

This chapter consists of critical and constructing descriptions on two dimensions with three significant factors. These descriptions are necessary in order to understand and define the problems of the Korean church.

In its first dimension, the holistic interaction between the church and culture in Korea was studied. In doing so, deficiencies were found in the Korean church's relationship to her culture. For example: deficiencies of setup, theological reflection, knowledge and responsibility, and of contextuality.

The present ecclesiologies of the Korean church were also found by critically using Avery Dulles' model as a window to look through. As a result, it was found that all five models were mixed in the Korean church. The Korean church has been very hierarchical and mystical and the most Korean type of the present ecclesiologies is *the church as herald* that stresses preaching the Word and places the preacher in the center of the church practices. The empirical interpretation of the interaction between church and culture (2.2.5) secured

relevance to such findings and suggested a solid and healthy ecclesiology for the Korean church.

In the second dimension, *preaching in the interaction between church and culture in Korea* (2.3), it was found that the Korean pulpit has been ignoring cultural changes and trends because the preachers have not been taught and properly guided how to respond to them. As a result, preaching in the Korean church experiences lack in the following areas: lack of diverse delivery methods, lack of hermeneutical balance between text and context, lack of congregational studies, lack of evangelistic or conversion preaching, lack of communal conversion, lack of valuing preaching itself, and so on.

More specifically, preaching in relation to its purpose mostly functions to persuade and advise with the biblical teachings and ethical guides. In the form of preaching, preachers have been using a single style of preaching, regardless of the diversity of form that is mainly logical, propositional, and topical with three ideas.

More seriously, regarding the content of preaching, it can be noted that preaching is more concerned about the individual than the communal aspect, earthly success than heavenly glory, and literal and allegorical interpretation than theological and biblical. In the theology of preaching, preaching is first, not much influenced by theological frame and change, but by historical and socio-cultural and political situations. The reason for this is that there was not much theological knowledge and sensitivity among the individual preachers and the church itself in Korea due to her short history. Secondly, there is no correlation or the axis of unity between worship, preaching, teaching, and sacrament. Thirdly, there is less value on preaching itself than on other aspects such as prayer. Fourthly, there is the problem of theological assumption that many preachers in the Korean church today only assume that their congregations are Christians and this has resulted in non conversion preaching. These findings

proved to be quite relevant through the empirical interpretation of preaching in the interaction between church and culture (2.3.3).

In Chapter 3, the interpretation of preaching in the interaction between church and culture from the normative Christian classic sources will be discussed biblically, historically and theologically by using D Browning (1991:49)'s second movement out of the four: Historical practical theology.

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

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 Haftarat (the Law and its completion on the Prophets, the first two divisions of the Hebrew canon) there could be exposition on one or both⁶⁰ 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

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).

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 develop 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 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

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).

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

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.

⁶⁶ They were indeed spread all over Europe. One thinks here of Jacques 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

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.

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:*

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

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

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-

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).

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 now⁷¹ 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

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

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

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

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

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

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,

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-Swirth: Penguin Books, 1967); Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, *War and peace in the global village* (Harword-Swirth: 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

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 *euanagelizesthai*, 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

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 parable, 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 (*didaskhein*) 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

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

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

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

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.

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.”

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.

CHAPTER 4 INTEGRATION: INTEGRATION OF INTERPRETATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIES

4.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a reflection that aims to integrate the questions implicit in contemporary practices of preaching in the Korean church, which were set out in Chapter 2, and the themes implied in the practices of preaching in the normative Christian sources, which were described in Chapter 3 (Browning 1991:51). In other words, this is where the inconsistency between what is and what ought is openly discussed, and where the continuity and discontinuity between the descriptive and the normative can be debated and judged (Polling & Miller 1985:88-89). It is necessary to reflect on what we have got in terms of new understanding before discussing the development of strategies (4.3) and concluding (Chapter 5).

4.2 Integrative interpretation

4.2.1 Claims implicit in contemporary practices

The critical and holistic historical survey of the Korean church in Chapter 2 revealed that the Korean church had since 1945 begun to lose her cultural initiative in Korean society and history. From the beginning of Korean Christianity (1884-1910), the Korean church had been vigorously participative in Korean people and society through various works of inculturation such as educational, medical, and evangelical ministries that became tradition of the Korean church and provided the background for the later development of the indigenous church of Korea. Especially during the Japanese oppression (1910-

45), the Korean church had been actively involved in political, economical, and socio-cultural issues and leading Korean people with the prominent Christian leaders who worked through the organized societies such as the YMCA, Independence Society, and the All People's Cooperative Association.

After 1945, however, the Korean church began to lose her cultural initiative due to two main reasons. 1) Her close relationship with political culture and regime that emerged from multi-factors such as the free and different atmosphere created by the Christian president and leaders in the democratic government, the influence of the American churches and missionaries, and anti-communism. 2) Her business with inner issues such as church growth and schism that resulted in negligence of social responsibility and service, and serious division of churches.

This situation worsened over time. There were ongoing rapid and various changes in every area of Korean society from the 1970's up to the present time. The followings are examples: (1) The dictatorship and political struggle for democracy (on political level); (2) The prominent development of industrialization (on economical level); (3) The rapid change of lifestyle through the use of all kinds of high technology and electronic media (on socio-cultural level); and (4) The increasing interest in Korean traditional culture and subsequent criticism on Western culture, that resulted in the multi-religion phenomena and Christianity's marginalization (in religious level).

The massive and holistic waves of change contributed to the Korean church losing her cultural initiative and influence in Korean society and making her float around worldly trends and culture. For example, there were the polarization between the conservatives and the liberals in relation to political culture and change; the emergence of Korean theology in relation to socio-cultural trends, and the rapid church growth movement and mass evangelical meetings closely related to economical and materialistic trends in Korean society.

As a result, the famous numerical growth of the Korean church began to slow down since the mid of 1980's and finally showed its decline since 1993. Many today consider this church decline as a crisis of the Korean church and are trying to find the reason behind the stagnation. Nevertheless, as declared in Chapter 2, it forecasted tragedy because no church can continuously grow if it ignores its context. No church can even survive if it loses contact with people. Although the Korean church kept growing especially in the 1970's and 1980's, however, at the same time she kept creating and accumulating the many problems we can see now both in Korean society and the Korean church. Moreover, church growth has been only in numerical growth. All the above can be concluded in the point that while there is inevitable interaction between church and culture in Korea in terms of ecclesiology, the present ecclesiology of the Korean church still lacks it.

Claim #1: How do we then rethink and reestablish the ecclesiology of the Korean church? Since it was argued that the Korean church has a weak setup of the relationship towards her culture and since both church and culture are the most significant contexts of preaching, I also here raise claim #2: How do we reset the context of preaching in the Korean church?

Chapter 2 argues that when the church loses her initiative to her culture, likewise preaching fails to understand and respond to the change of age and the culture of congregation. Once more, the reason for this is that the church and culture are the most important contexts of preaching. It is therefore very natural that there is today a rising need for preaching as a re-engagement between the Korean church and Korean culture. In relation to this, I strongly feel the need for the formation of Christian culture as a way of regaining the cultural initiative of the Korean church. This is in contrast with the fact that traditional religions such as Confucianism and American theology have influenced the formation of the theological tradition of the Korean church. It is therefore time for us as Christians to influence again Korean society.

However, we have to remember what the Western Church had experienced in the Christian culture called Christendom. For example, as D R Kim (1999:21-30) rightly explains, we see in Christian history that the honeymoon relation between the church and culture (originating from the existence of a state church) produced numerous nominal Christians. If we do not want to repeat this same problem committed by the Western Church, a holistic conversion should be emphasized. Since preaching is widely considered as the usual medium of conversion in Christian church and history (see S C Hong 1994:348; Willimon & Lischer 1995:214-5; G Johnston 2001:35), conversion preaching is to be addressed in this matter. In fact conversion preaching is one of the missing parts in the practices of the Korean church based on the discussion (2.3.1) in the second half of Chapter 2.

Chapter 2 seems to raise a few more claims. Claim #3 asks: How do we then formulate the Christian culture against or in the rage of worldly thoughts and cultures in Korea? Claim #4 asks: How do we define and defend conversion preaching that is seemingly exclusive in contemporary pluralistic Korean society? Claim #5, which should be considered inclusive to #4, asks: How do we revise the present preaching theory of the Korean church. In sum, the five claims inquires as follows:

1. How do we rethink and reestablish the ecclesiology of the Korean church?
2. How do we reset the context of preaching in the Korean church?
3. How do we formulate the Christian culture against or in the rage of worldly thoughts and cultures in Korea?
4. How do we define and defend conversion preaching that is seemingly exclusive in contemporary pluralistic Korean society?
5. How do we revise the present preaching theory of the Korean church?

These five claims are the general questions that characterize the situation of the contemporary Korean church. They will be responded to through general themes derived from the biblical, historical, and theological interpretation of the

normative Christian sources in Chapter 3.

4.2.2 Themes implied in normative practices and their fusion

Chapter 3 seeks to interpret the Christian classic sources in order to get the general themes implied in normative practices. These are the basic role of preaching, some criteria for its practice, and its dynamic interaction between church and culture. The result from such an effort may or may not cover all the general questions claimed in Chapter 2. There may be a need for further discussion with other relative sources for the fusion of the horizons. In this section, therefore, I will attempt to clarify what general themes would be implied in Chapter 3. This is in response to the general questions found in the previous section (regardless of whether they cover all claims and without limiting possible influences apart from the work in Chapter 3).

Throughout human history, religion and culture have been inextricably connected. There has never yet been a great religion that did not find its expression in a great culture. Likewise, there has never yet been a great culture that did not have deep roots in a religion (S Neill 1980:1). This is as true of Christianity as of any other religious faith. Today we see and hear a great deal about the importance of culture in the preaching of the gospel. Certainly much damage can be done to the mission of the church if cultural factors are ignored.

Accordingly, one of the main themes that come to the fore throughout Chapter 3 is to present preaching in the interaction between church and culture. This theme originated from the way God revealed Himself: God's self-disclosure did not take place in a cultural vacuum. This fact has been true from the implicit evidence of the Bible through the contemporary practices. Although culture is not an explicit subject of the Bible, biblical interpretation in Chapter 3 makes it clear that human cultures have played a far more significant role in biblical history. The historical interpretation in Chapter 3 also reveals that preaching,

especially in its form and style, has tended to move like the swing of the pendulum 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 Christian church history. The reason for this is that it has been influenced by the historical and cultural trends. In the same manner, theological work in the chapter clearly shows that there are times when Christian faith moves into culture. Christian faith and culture go together, or the cultural syntheses go tumbling down. With this, the patterns and language of preaching are affected.

This theme is highly significant and gives much insight on the related general questions claimed in Chapter 2:

4.2.2.1 Context of preaching: How do we reset the context of preaching in the Korean church?

In the sense that preaching is placed in the interaction between church and culture, we can think of its relation in the context of preaching (Claim #2). Chapter 3 realistically emphasizes that these two factors, church and culture, are the significant contexts of preaching. It is reasoned in Chapter 2 that the Korean church lacks such understanding. U Y Kim (1999:243) is quite right to analyze the Korean church in this very matter. “There has been a tendency, he says, in the Korean church to separate the church and culture in preaching.” Therefore, placing preaching in the interaction between the church and culture is a good starting point of discussing here the fusion between the practice and the normative for the Korean church.

Accordingly, R Schreiter (1985:20) also considers church and culture as the community and the broader context in which the gospel becomes incarnate. R Allen (1998:19-61) declares that there are three contexts for preaching, such as church, *world*, and the life of the preacher. Although he did not choose the term *culture*, what he uses can mean *culture* because his consistent argument is on

the cultural transition from modernity to the postmodern (see R Allen 1998:44-53). Likewise, when H Robinson (2001:73-4) refers to the three worlds of preaching: the world of the Bible, the world we live in, and the particular world in which we are called to preach, the first two worlds can be replaced by *culture* because in his terminology, world means *culture* and *language* and the last obviously represents *church*.

Within the context of preaching, R Osmer (1990:183) emphasizes the role of theology: *theology as a critical interpretation on the sermon* reflects critically on the content of Christian faith and thought, and helps the congregation get to grips with their existential experiences such as justice, moral issues, suffering, death, and peace. Along with what he stresses I have to highlight another point, too: There is another role of *theology as a critical interpretation on the culture of congregation that we often ignore*. In this sense, H Robinson (1991 in Mattingly 1998:82) explains that preachers therefore need to exegete their culture as well as exegete the Word of God. In addition to that, I want to add another need to exegete: that is the culture of preacher. In saying this, I am in debt to L Tisdale (1992:9-12) and R Allen (1998:54-61) because they recognize the preacher and the congregation as subcultures without just generalizing them as the contexts. I do not think H Robinson refers exclusively to the pastors' culture when mentioning "their culture", but rather generalizes it inclusively. I think this can be a good starting point to discuss the additional claim on Korean Christian identity.

So far, various factors that construct the context of preaching were discussed, such as text, church, culture, the culture of the pastor, and of the congregation. One researcher may add something to this list, e.g. theology, tradition, the Holy Spirit, and worldview. Another one may very well omit something from it. For example, R Schreiter (1985:20, 95) values theology and tradition beside gospel, church, and culture. J G Van der Watt (2002:1) gives his attention to tradition, the Holy Spirit, worldview as well as the Bible and church. D C S Lee (2003:iii) constructs his context of preaching with the text, context, congregation, and the

context of congregation. Since Chapter 2 defines that the Korean church lacks the adequate understanding of culture as an important context of preaching and tends to separate the church from its culture in preaching, a proposal for such will be addressed in the next section. The significant fact will be discussed that *the context of preaching changes instead of being a context that is “once fixed and stands forever”*. This assertion is in accordance to the observation that the new homiletic movement emerged out of a realization of the changing preaching context due to cultural breakdown.

4.2.2.2 Preaching theory: How do we revise the present preaching theory of the Korean church?

From the argument that preaching’s form and language have been influenced by the historical and cultural trends, I feel it necessary then to revise the present preaching theory of the Korean church for the culturally appropriate communication of the gospel (Claim #5). At the same time, however, I feel the limit that the revised preaching theory to be proposed cannot be the absolute alternative.

Chapter 2 found that the Korean pulpit has been ignoring cultural changes and trends because preachers have not been taught and properly guided how to respond to them. As a result, preaching in the Korean church experiences the lack of diverse delivery method, the lack of hermeneutical balance between the text and context, the lack of congregational studies, the lack of the evangelistic (conversion) preaching, the lack of communal conversion, and the lack of valuing preaching itself.

In relation to this, Chapter 3 argues from a biblical perspective that even God’s self-disclosure in his revelatory action, known as preaching to us, did not take place in a cultural vacuum. Human cultures have played a very significant role in biblical history and writing. Besides, the basic structure of His revelation in the Bible was dialogic in care of listeners. And it was very true both in the Old

and New Testament. Furthermore, there was no distinction between evangelistic (conversion) preaching and congregational (teaching) preaching in New Testament preaching.

With regard to historical interpretation, Chapter 3 also declares that preaching in its form and style tends to move like the swing of the pendulum between the two extremes of 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 affected by historical and cultural trends. From this, we understand that the lacking hermeneutical balance between the text and context is not the problem of the contemporary Korean pulpit only. The Korean church has kept the traditional form of preaching in most of her history. Since the 1980's, however, she began to shift her attention to expository preaching. As U Y Kim (1999:36) rightly indicates, she seems to believe that expository preaching is the only biblical and true sermon. No preaching form or theory can be the absolute alternative. It is not easy therefore to revise the present preaching theory and propose a new one. What is essential is to continue and to never stop linking human sin with God's forgiveness and human need with God's provision, and human search with God's truth in a given time and given culture as the wise of Canterbury illuminates (cf D Coggan 1958:18).

Chapter 2, more specifically determines that preaching (in relation to its purpose) in the Korean church mostly functions to persuade and advise with biblical teachings and ethical guides. With reference to the form of preaching, preachers have (regardless of the diversity of form) been using a single style of preaching that is mainly logical, propositional, and topical with three ideas. Regarding the content of preaching, preaching is more concerned about individual than communal aspects, earthly success than heavenly glory, and literal and allegorical interpretation than theological and biblical. In the theology of preaching, there is no correlation or axis of unity between worship, preaching, teaching, and sacrament. Furthermore, there is the problem of theological

assumption (many preachers in the Korean church today assume their congregations are Christians) that resulted in preaching without conversion.

The contemporary preaching theory practicing in the Korean church for theologically accurate and culturally appropriate communication of the gospel, can be revised at this point. Chapter 3 asks when and why the new homiletic movement emerged. 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 a changing culture. To achieve the aim, it made a homiletical paradigm shift from deductive preaching, that begins with a general principle and moves toward particular examples, to inductive preaching, that begins with specific experience and moves toward extensive principles. Moving beyond the old traditional paradigm, the story or narrative emerged as an effective medium for the communication of biblical truth in the contemporary homiletics.

Accordingly, D Buttrick (1994:71-5), one of the main figures of this camp, argues that contemporary preaching is shorter and less demanding of listeners. Preachers today seem to be busy 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. U Y Kim (1999) proposes homiletical ideas and suggestions of this movement as an alternative for contemporary Korean preaching.

Many suggest that we have to look carefully at the New Testament because as K Runia (1983:19) rightly defines, the New Testament itself is both the result of Christian preaching and a form of Christian preaching. For example, from the theological interpretation in Chapter 3, it can be figured out that there are no less than thirty words for preaching in the New Testament. It means there is a rich variety of preaching in the early church. It means at the same time that our

almost exclusive use of preaching for all of them, such as preaching and teaching, is a sign of the loss of something that was a living reality in primitive Christianity. There is thus a need to recover some of them in the preaching habit of the Korean church today. Furthermore, it is also essential that one looks closer at the Reformation preaching since this was one of the major shifts in Christian preaching history that emerged from an awareness of the changing preaching context and practices in the medieval time and culture. A proposal for such will be developed in the next section.

4.2.2.3 Conversion preaching: How do we define and defend conversion preaching that is seemingly exclusive in contemporary pluralistic Korean society?

Indeed, the practice of preaching as the medium of conversion was not only the tradition of the early Christian church, but also the heritage of the evangelistic movement from the 17th through to the 19th century. This seems to be lost in most of the preaching practices in our churches today. According to D W Lee (1994:348-9), this may be due to the spirit of age that concerns itself more with context than text. In other words, it is because of the demand of the pragmatistic era that trespassed on the church. Chapter 2 therefore defines and defends conversion preaching that is seemingly exclusive in contemporary pluralistic and pragmatistic Korean society.

Chapter 2 sets out the lack of *communal* conversion in the Korean church preaching. Ironically, this happens most often in churches that emphasize sin and conversion in preaching. Conversions take place in the individuals, but not much in the *communal* sense, as a local church. This could answer the common critical question often asked, namely, considering such a great membership and world growth record, why does the Korean church not have an influence on her society or nation?

The essence of the church's credible witness is her own *ongoing process* of conversion. As the love of God in Jesus Christ is incarnated in the faith community, that love is demonstrated to the world. Witness happens in all that the church is, does, and says, but always in and through its forgiveness and its dependence upon God's grace. Unfortunately the reality in our churches, including the Korean church, is not like that, because there are the lack of the *communal* character of faith and the reduction of conversion to the experience of the individual (cf Guder 2000:148).

It was discussed in the previous section (4.2.1) that in Christian history the honeymoon relation between the church and culture produced numerous nominal Christians. If that same problem has to be avoided; a *holistic* conversion should be emphasized. My arguments are as follows: Preaching calls the church, not only the individuals, to repentance. Preaching does not only shape the character of individuals, but also the character of the church. Preaching aims to change certain aspects, such as belief, behavior, and belonging for the church, as well as for individuals. In addition, preaching aims for a *holistic* conversion: not only to change a person's belief, but also his or her whole person. A proposal for such communal, holistic, and ongoing conversion will be developed in the next section.

4.2.2.4 Ecclesiology: How do we rethink and reestablish the ecclesiology of the Korean church?

In highlighting church and culture, and in connecting the two, our attention is challenged again to rethink and re-establish the present ecclesiology of the Korean church already discussed as Claim #1. A Dulles' study of the five ecclesiological types for examining the present ecclesiology of the Korean church (see Chapter 2) reveals that all five types exist in a mixed form. This means that the Korean church has not been taking serious theological reflection for constructing a sound and healthy ecclesiology. Since the Korean church has been very hierarchical and mystical, the most Korean type of ecclesiology is

The Church as Herald, which places preaching the Word and preacher at the center of the church practices. This model can be observed in almost every church in Korea today. It tends to pursue a one-way communication towards the congregation and neglects the importance of community and the laity ministry. It became a tradition in the Korea Church that reduces the laity to passivity and makes them a mere appendage to the apostolate.

Accordingly, the conversation partners for qualitative interviewing (Chapter 2: 2.2.5) have all agreed that the Korean church does not participate much in her surrounding culture and does not exercise a positive role over the society. One of the conversation partners said it was the problem of ecclesiology. I think he is right. In discussing the communal conversion above, it was argued that conversions do take place in individuals, but not much in the communal sense as a local church and that this could be a possible answer to the common critical question, of why the Korean church lacks positive influence over her society. This is in essence the very problem of ecclesiology. The Korean church has been handling this ecclesiological problem improperly (her wrong attitude to see the problem on the individual level on the surface, and not on the church level as a whole). This is why many criticize today that the Korean church produced individualism in faith (see T Y Cho 1994:60-2; I S Choi 1994:105-7; Y K Park 1998:204; U Y Kim 2002:95-6). T Y Cho (:62) in particular, argues that the Korean church has weakened the communal and social function of baptism. U Y Kim (ibid) declares there are even individual characteristics in preaching and worship in the Korean church. I cannot deny that all these are closely and essentially related to the problem of the validity of ecclesiology that has never been seriously and theologically reflected on by the Korean church.

The conversation partners also argued that the response of the Korean church to the problem expressed is not proper and not good enough, and that many churches attempt to respond in many ways but with wrong motivation: they do it because of church growth as a management strategy. Again, the ecclesiology in the Korean church has been influenced by historical and socio-cultural trends,

not by theological consideration. This is the time where we need to rethink and reconstruct a sound and healthy ecclesiastic model for the Korean church.

Although R Niebuhr's demonstration offers a classic model of the relationship of culture and church, I used in Chapter 3 a model based on the findings of James M Gustafson (1974:73-96) in holistic perspective. This model categorizes the role of theologians in society into three roles: preserver, prophet, and participant. The preserver attempts 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 influences it to change and construct it (:73). Culturally speaking, we are living in the era of cultural relativity, that is the idea that there are no absolute criteria for making value judgments, or especially ethical judgments. According to Taber (1991:170), each human culture, on the one hand, is a collective expression of the creatively inherent in the 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) on the other hand, agrees with Gustafson's second model (prophet) and Niebuhr's second (against culture), 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 to be under the judgment of God. Gustafson's participant model goes beyond this limit: this participant stands between two models, preserver and prophet, but instead of criticizing society passively from the outside, it rather actively participates in the process of social construction. I strongly sense that the Korean church too needs to go beyond this point. In the next section, I will propose a sound ecclesiastic model for the Korean church in a comparative and cooperative discussion between the model of A Dulles, which was used to examine the present Korean ecclesiology in Chapter 2, and that of J Gustafson, which I adopted to develop the strategy.

4.2.2.5 Christian culture: How do we formulate the Christian culture against or in the rage of worldly thoughts and cultures in Korea?

Chapter 2 sets out how the Korean church has, since 1945, lost the cultural initiative of her society. As a result, deficiencies were revealed in the Korean church's relationship towards her culture (deficiencies of setup, theological reflection, knowledge, responsibility and contextuality). It was argued that such trends have become a socio-cultural tradition and that they have influenced continuously on the formation of the theological tradition of the Korean church. Besides, the Christian culture is marginalized among cultures in Korean society. In contrast with this reality check, I zealously feel and claim the need of the formation of Christian culture and ultimately the necessity of regaining the cultural initiative of the Korean church.

Concerning the issue that the Christian culture is marginalized among cultures in Korean society, Chapter 3 from its biblical and historical interpretation turns our attention to the way two or multicultures exist. For example, the two media of oral tradition and literary culture coexisted and interacted. In other words, there was a period during which some Christian traditions were orally transmitted. During that same period Christians were deeply and continuously engaged with literature (H Y Gamble 1995:23-4, 28-32). Hauerwas & Willimon (1989:12) interestingly define that the church is an island of one culture (that of God's Kingdom) in the middle of another (that of the world). In baptism our citizenship is transferred from one to another. According to L Tisdale (1992:1-22) we can understand that our church and society exist not in one culture, but in various another subcultures. G Marsden (R Mouw 2000:86-90) declares that the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century was much like an immigration experience from a culture that had been quite friendly to evangelical Christianity to a new context dominated by an open hostility to our deepest convictions.

It becomes clear from the above discussion that no culture entirely replaces another, but that they rather co-exist with each other, although we do not know whether each exists in opposition to or in favor of the other. We can be challenged by the fact that we are in the religious and cultural pluralistic context where we have to answer to how to deal with the others in order to formulate the Christian culture.

The discussion on the Reformation in Chapter 3 asserts the very crucial point that the laity turned to the Reformation because it flattered them and placed their spiritual destinies in their own hands. If we once again want to turn the rage of worldly thoughts and cultures to the way God wants (as the Reformation did in Christian history), we have to look closer at the relationship between the Reformation and the laity movement.

Uniform preaching and teaching in the Reformation were indeed effective to spread the same conviction Luther conveyed from town to town. Although we tend to keep away from the term “uniform” these days (due to post modernistic thoughts and the objection that traditional preaching was too uniform), we should consider it as a possible medium of formulating and spreading the Christian culture effectively.

Gustafson’s participant model can be applied to this very matter because of its nature and stand. I strongly assert that from a Christian point of view, the world needs the church. God wants our churches to care for the world, not in order to help the world run more smoothly or make the world a better and safer place for Christians to live in, but in order to help them pay attention to the genuine desire of God for the world and for the nature of God’s kingdom. That is what Christian culture is all about. A proposal for such will be addressed in the next section.

4.3 Development of strategies

Chapter 4 consists of two parts, namely *integration* and *insight*. *Integration* as fusion between the descriptive and the normative was reflected on in the previous section (4.2). With *insight*, as a strategic practical theology (Browning 1991:58; Ballard & Pritchard 1996:142), reflection is turned into action in order to develop strategies such as educational activity, new attitudes, refinement of skills, corrective action, new action, and prayer and celebration. I therefore attempt to develop here the strategies of concrete practices in light of the analysis and the reflection of the concrete situation and the normative texts. I will propose a return to contextual experience so that the strategies that will be developed here can be tested for their relevance in real life.

4.3.1 Context of preaching

How do we reset the context of preaching in the Korean church?

The first strategy is *to place preaching in the interaction between church and culture*.

This should be the first step. Without it the following efforts are meaningless. This strategy comes from the analysis of concrete practices in the concrete situation where the Korean church lacks the clear understanding of culture being an important context of preaching and tends to separate the church from its culture in preaching. Such a tendency comes from a cultural identity and belief that Koreans are homogenous. For them, therefore, cultural issue is not for internal matters that they have to deal with in the Korean church, but for external matters that they will finally face when they do mission work in other cultures in other countries.

However, this is not quite true. The Korean church followed the Korean society, that began to value and study both the traditional cultures and the new trends since the 1980s, and gave her attention to cultural issues. Nevertheless, the Korean church began to decline from that very period, the mid of 1980's. What irony! Some may argue it just happened because the velocity of cultural change was too fast for the Korean church to catch up with. To some extent, this is true. In fact, it is not ironic but evident that her efforts and interest were and still are limited to the media of church growth and the social phenomena outside church. The Korean church had a chance to prevent the tragedy of church decline but had failed to do so because of the lack of the serious theological reflection on her culture and of the absence of adequate response based on such theological considerations.

Besides, the Korean church has not the sense to see that there can be many subcultures inside a single congregation. In other words, the context of preaching in the Korean church lacks cultural qualities both inside and outside church. The Korean church, therefore, needs to place preaching to where it was or where it ought to be: that is not just in the center of church practices, but also in the interaction between church and culture. Ultimately, preaching should be understood as an interaction between church and culture. Preacher, who was a mainly actor in the old setting that placed him or her in the center of church practices, is an inter-actor in this new setting. As an inter-actor, preacher should be a servant standing between and serving God and His people. As an inter-actor, preacher should be an intercultural missionary working between the cultures.

The second strategy is *to see the congregation as a culture, which implies both that the congregation has a culture (subcultures) and that it is a culture (subcultures).*

Without having a sense of cultural aspect, the Korean church seems to follow the classical communication theory that focused on speaker (preacher), message (the gospel), and receiver (listeners). The balance between preacher and listeners obviously leans towards the preacher because of the Korean preaching style that has been discussed in Chapter 2: Because of its aim to persuade and advise with the biblical truth, preaching is mainly a one-way communication with the preacher's authority. The preacher is a herald and his/her relationship with the listeners is vertical and hierarchical. The problem with this, according to F Craddock (1971:54-5), is that there is no democracy, no dialogue, no listening by the preacher, and no contributing by the listeners.

In reality, the paradigm shift from being speaker-oriented to listener-oriented has taken place not long ago. Synagogue preaching was however open to the laity (see S K Jung 1993:69; Norrington 1996:4) and the Reformation moved them from the margin to the heart of the spiritual domain (see Cameron 1991:312; Dixon 2002:72-3). About thirty years ago, some leading homileticians in America such as F Craddock, E Lowry, and D Buttrick began to ask the primary question with a different emphasis: "To whom does the preacher speak?" and "How does the congregation listen?" rather than "How should the preacher speak?" (E J Kim 1999:1-2).

In my view, this listener-oriented paradigm should expand to include an awareness of the active and communal characteristics of the congregation. This means that the congregation is seen as a culture, which indicates all together that the congregation has a culture (subcultures) and that it is a culture (subcultures). The congregation is not only the hearers or listeners of the preaching as traditionally understood, but also active participants in and co-creators of the sermon's movement who could arrive at a conclusion by themselves, not only through the preacher (F Craddock 1971:62; T Long 1989:131; E J Kim 1999:11-3). Pope-Levison & Levison (2000:3-8) even compare them with actors who prepare the message and make it visible. I thus prefer the term *the congregation* than either the listeners or the hearers.

The meaning of the word *congregation* links more closely with community than with individual listeners. Preaching presupposes a group of listeners. The group of listeners is the congregation, the people of faith, the church, and the community of faith. Just as individual Christians are unknown in the Bible apart from a community of faith, so individual listeners in preaching cannot be considered separate from the congregation (cf T Long 1989:22-3; see Pope-Levison & Levison 2000:4-5; C Gelder 2000:38).

The old term *dialogical preaching* declared two partners of preaching, i.e. the preacher, representing interpretation, and the congregation, representing the world. The individuals in congregations, however, are not indeed representatives of the world because their culture is different from that of the world around them and each is unique as a subculture (cf D Mosser 1991:9-10; M Marty 1991:15-18; see J Hopewell 1987; L Tisdale 1992:5-9; S C Moon 2001:133). Preachers thus need to consider basically three contexts of preaching: the text, the world, and the congregation. In other words, preachers need to exegete the text, the world, and the culture of congregation or the congregation as a culture (subcultures).

The Korean church is clearly in need of a reset of the context of preaching. By saying this I do not mean that she needs a completely different and new component to set it. What I rather want to point out is that it should have a different quality or characteristic, one that was ignored by previous models; a different accent that was previously depreciated by the Korean church. This different characteristic is the cultural feature that sees all the components of the contexts of preaching from the viewpoint of culture. In fact, preaching takes place in multiple overlapping and interacting contexts (R Allen 1998:19). Each component that consists of preaching, therefore, stands for one of the multiple overlapping and interacting cultural contexts. In addition, each context, except the text, is not static, but ever changing. With this understanding I suggest as the contexts of preaching for the Korean church, the following: the text (gospel,

Bible), culture (context, world), church (congregation, the community of faith), the culture of congregation, and the culture of preacher.

Of course there are many other important contexts of preaching such as the preacher's personal life, the preacher's household, the denominations, the global Christian community, tradition, worldview, theology, and the Holy Spirit. The first two can be included in the culture of preacher, the third and fourth belong to the church in a broader sense, the fifth and sixth can fit into culture, and the last two can be placed anywhere and everywhere. I cannot deal with them all here due to the limitation of this study except theological features that affect all the contexts of preaching. However, it should not be forgotten that each identified context is to be understood from the viewpoint of culture. Denominations, for example, should be viewed as subcultures because it is the social behavior of religious groups, their actions, customs, and cultures, and not just their words and stated beliefs that distinguish them from one another (cf H Nieburh 1929; M Marty 1976:76; W Roof & W McKinney 1987:106-47; L Tisdale 1992:4-5). If the Korean church can consider this point of view seriously and positively when dealing with each other denominationally, a totally different and new phase of positive, constructive, and mutually respectful relationship will be created among the denominations and will end or at least diminish the hostile environment that emerged from the painful denominational schism in Korean church history.

4.3.2 Preaching theory

How do we revise the present preaching theory of the Korean church?

The first strategy is *to seek preaching as multiple purposes, multiple forms, and multiple aspects for culturally appropriate communication of the gospel.*

We determined that preaching in the Korean church mainly aims to convince the congregation of biblical teaching and ethical guides and has been delivering preaching in a single traditional form. Korean preaching tends to lean more towards the individual than the communal aspect, earthly success than heavenly glory, and literal and allegorical interpretation rather than theological and biblical. In other words, the Korean church's preaching has been ignoring multiplicity in its purpose, form and content, and remaining in uniformity.

I cannot criticize uniformity in itself or say it is wrong because it may very well function correctly and better in a particular time and particular place. For example, in the Reformation, the preaching in the towns was marked by a fairly consistent corpus of "uniform preaching, uniform condemnation and uniform recommendation" derived from the teaching of Martin Luther. The preachers shared the same sense and conviction just as Luther had written and Reformation ideas were spread that way by preaching (B Moeller 1999:52). Likewise, the Korean church has experienced the glorious period of preaching and great church growth for the last hundred years even though her preaching has been determined as uniformity.

My claim, however, is on her continuing ignorance not only of multiplicity in the purpose, form, and content of preaching, but also of the rapid and various socio-cultural changes and the possible congregational changes that followed in that changing society. Preaching in Korea today is required to be culturally appropriate as well as theologically accurate. My suggestion as a strategy for Korean preachers, therefore, is to seek multiple purposes, multiple forms, and multiple aspects for culturally appropriate preaching.

Practically speaking, the Korean church needs to get some practical insights and theological guidelines. These should come from the homiletical ideas and suggestions claimed by the new homiletic movement that emerged out of a realization of the changing preaching context due to cultural changes. It was a new effort moving beyond the old traditional rhetorical paradigm to increase the

effectiveness of preaching in changing culture. It moved the homiletical concern from the preacher to the congregation and the homiletical language from logical, prepositional, and stimulating to the ear, to metaphorical, poetic, and visual (cf W Wiersbe 1994:17-43; U Y Kim 1999:256-61). Furthermore, it values and stresses story and narrative as the effective media for communicating biblical truth (see T Long 1994:90-100). Although it is a generation old now, we can assume that it is still quite new to Korean preachers on a practical level in local churches. This is because U Y Kim proposed such homiletical ideas and suggestions as an alternative for contemporary Korean preaching not very long ago in his PhD thesis in 1999.

However, no preaching form or theory can be *the* absolute alternative. Since the 1980's, for example, the Korean church began to give her attention to expository preaching. As U Y Kim (1999:36; 2000:171) indicates, she seems to believe that the expository preaching is *the* only biblical and true sermon. As a result, contemporary preachers who like to use the expository preaching tend to be excessively addicted to expository preaching only. Likewise, the new homiletic form should not be considered as *the* alternative or used excessively and exclusively among Korean preachers. It rather has to be used as but *one* of multiple options.

In addition, criticism is emerging against the new homiletic movement. The most common and strong criticism is of the lack of a teaching aspect. Although much have been learned from advocates of its views, and preaching in America has been changed for the better because of it, however, a homiletic that solved the problems of preaching in the final days of a Christian culture is not likely to be the solution to the problems of preaching in a post Christian culture. Preachers are becoming increasingly aware that they are now speaking to the children of those congregations whom they were attempting to address with the new homiletic a generation ago and who have lost the substance of the Christian faith. They do not know the fundamentals of biblical and theological knowledge to enter into active participation in the sermon. Congregations do not know, they

know they do not know, and they want to know (T Long 1994:99-100; J Thompson 2001:1-2).

On the contrary, with the same concern, M Abbott (1999:5) rightly argues that an intelligent Christian, with a well developed right brain, deeply committed to a mainline congregation, would feel that what he or she heard is amorphous, vague, and unfocused when the preacher had finished “a new homiletic” sermon. I do not think that there is an exception to any case above in the Korean church. The reason for this is that it has been almost twenty years that the Korean church had started to decline since the mid-eighties. Another reason is that there certainly are many intelligent Christians among the various congregations in the Korean church. Again my suggestion as a strategy for Korean preachers, therefore, is to seek multiple purposes, multiple forms, and multiple aspects for culturally appropriate preaching. Although I definitely encourage them to learn much from the new homiletic and to change their preaching habit and paradigm through it, however, at the same time I urge them to do so critically and consider it as *an* option.

The second strategy is *to understand preaching as a theological interpretation of the contexts as well as the text in partnership with the congregation for theologically accurate communication of the gospel.*

If the first strategy was related to revising the aim, form, and content of preaching for culturally appropriate communication, the second strategy concerns rethinking the theology of preaching for theologically accurate communication. As I mentioned at the end of previous section, theology preachers hold affects not only the text, but also all the contexts of preaching when dealing with them. R Allen (1998: 63-81), to whom I am in debt for this insight, clearly defines that preaching is the theological interpretation of the text, God’s Word. I argue, however, that it is more than that: Preaching should also be a theological interpretation of each context such as culture (or world), church, the culture of congregation, and the culture of preacher. Otherwise,

preaching cannot be “a sharp two-edged sword” (Rev 1:16) for culturally appropriate and theologically accurate communication of the gospel because it would have no close look in and contribution to establishing contextual understanding. In fact, interpreting the contexts is the first task to be done prior to the interpreting the text. Interpreting the contexts is a more significant assignment than revising preaching theory or method. However, it cannot be done by one chance in one place: rather it should be done as an ongoing establishing of understanding.

The role of the preacher is the very central to this theological work because it should be performed by him or her. Through this theological interpretation of the contexts as well as the text, his or her preaching will not only be theologically accurate and true but also culturally appropriate and fitting for the particular congregation in a particular context. Accordingly, L Tisdale (1992:247-8) states that the preacher grows homiletically through an ongoing deepening of biblical and theological understanding. Likewise, the preacher also grows homiletically through the ongoing establishment of contextual understanding.

However, the role of the congregation is also very crucial in this new understanding. It is indeed a partnership between the preacher and the congregation. In this partnership, the preacher has to help the congregation interpret the contexts as well as the text in the same way the preacher had initially interpreted it for him/herself. In other words, the preacher guides the congregation through preaching or through conversation (R Allen’s term) to interpret the biblical truth such as the divine character (who God was/is), divine purpose (what God originally intended/intends), and divine action (what God has done/is doing) both in the biblical time and in the present. At the same time, through preaching or conversation, the preacher needs to lead the congregation to interpret the situation or the culture of the world that surrounds them and the divine relationship to it so that they may better understand their preacher’s life, as well as their own life and world.

From this, preaching can be understood as the theological interpretation of the contexts as well as the text in partnership with the congregation as a community for theological interpretation. In this regard, however, I have to suggest some important points that have to be considered seriously: First of all, although R Allen (1998:63) is quite right to define all Christians as theologians in this very sense, we should however not overlook the preacher because he or she has the initiative to and is responsible for the partnership of theological interpretation. Second, although I am in debt to R Allen in this regard and for his term (:13) *interpretation* that invites humility on the part of the preacher, I cannot fully agree with his idea (:70) to reduce preaching to mere interpretation. This is because I understand preaching as God's Word to the extent that it is inspired by the Holy Spirit and a faithful interpretation of the Bible. Third, although this understanding values the contexts as well as the text, yet it does not mean that I value them both equally as R Allen does from his revisionary theological perspective. The reason for this is that I am also an evangelical theologian who is criticized by him (:80). Finally, although preaching can begin with general theological themes in relation to the context (since this new understanding of preaching emphasizes context), I argue that such topical preaching can also be biblical because the preaching is just one step away from a direct encounter with the Bible. The source to which the preaching appeals itself, is the result, to some degree, of biblical interpretation. Accordingly, T Long (1989:49) explains it better: "To the extent that this kind of preaching can be called gospel sermon, then it presupposes an encounter with the Bible having taken place somewhere, sometimes. All gospel preaching, then, is in some sense biblical preaching, since biblical interpretation stands in the background even when it is absent from the foreground."

The third strategy is *to integrate preaching and teaching, conversion preaching and congregational preaching, and preaching and other Christian practices for holistically balanced communication of the gospel.*

This strategy was initiated by the integrative interpretation between contemporary Korean practices and New Testament practices of preaching. In the New Testament a variety of words is used for today's word *preaching*, as discussed in Chapter 3 (3.4.2.2.2). This means that the present practices lost some that were vital in the early Christianity. This is the result of such effort to recover some of the missing dimensions in Korean church today.

First of all, this is not the recent homiletic issue in general, yet it needs to be addressed for the Korean church due to her dichotomization of preaching and teaching. One of the major criticisms that we can hear with reference to the Korean pulpit is that preaching is like a lecture. The claim is simply that *preaching is preaching* and *teaching is teaching* and that they cannot be the same.

The New Testament, however, does not separate preaching from teaching. There are clear evidences in many biblical passages (Mt 4:23; 9:35; 11:1; Lk 4:15, 44; Act 28:31) that in one and the same place both kinds of activity went on as was declared in Chapter 3. Haddon Robinson (2001:74) also clearly affirms that the Bible speaks of the gift of the pastor-teacher (Eph 4:11) and this implies that the two functions should be joined. Although there are other voices against this point (cf C Dodd 1936:7; J Adams 1982:5; M Lloyd-Jones 1998:62), there is much wider and obvious consensus among the scholars that preaching and teaching were never sharply separated by the first Christians and should not to be separated by us today (cf H Davis 1958: 123-25; R Worley 1967; T Hall 1971: 105-7; J McDonald 1980; S Greidanus 1988:7; M Abbott 1999:4-6; D Lee 2003). The Korean church, therefore, needs to integrate preaching and teaching as an organic whole.

Second, as explained in Chapter 2, the Korean church has obviously lost the conversion feature that is one of the two major aims of preaching. Although it can still be found exceptionally in the revival movement, most Korean pulpits in local churches tend to preach on another aspect (equipping established church

members). Comparing this to the discussion above, it seems to be contradictory to each other. But it is not. Ironically, the two things happen at the same time in the Korean church. How does it happen? Theoretically it should not happen because, as noted above, most Korean preachers think preaching and teaching cannot be the same. Practically, however, it just happens: They preach like a teaching in rational, logical and three point form (as explained in Chapter 2) without realizing what they do and how they do in terms of preaching theory. This happens because they have been taking it for granted. Besides, this is obviously congregational preaching in terms of its purpose that aims to equip the established church members, not to convert the new. As a result, conversion preaching is lost or at least seriously weakened in the Korean church. The evidence is in fact clear that there are not many converted new members. However, the established members move from one to another church at large in the Korean church today. D W Lee (1994:348) is thus very right to criticize that we cannot hear and see any slogan of conversion growth or evangelistic preaching in any church growth seminar or preaching seminar today in the Korean church.

The New Testament does not distinguish in principle between conversion preaching and congregational preaching. The purpose of preaching is to evoke and to strengthen faith for one's whole life for the kingdom of God. In other words, preaching aims not only to change certain things, such as belief, behavior and belonging, but also to equip the congregation in meeting with the triune God, Father, Son, and Spirit (cf J C Müller 1984:79 in H J C Pieterse 1987:11; D Buttrick 1994:33-36). Conversion preaching is the missing part in the preaching practice of the Korean church. To integrate it with congregational preaching is therefore the urgent and ultimate assignment for a holistically balanced communication of the gospel in the Korean church.

Third, further investigation is needed on how preaching collaborates with other practices of the church because there is no correlation or axis of unity between worship, preaching, teaching, and sacrament in the Korean church. In the early

church of Christian history, they existed as an organic whole in praising (worship), proclaiming (preaching), experiencing (sacrament and fellowship), and edifying (teaching) (J K Un 1999c:497). There were some significant efforts regarding this issue among practical theologians such as W Willimon (1979; 1980), W Skudlarek (1981), and C Rice (1990) who attempted to integrate preaching with worship, and preaching with sacrament. These efforts are crucial for the Korean church because she has a preacher-centered and preaching-centered structure and as a result, other forms of structure are omitted. The ministers who monopolize worship and preaching exclusively control it, regardless of the laity. Teaching has been reduced to children's ministry led by laity (J K Un 1999c:496). There is no partnership between the ministers and the laity and no balanced structure to integrate one practice with another in the Korean church.

Preaching is not a distinctive practice, but a part of Christian practice. It is argued in this study that the problem of preaching is at the core of the problems that Korean churches face. Yet, the Korean church cannot solve these questions by preaching only, but rather in cooperation with other practices, because the problems came out of all her practices holistically. Preaching, therefore, should be part of the practice of worship. Preaching is indeed part of worship because in preaching and worship we experience the same and in praising and proclaiming the same, that is to say God's presence and God's kingdom. In addition, preaching should be part of the practice of sacrament. It certainly is, because we understand that the Lord's Supper should constitute Christian worship. Preaching has always, from the early Christian practices, helped the community make its way to the table. In view of that, R Allen (1998:29) summarizes the early practices very precisely as follows: Preaching is the gospel spoken. Sacraments are the gospel represented in loaf and cup. Preaching is then spoken sacrament.

Preaching as a front leader can help the Korean church to reconstruct the integrative structure that was part of the early church's property and which the

Korean church has lost among essential Christian practices. A reconstructed structure would facilitate preaching to become the holistically balanced communication of the gospel.

4.3.3 Conversion preaching

How do we define and defend conversion preaching that is seemingly exclusive in the contemporary pluralistic Korean society?

The first strategy is *to reconsider conversion preaching in relation to the congregation and cultural context.*

According to the critique of D W Lee (1994:348), as mentioned before, it is indeed difficult to see and hear terminology such as *conversion growth* or *evangelistic preaching* in any church growth seminar or preaching seminar today in the Korean church. We may have recently been alien in applying the term *conversion preaching*, to our particular ministries of preaching, and even more alien in focusing our energies on making this accessible to persons who have not been part of the Christian community. Why is that? What happened to our churches? Pope-Levison & Levison (2000:3) interestingly argue that the mere mention of the words conversion preaching either thrills or chills today's ministers. Some embrace the prospect with gusto, as they envisage church growth, conversion, and the challenge of reaching the unchurched, while others view conversion preaching as a garish manipulation of persons into faith through emotional appeals. I think this argument should shed light on why there is no voice of conversion preaching in the Korean church.

In the meantime, there are other terms equivalent to conversion preaching, such as *evangelistic preaching*, *revival preaching*, or *missional preaching*. *Evangelistic preaching* has often been identified with those of the Puritans and the evangelistic movement practiced mostly in England and America since the

seventeenth century (as discussed in Chapter 3). *Revival preaching* can be understood as preaching practice during limited occasions like revival meetings (although it means indeed beyond that) (cf I K Jung 1997:131-142). Although the term *missional preaching* considers the existential praxis and context in preaching, it nevertheless seems to lack the balance between the context and the work of conversion itself (cf C Cardoza-Orlandi 1999:3-8). I therefore prefer the term *conversion preaching* which is more inclusive and stresses the work of conversion as well as the context above all other things.

This strategy is based on the realization that most research done on conversion or evangelistic preaching considers it out of context (as if it occurred in a vacuum). The clearest examples of this approach are the books of collected conversion sermons, in which too little attention is given to audience or context.⁸⁵ An exception to such a trend is the work of D Salter (1996:282) who emphasizes that conversion preaching never happens in isolation from a real live congregation. What I suggest is, therefore, a view of conversion preaching that is centered on the congregation rather than on the preacher. Despite the fact that congregational participation and roles are welcome and continuously increasing in every area of ministry in the Korean church, however, in preaching ministry, the preacher is exclusively dominant. I am not saying the congregation is the only subject of conversion preaching. There are other parties such as the pastors and the Holy Spirit that the traditional view and Korean pulpit value most. The preacher-centered conversion preaching and the subjective role of the Holy Spirit in it will be discussed later under the second strategy. What I am trying to convince the reader is that conversion preaching should give priority to the characteristics and commitments of the congregation while fulfilling the commission to convert. In other words, we need to understand the congregation correctly and in a better way as the partner and subject for conversion preaching, not just as the object to convert.

⁸⁵ An example of this is V L Stanfield, *Effective evangelistic messages* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1967). Besides a four paragraph "Foreword" in which the author mentions that these sermons were preached in church revivals, all that is included in the book are ten evangelistic sermons.

From the early discussion in the second strategy in 4.3.1, it was argued that the congregation should not just be the hearer of preaching (the object of conversion preaching), but also the participant in preaching (the partner of conversion preaching). In addition, I strongly declare that the congregation is one of the subjects of conversion preaching. Although D Salter (1996:282) recognizes the importance of the congregation in conversion preaching, his central point yet concentrates on the role of preachers. The congregation is the essential but neglected element of conversion preaching.

Pope-Levison & Levison (2000:4-5), however, presents a great point from the early Christian conception of conversion preaching: “Peter’s sermon at Pentecost provides a paradigm of evangelistic preaching. According to this paradigm, evangelistic preaching arises out of and serves to explain the remarkable experience of an authentic Christian community devoting itself to prayer (Act 1:14) and testimony to the mighty acts of God (2:11).” The congregation lives a life of devotion and proclamation, provides the content and the cause of conversion preaching. These authors’ definition of the congregation or the community (their term), therefore, would be either a provider or a source of conversion preaching. Although they made an excellent observation of the early Christian conversion preaching and gained exceptional insight in the active role of the congregation, their definition reduces the congregation to *another object* that is passive and impersonal between the preacher and the object to convert.

My claim is, therefore, that the congregation is one of the *subjects* of conversion preaching. In fact, Peter does not stand up to speak alone (2:14), but with his congregation as the content and the cause of his preaching. There are, therefore, three components, i.e. the preacher, the Holy Spirit, and the congregation in this very act of conversion. The congregation is not only a vehicle or only the fruit of the gospel, but pre-exists conversion preaching and

Certainly there is no interest in where or when or to whom these were preached.

represents the gospel both in the church and in the world (Mt 5:13-4; 2 Cor 2:15; 3:3).

This congregation-oriented paradigm should however expand to include an awareness of the cultural context in which conversion preaching goes on. The reason for this is that there is a variety of people in various subcultures both within and outside the congregation we may be responding to as we undertake to preach for conversion. Some congregations will specialize in ministry to one particular culture. Thus, some of us may end up preaching to one particular group of people most of the time. This is the pattern that Korean preachers used to keep. It worked well for quite a while before both Korean society and the Korean church were challenged by rapid and various changes in every area since 1970. The problem is that most of the Korean preachers have kept using the same pattern of preaching regardless of massive changes in their cultural context and ended up to the serious crisis of pulpit in the declining church. Today this need of preaching (to be aware of the cultural context for conversion) is much required because a far greater number of congregations in Korea will inevitably draw together a greater variety of people and then be faced with the challenge of living and growing with that diversity. Reconsidering conversion preaching in relation to the congregation and cultural context should certainly challenge the task of preaching in the Korean church.

The second strategy is *to define conversion as a holistic hermeneutical communal divine process in Christian preaching.*

The discussion of the fusion between the descriptive and the normative in 4.2.2.3 clearly shows that there are essential but neglected elements of conversion preaching in the Korean pulpit such as holistic, communal, and ongoing process. My strategy here will be developed based on the above elements and a new element found later.

First, preaching aims a holistic conversion that suggests not a cognitive change,

but a change of the entire person. In fact, the Bible is full of conversion stories. The four Gospels are especially so. Jesus went around from town to town; gazed on people he met, and invited them to follow him. Those addressed then had a choice either to submit to the holistic change that his invitation would bring to their lives or to go away grieving. Jesus was demanding; he led to upheavals in people's belief, in their sense of belonging, and in their behavior. Conversion means change, a holistic change. According to A Kreider (1999:xv-2), the early church understood conversion as a process of multidimensional change and was serious enough to think about the cost of conversion. Conversion was costly indeed in the early church because we can observe that many who were converted to Christ were at risk and terminated by execution from the Bible and Christian history.

However, conversion has lost its comprehensive meaning for the entire renewal of a human being because it has often been considered as a cognitive change only. H Conn (1980:159) sees the impact of Protestant scholasticism and its syncretistic accommodations to western rationalism as the cause. In my opinion however, it happened much earlier, with the beginning of the Christendom. Accordingly, A Kreider (1999:xvi) explains distinctively that in the four hundred years between Caesarius, a mid-sixth century bishop, and Justin, a mid-second century bishop, a new Western Christian civilization called Christendom had dawned and conversion, which entailed change, had itself changed. Clovis, for example, the king of the Franks in the late fifth century killed off his every relative in order not to have political rivals after his conversion. How could we possibly accept and even understand his conversion! J Moorhead (1985:338-9) explains that murderous behavior did not disprove the genuineness of religious convictions by the standard of the late fifth century. Indeed, for the Franks, conversion was a rite of passage to becoming civilized (see J Russel 1994:150-3). Conversion that had turned Christians into distinctive people, resident aliens, became something that made people ordinary, not resident aliens but simply residents.

I assert that *culture conversion* had emerged since then. This type of conversion to culture was more centrally conceived than genuine *conversion to Christ*, especially in the western churches. I respect A Walls' (1997:148; see 2000:20-1) view that the early church's abandonment of the proselyte model of dealing with Gentile converts (well established as it was) indeed built the principle of cultural diversity of Christianity (see 4.2.2.3). However, this did not make the converts devout Christians, but rather nominal ones. In fact, their pagan or worldly segment did not lose face by the conversion.

Unfortunately, this is not just a historical story that happened once upon a time in Jerusalem and Athens, but also a contemporary reality. It possibly happens in all communities claiming to be Christians including the Korean church. It is even possible for people to be incorporated formally into the Church, to engage in its services and make use of its means of grace, and yet never to grow in grace or mature. Because no one demands as Jesus did, we rarely hear conversion preaching on our pulpits, and even when there is conversion preaching taking place, it does not challenge contemporary people today. This is one of the major reasons for the lack of comprehensive meaning of conversion in preaching. As a result, the Korean pulpit is weakened. Therefore, it is the urgent and ultimate task of the Korean church to regain a holistic conversion that is biblical and Jesus demanding; challenges a total change of people's belief, behavior, and belonging, and will strengthen Korean pulpit.

Second, preaching aims for a hermeneutical conversion that can be encountered in the interaction between faith and context. Many historians and missiologists agree that Christianity finds itself *growing* and *maturing* in the southern continents of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (see D Barrett 1982). What I do believe is that in those continents "many who heard the gospel (through preaching) believed, the number of men *grew* to about five thousand" (Act 4:4) and "our Lord added to their number daily those who were being converted and saved" (2:47). There is certainly much growth numerically, and there is the work of conversion through preaching. What I however do doubt is,

that there is something *maturing* (not just growing numerically) and the work of *holistic* conversion (not merely conversion) through preaching. It does not mean that I am apathetic because of the doomed situation the Korean church faces or pessimistic that it would happen. I definitely want this to happen even more abundantly than ever before in Christian history. As A Walls (2000:21) dreams, we may see that “the tabernacle is now adorned with African gold and hung with curtains of Asian cloth” (cf Exo 12:35).

One reason why I doubt the possibility of their maturity and the presence of a holistic conversion in preaching is that Christianity seems to face theological, ecclesial, and missional challenges similar to the ones faced by the early church in those areas (see C Cardoza-Orlandi 1999:3-4). Such challenges emerged out of the interaction of faith and context. It can function either positively to produce vitality of faith as Cardoza-Orlandi optimistically wishes, or negatively to shake the genuineness of the faith as the Korean church in one of the southern continents severely experienced in her history. It is not an easy task to be dealt with simply optimistically, but it is a task to be approached hermeneutically.

However, I agree with Cardoza-Orlandi's (:3) significant point that faith is stimulated as Christianity crosses all types of boundaries – geographical, cultural, and religious – and interacts with those realities. I have emphasized throughout this study the fact that Christianity cannot simply ignore all the contextual factors or pretend to be beyond all the boundaries without interacting appropriately. I strongly assert that this is a hermeneutical task. It can be effectively carried out through preaching that aims for hermeneutical conversion in the interaction between faith and context, gospel and culture or Christianity and other religions.

Another reason why I doubt is related to my third point and comes from the fact that the maturity of faith cannot be accomplished by one chance or one

occasion. It takes time. If we want to see not only numerical growth, but also the fruits of a total maturity of people through conversion preaching, it will take time. In that sense, conversion can be understood as a process. If we expect not only a cognitive change, but also a whole person's change of belief, behavior, and belonging through conversion preaching, it will take quite a while. Conversion is thus a process, not an event. Theologically speaking, conversion preaching then aims not just for people to be saved (conversion), but also "the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:13)" (sanctification). If we wish to have no proselytes, but converts through conversion preaching, it shall take time because conversion works through a process. If we desire not some memory of a particular story or a particular event, but a never-changing biblical truth, which modifies people, through that story and event, through conversion preaching, it will probably take time. If so, then conversion is definitely a process.

I am not however denying the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit who can make it possible at once as one essential element. The importance of the transforming moment as a starting point of conversion process should also not be diminished. What I am trying to do here is to keep some balance between the two by stressing another essential but neglected element of conversion preaching. Therefore, the third aim of preaching is *conversion as a process*.

Fourth, preaching aims at communal conversion. This is another missing point with regard to the Korean pulpit, as discussed in Chapter 2 and 4.2.2.3. Conversion preaching rarely takes place in the Korean church and even if there is conversion preaching, it is exclusively focused on individuals. There is surely a reduction of conversion to the experience of the individual in Korean preaching. This reduction of conversion, together with other factors such as faith of supplication of individual blessing, caused an individualistic faith. This type of faith promotes a lack of concern for neighbor and society, and encourages strict separation between religious and social life, and between church and society. In view of that, E S Cho (1996:353) rightly points out that in a such trend, the concern of the church is limited to spiritual matters and

believers are not much concerned with how to live in the society as Christians or how to carry out their worldly tasks. As a result, while more than 25% of the total population is Christian, the Korean church as a whole is not as influential on her society as she was between 1884-1945.

According to H Conn (1980:166), this communal dimension of conversion was abundantly evident in the early church of Korea when people's life styles were more primitive and based on the web of family ties. A person hearing the gospel would go back to his or her own village, talk it over with his or her family members and relatives, and if a positive decision was made, the whole group often quite naturally became Christian. Nevertheless, this no longer happens in Korea.

On the contrary, Korean Christians often come into conflict with the families of faith inside church, especially between orthodox members and evangelized members. Orthodox members are understood as a group of people who did not have a clear experience of conversion, but mostly grew up in Christian family and have been in church for quite a long time. On the other hand, evangelized members are considered as a group of people who have invited Christ into their lives and who had quite an obvious experience of conversion. According to I S Choi (1994:103-4), the evangelized consider the orthodox as nominal Christians due to them not having had a conversion experience. On the other hand, the conversion of the evangelized is doubtful because their experience can be understood as a subjective decision based on human effort or human situation, rather than a divine work of grace.

I assert that such conflict comes from the lack of communal meaning of conversion. The individualistic faith discussed above encourages this conflict more seriously. Conversion is clearly an individual experience. Its communal character however cannot be neglected. In John 3:7, when Jesus said, "you must be born again" he used a verb for second person plural which means he did not deal with Nicodemus' conversion only. In John 17:20, Jesus did not pray

for the twelve, but “for those who will believe in me through their message.” Therefore, conversion is the individual incident that produces individual spiritual change. Simultaneously, it is the communal event, which builds up the community and helps it to become mature in Christ.

I further assert that the conflict has another reason: the lack of a communal character of preaching. Preaching is not primarily addressed to individuals, because it is precisely as individuals that we are most apt to fail as Christians. In relation to this, W Willimon (1989:77) gives a clear example: “Only through membership in a nonviolent community can violent individuals do better. The sermon on the Mount does not encourage heroic individualism, it defeats it with its demands that we need to be perfect even as God is perfect, that we deal with others as God has dealt with us.”

The Korean church is still actively involved in evangelism and church planting despite facing many challenges in pluralistic society. If the situation regarding the Korean pulpit can recover and emphasize this communal conversion, it would help the church become one strong community as God’s family. It would also turn the world to view the church as the love of God so that they can come to Christ.

Fifth, needless to say, preaching aims divine conversion because conversion is a divine work. No religion, not even Christianity has ever reconciled anyone to God. Only Jesus Christ has done that, and he did it for Abraham and people like him as well as for those of us who have heard of him. Preaching can be a very important means, but it is not itself the saving agent. Preaching in reality even can be an obstacle to the faith that receives the saving grace of God.

Conversion does not come from one’s intellectual brilliance, but only from God above. Conversion preaching is, therefore, an action to help people recognize their limitations. When it is done well, we can expect the work of divine conversion in their lives. In this sense, we find the indisputable fact that God

works *with* us as preachers for conversion. Although conversion preaching is unquestionably a divine work, yet we cannot totally ignore the role of preachers and the human response of those who hear the gospel of salvation. This relates with the orthodox Calvinistic outlook that considered human will hostile to God's sovereignty. Conversion preaching, therefore, is better understood from the Evangelical position that sees the relationship of two harmonically.

From this discussion, it can be concluded that preaching aims conversion as a *holistic hermeneutical communal divine process*. In addition, it is obvious that not just preaching, but also worship and all kinds of ministry of the community should always have the character of conversion in calling those who are within theory but not in practice inside church. At the same time, it is also a call to those who are outside of God's grace. What conversion preaching can give is what they really want but do not have from the world they live in.

4.3.4 Ecclesiology

How do we rethink and reestablish the ecclesiology of the Korean church?

A multipurpose strategy proposed for the Korean church is a *theocentric communalistic participant ecclesiology for an essentially and effectively balanced ministry both within the church and with culture*.

This study defines the most Korean ecclesiology as the church as herald although many diverse ecclesiological ideas exist together. From this definition, the Korean church can be understood as a hierarchical, mystical, and preaching-centered church. This structure comparatively lacks the importance of the congregation. Y K Park (1998:86) declares the Korean church as a worshipping community. The preacher functions as a central axis in such community. Whether we consider the Korean church a worshipping community

or the church as herald, there is the same emphasis on the preacher and the same evasion on the congregation.

This study also examines the fact that the Korean church is neither participating much into her surrounding culture nor exercising a positive role over the society. We cannot think of this fact without relating it to the preaching-centered structure. Such a centripetal structure naturally results in the lack of the consideration for the congregation, the socio-cultural context and the communal and social function of baptism, worship and Eucharist. In addition, the Korean church has interpreted these problems mistakenly as problems on an individual level, not on a church level as a whole. The Korean church responded to them mistakenly in terms of management strategies for church growth, not in terms of theological reflections on the validity of ecclesiology.

In sum, the present ecclesiology of the Korean church is humanistic in her attempt to manipulate church growth, individualistic in her approach to preaching, worship, baptism and Eucharist, and prophetic in her attitude toward the surrounding culture and society. I assert here that the Korean church needs a multipurpose ecclesiology to solve these multidimensional problems. Therefore, I propose a theocentric communalistic participant ecclesiology for an essentially and effectively balanced ministry both within the church and with the culture.

With regard to *theocentric* I do not exclusively mean God the Father only. I rather connote it inclusively and interchangeably with the christological ecclesiology as a traditional view and the pneumatological ecclesiology – as a new aspect emerging since the latter half of the twentieth century. More specifically, this theocentric character comes in opposition to the present humanistic ecclesiology. The contemporary Korean church seems to seek too much of a new style of ministry and merely imitates it without serious theological examination, if it works for church growth. In line with what L Newbigin (cf 1966; 1983; 1986) consistently argues the church and its theology have thus made an

uncritical compromise with the dominant culture of society, which has resulted in the exclusion of God from His church. Accordingly, Y K Park (1998:9) points out that such a trend proves the lack of obvious ecclesiology and ministry philosophy.

I however assert that it is not confirmation that the Korean church has no ecclesiology, but confirmation that she rather has a quite humanistic ecclesiology to control God's church by human effort. Despite the fact that preaching is centered in ministry, if she seeks such humanistic way of ministry, the preaching-centered structure will guarantee neither theocentric conversion nor a theocentric church. Without recovering a theocentric ecclesiology, a contextually sensitive church or so-called culturally appropriate preaching means nothing.

A theocentric ecclesiology is closer to the ecclesiology in the Gospel of John⁸⁶ than to that of the letters of Paul. Both John and Paul show the christological ecclesiology in their vine ecclesiology (Jn 15) and in Christ's body ecclesiology (1Cor 12:12-27; Eph 1:22-3). John however emphasizes a direct and vertical relationship between Christ and the believers while Paul describes a horizontal relationship between the believers. In addition, the Gospel of John shows the democratic office regulation that considers every Christian including women equally (D S Kim 1999:73). The term *apostle* occurs just once (13:16) in the Gospel of John, not as one of the apostles representing the twelve in particular, but as a messenger in general. This understanding is quite different from that of the pastoral epistles as contemporary writings with the Gospel of John and the letters of Ignatius in the second century (ibid). The pastoral epistles place the overseers, elders and deacons on a certain level of official rank (1Tim 3:1-13). Ignatius' letters identify overseers with the church and maintain that the church

⁸⁶ Although many doubt there is surely an ecclesiology in John due to the absence of the term for church such as *ecclesia*, the kingdom of God, or New Jerusalem, the ecclesiology in the Gospel of John was one of the significant issues in the latter half of the twentieth century especially among the scholars such as E Schweitzer, R Brown, E Schnackenburg, R Kysar, J Grady, and J Baker. For the recent research on this, see D S Kim, *The Church in the Gospel of*

only exists where there are overseers (Ignatius, Letter to the Smyrnaeans 8:1 in D S Kim 1999:74).

Ultimately, the Korean church in a hierarchical and preacher oriented structure is indeed quite similar to the church that Ignatius defines. The Korean church thus needs a theocentric ecclesiology to turn people's attention from the preacher back to Christ (especially in the practice of preaching). In addition, the Korean church needs a theocentric communal ecclesiology to shift her office regulation from a hierarchical form, that mainly focuses on the preacher to a horizontal form, that values both the preacher and the believer equally as a disciple before Christ the most high.

With regard to *communalistic*, this multipurpose strategy stands against the present individualistic aspect of people's faith and the ministry of preaching, worship, baptism and eucharist. Despite C Colson's (1997:39) warning, many Korean Christians are infected with the contemporary most toxic virus called radical individualism. It happens not just in the individual Christians' faith and lives, but also in the church ministry as a whole. T Y Cho (1994:62) asserts that the Korean church has weakened the communal and social function of the baptism. H M Yim (1996:178-80; 212-16) claims that the baptismal practice and the eucharist of the Korean church were accomplished mainly on an individual basis. Infrequent (twice a year) administration could not encourage the Korean Christians to promote fellowship among Christians or even affect the church divisions in Korea. In addition, U Y Kim (2002:95-6) indicates that the practice of preaching and worship in the Korean church has individual characteristics.

In contrast, (1) a communal ecclesiology aims to recover the communal and social function of church ministry (preaching and worship) and sacraments (baptism and eucharist). In addition, (2) a theocentric ecclesiology aims to regain the lost unity with Christ (incorporation into the body of Christ) in the

John. PhD Thesis. University of Cambridge. 1999.

baptismal practice treated as a mere ritual of passage. Furthermore, (3) a theocentric communal ecclesiology aims to retrieve the lost horizontal fellowship in the eucharist. The contemporary Korean church, therefore, needs a theocentric communalistic ecclesiology for the unity both with Christ and with brothers and sisters in Him through all church ministry and sacraments. Especially preaching should be practicing based on this ecclesiology.

With regard to *participant*, this strategy stands in relation to the Korean church's multipolar attitude, prophetic, ignorant or transformative, toward the surrounding culture and society. This attitude comes from her centripetal structure, the church as herald, in which preaching is centered and all others are peripheral. This is also related to the lack of validity test of the ecclesiology that presupposes the interaction with context. The Korean church sometimes acts like a prophet who believes the fall has fatally infected every aspect of culture and views the moral and spiritual health of the society with uncertainty (cf J Gustafson 1974:73). At times, she also functions unaware of any detail of culture and society. In addition, the conservative churches, the majority of Korean churches, rank themselves as the prophet while the liberal churches stand as the transformer who tries to change the existing social values and systems (cf H Niebuhr 2001:190-6).

With this realization of the Korean church, a participant ecclesiology emerges. A participant model between the two (prophet and transformer) goes beyond the limit of the prophet by actively participating in the process of social construction, and not merely criticizing society passively from outside of it. A theocentric communal participant ecclesiology provides a theological and practical blueprint for both the conservative and the liberal churches to participate together as one community of one God in constructing God's kingdom and cultivating His love and justice in it.

4.3.5 Christian culture

How do we formulate the Christian culture against or in the rage of worldly thoughts and cultures in Korea?

A strategic model proposed for formulating the Christian culture is *selective engaging and disengaging in participation*.

This attempt is encouraged by the realization that any cultural interchange should result in mutual influence (cf G Snyder 1999:1-5). This realization was formed out of the existent fact in the Korean church history. Scholars typically have attempted to show how Korean culture or religion impinged on the Korean church and altered it. Their efforts are relevant in this study, as discussed in Chapter 2, because some of the trends (e.g., the Confucian orthodox mentality) that prevailed long enough in Korean society to influence all the areas of politics, society, culture, and religion have also impacted continuously on the formation of the theological tradition of the Korean church.

I, however, attempt to demonstrate the opposite, that is, how the Korean church altered the Korean culture and society. This study presents an obvious historical example. The early church that took the cultural initiative for her society not only provided the background for the later development of the indigenous church of Korea, but also formulated a positive and powerful Christian culture in the Korean society through works of inculturation, such as educational, medical, and evangelical ministries (cf 2.2.2.1.5 in Chapter 2). Understood this way, this strategy is an opposite challenge that asks how then the Korean church should formulate Christian culture and *alter again and consecutively* the Korean culture and society.

G Lindbeck (1984:134) identifies the present Christian ecclesiastical context as “the awkwardly intermediate stage of having once been culturally established (in Christendom) but are not yet clearly disestablished (in post Christendom).” His

diagnosis is fairly applicable in contemporary Korea as well as in the North America. He recognizes two ways, quite opposed to one another, in which Christians attempt to surpass their currently ambiguous state, socially and religiously. One is the liberal theological inclination to present the Christian message in whatever ways one can and to keep one's standing within the dominant culture. For this purpose, Christians will lose many things dear to tradition (:129).

The other way of getting beyond the current awkwardness of the relationship between the church and culture is to accentuate, on the contrary, the dimension of distance, difference, and discontinuity. According to Lindbeck (:134), this is the postliberal approach, "Theology should therefore resist the clamor of the religiously interested public for what is currently fashionable and immediately intelligible... instead prepare for a *future* when continuing dechristianization will make greater Christian authenticity communally possible."

I assign myself to the latter approach at least in the sense that the church will have nothing to say to her culture if she simply attempts whatever ways she can to align with the ever-changing culture. I proposed in the previous section a theocentric communal participant ecclesiology that requires the active participation of the Korean church in the process of social construction *now* and *here*, not the critics to society passively from outside of it in merely hoping a better *future*. Although I recognize the reality Lindbeck describes as we are in the position as awkward, I strongly argue that we should neither stand off from the culture, nor give up our authentic tradition of faith to keep connecting with it.

In accordance with Gustafson (cf J Gustafson 1974:73; 3.4.2.1.3 in this thesis), the postliberal is the prophet who believes that the fall has fatally infected every aspect of culture and questions the moral and spiritual health of the society (and escapes from it). The liberal is the preserver who attempts to maintain the existing social value and system regardless of whether we lose our authentic tradition of faith for the objective. There are dangers that the former may end up

in the sectarian of Christianity while the latter may result in the total loss of Christian distinction. This is what we have often experienced through the two extremes, the conservative and the liberals in Korea. In relation, D Hall (1997:54-7) attempts to combine the two while proposing the integrative idea of *disengaging in order to engage*. Although I find myself in agreement with him on many thoughts, yet I have to argue that such integration is not something to clearly solve the problem, but something to only cover it. In addition, such effort is linear and sequential. I assert that such work should not proceed separately, but simultaneously.

Understood this way, I propose *selective engaging and disengaging in participation* for the Korean church in particular as well as for the church in general:

(1) This stands against the two, the postliberal and the liberal, that encourage the church to seek the absolute disengagement and engagement towards her culture, regardless of the existing conditions. This aims *selective* engagement and disengagement. There should namely be a careful theological examination to select what to disengage and what to engage.

(2) Opposed to the two standpoints that place the church *out of* and *of* the world, this aims for selective engagement and disengagement *in* participation since it is a biblical and traditional dialectic that the church is not *of* the world, (of course it is not *out of* the world) but *in* the world.

(3) Against the third, D Hall's *disengaging in order to engage*, that is linear and in sequence, this *selective engaging and disengaging in participation* emphasizes the *present progressive* character of the church ministry towards her culture that has to be undertaken simultaneously, not separately.

(4) In agreement with D Hall (1997:65), Christian disengagement from the culture is not the abandonment of that culture. This strategy thus presupposes

participation of the church (as a concrete illustration of what it means to be selective engaging and disengaging in participation). It does not just call the world to come into the church, but rather asks the church first to go into the world. It does not merely require the world to change, but challenges the Christian community first to transform. Practically speaking, to participate in the culture of boast, the church needs to be humble. To participate in the world that experiences the failure of community, the church should be a caring community. In addition, to participate in the age of cutthroat competition, the church is to show love, instead of power. If conversion as an essential work of the church could be understood as *participating* in a genuine decision for Christ (cf D McGabran 1980:300), culture ministry as another necessary work of the church would be considered as *participating* in the world for which God so loved that He gave His Son (Jn 3:16).

(5) This stands in relation to the worship of the church as another practical example of what this strategy means. The Korean church is a worshipping community that does not engage with the diversity of her culture (cf R Zacharias 2000:27). This nevertheless identifies her as the authentic tradition of faith within. Christian worship should include both community and culture. The Korean church thus needs to be a genuine worshipping community that connects with the diversity of her culture, education, backgrounds, and encourages people to participate in a corporate expression of worship. W Willimon (1979:31-52) defines worship as pastoral care because it contains elements of pastoral care such as healing, sustaining, guiding, and reconciling. Since we argue that there is the diversity of culture in our contemporary worship we have to care, worship is then cultural care as well as pastoral care. The Korean church with its severe and conservative atmosphere and form of worship may distract people to concentrate on preaching especially when there are visitors with a non-church background. From this, I have to say that she does not have a sense of worship as pastoral care. The Korean church with its current mood and style of worship may lack diversity of culture, especially when there are many subcultures in a congregation. In this, one should mention that she does not

have a sense of worship as cultural care. The Korean church needs to develop the horizontal function of worship because one of the most powerful appeals to the postmodern mind is a worshipping community.

(6) As a practical illustration, preaching is related. This strategy reflects the uniform preaching in the Reformation that was in fact effective to spread the Reformation ideas from town to town (cf B Moeller 1999:52). It is obvious that preachers need to study and practice the various contents and various forms from their own pulpits for the sake of their congregations. However, if we consider the Christian culture to spread nationwide and worldwide, we would not ignore an outstanding historical example of preaching form that had been tremendously useful just because it has the non-attractive old-fashioned name of uniform preaching. There is a well-known story that when England was about to enter into World War II, the English government requested every church in England to ring a bell at a certain time. Bishop William Temple had to give a broadcasting nationwide sermon to exhort people to go to church to worship the Lord at that very moment of the outbreak of war. Whether using the classic model of uniform preaching or the contemporary multimedia, it should be powerful enough for the church to present one God, one Christ, one Spirit, and useful enough to alter again and consecutively the Korean culture and society. In doing so, the Christian community can participate in her culture and society. In doing so, we as Christians may be able to formulate the Christian culture that gives the world something they never had in the name of Jesus Christ.

4.4 Summary

Chapter 4 consists of two parts, *integration* and *insight*. The first part, *Integration*, was introduced as a systematic practical theology (Browning 1991:51) that aims to fuse the horizons between the questions implicit in contemporary practices of preaching (Chapter 2) and the themes implied in the practices of preaching in the normative Christian sources (Chapter 3). The

following five claims emerged from the contemporary practices: (1) Context of preaching: How do we reset the context of preaching in the Korean church? (2) Preaching theory: How do we revise the present preaching theory of the Korean church? (3) Conversion preaching: How do we define and defend conversion preaching that is seemingly exclusive in contemporary pluralistic Korean society? (4) Ecclesiology: How do we rethink and re-establish the ecclesiology of the Korean church? (5) Christian culture: How do we formulate the Christian culture against or in the rage of worldly thoughts and cultures in Korea?

The second part of this chapter covers *insight* as a strategic practical theology (:58; Poling & Miller 1985:93) and developed strategies for the Korean church in relation to the five claims based on the fusion between the descriptive and the normative. The results are as follows:

(1) Preaching context

-The first strategy is *to place preaching in the interaction between church and culture.*

-The second strategy is *to see the congregation as a culture, which implies both that the congregation has a culture (subcultures) and that it is a culture (subcultures).*

(2) Preaching theory

-The first strategy is *to seek preaching as multiple purposes, multiple forms, and multiple aspects for culturally appropriate communication of the gospel.*

-The second strategy is *to understand preaching as theological interpretation of the contexts as well as the text in partnership with the congregation for theologically accurate communication of the gospel.*

-The third strategy is *to integrate preaching and teaching, conversion preaching and congregational preaching, and preaching and other Christian practices for a holistically balanced communication of the gospel.*

(3) Conversion preaching

-The first strategy is *to reconsider conversion preaching in relation to the congregation and cultural context.*

-The second strategy is *to define conversion as a holistic hermeneutical communal divine process in Christian preaching.*

(4) Ecclesiology

-A multipurpose strategy proposed for the Korean church is *a theocentric communalistic participant ecclesiology for an essentially and effectively balanced ministry, both within the church and with culture.*

(5) Christian culture

-A strategic model proposed for formulating Christian culture is *selective engaging and disengaging in participation.*

At this point, the focus should return to contextual experience so that the relevance of the developed strategies can be tested in real life in the Korean church.

CHAPTER 5 INFERENCE

5.1 Reflection and conclusion

This thesis was initiated in view of the need for research on preaching in the interaction between church and culture. It is based on my own conviction that all church-related work, especially preaching, should be done in the understanding of church culture. The Korean church, famous for her rapid growth, has begun to notice a downward trend in her growth rate since the mid-eighties. Although many reputable investigations have recently been carried out with regard to this downward slide, these investigations have overlooked the full meaning of preaching in the interaction between church and culture.

In view of this, this study sets the following four aims: (1) to investigate the reasons behind church decline in terms of preaching in the interaction between church and culture in Korea; (2) to interpret preaching in the interaction between church and culture biblically, historically and theologically in order to understand the normative Christian perceptions and practices of preaching; (3) to attempt a critical synthesis and comparative integration between understanding preaching in the specific situation in Korea and understanding preaching in the Christian normative sources; and 4) to propose developmental strategies for the Korean church.

To achieve these purposes, Chapter 2 (Interaction) as a descriptive practical theology (Browning 1991:48), examined the present ecclesiology. The interaction between the church and culture, and the present preaching theory with regard to this interaction, was described critically, as well as the manner in which these relate to the problem of the Korean church. As a result, it was first found that the Korean church has been very hierarchical and mystical. The main type of Korean ecclesiology was found to be *the church as herald*, which places

the preacher and preaching in the center of the church practices. The empirical interpretation of the interaction between church and culture (2.2.5) secured relevance to such findings and suggested a solid and healthy ecclesiology for the Korean church. Secondly, it was also found that the Korean pulpit has been ignoring cultural changes and trends. This has resulted in lack of diverse delivery methods, lack of hermeneutical balance between text and context, lack of congregational studies, lack of conversion preaching, lack of communal conversion, lack of correlation between worship, preaching, teaching, and sacrament, etc. These findings proved to be relevant through the empirical interpretation of preaching in the interaction between church and culture (2.3.3).

Five claims emerged from these findings and were integrated with the normative Christian themes in Chapter 3 and developed in Chapter 4: (1) Context of preaching: How do we reset the context of preaching? (2) Preaching theory: How do we revise the present preaching theory of the Korean church? (3) Conversion preaching: How do we define and defend conversion preaching that is seemingly exclusive in contemporary pluralistic Korean society? (4) Ecclesiology: How do we rethink and re-establish the ecclesiology of the Korean church? (5) Christian culture: How do we formulate the Christian culture against or in the rage of worldly thoughts and cultures in Korea?

To identify the normative Christian themes, Chapter 3 (Interpretation) as a historical practical theology (Browning 1991:49) attempted multi-interpretations of preaching in the interaction between church and culture. These were biblical, historical and theological interpretations based on classic sources and contemporary Christian thoughts. From a biblical interpretation (3.2), it was found, first, that there is no distinction between missionary (conversion) preaching and congregational preaching. Secondly, biblical studies have made it clear that human cultures have played a significant role in biblical history and that God had indeed spoken through Moses, the subsequent prophets and biblical writers in the context of the surrounding cultures. A historical interpretation (3.3) obviously revealed that preaching, especially in its form,

tends to shift like the swing of the pendulum between two extremes, such as reason, knowledge and dogma on the one side (text) and experience, passion and emotion on the other side (context). A theological interpretation (3.4) defined the basic role of preaching and some criteria for its effective practice, both in church and culture. From this, it was found that (1) theology has a central role in preaching; (2) preaching the Word of God is the primary task of the church and of the Christian pastor; (3) preaching is empowered by God and the church is subservient to it; and (4) interaction between church and culture affects preaching.

Above all, all three interpretations can be concluded with the same point of emphasis that culture exercised/is exercising a massive influence and challenge on biblical writing, biblical history, the church, her theology (especially ecclesiology), her practice (especially preaching), and Christian culture. At the same time all three interpretations emphasized the same conviction that there is the never-changing fact in ever-changing culture that preaching is the primary task of the church. Preaching is empowered by God for converting people to Christ.

This study then progressed to attempt *Integration* (the first part of Chapter 4) and a systematic practical theology (Browning 1991:51) with the aim of fusing the horizons between the five claims that emerged out of the contemporary practices of preaching (Chapter 2), and the themes implied in the normative practices (Chapter 3). The second part of the Chapter 4 (*Insight*) as a strategic practical theology (:58) developed strategies for the Korean church based on the integration. As a result, this thesis concludes by proposing the following practical strategies as suggestions, however not solutions:

1. Preaching context

(1) The first strategy is *to place preaching in the interaction between church and culture*.

(2) The second strategy is *to see the congregation as a culture, which implies both that the congregation has a culture (subcultures) and that it is a culture (subcultures)*.

2. Preaching theory

(1) The first strategy is *to seek preaching as multiple purposes, multiple forms, and multiple aspects for culturally appropriate communication of the gospel*.

(2) The second strategy is *to understand preaching as theological interpretation of the contexts as well as the text in partnership with the congregation for theologically accurate communication of the gospel*.

(3) The third strategy is *to integrate preaching and teaching, conversion preaching and congregational preaching, and preaching and other Christian practices for a holistically balanced communication of the gospel*.

3. Conversion preaching

(1) The first strategy is *to reconsider conversion preaching in relation to the congregation and cultural context*.

(2) The second strategy is *to define conversion as a holistic hermeneutical communal divine process in Christian preaching*.

4. Ecclesiology

A multipurpose strategy proposed for the Korean church is *a theocentric communalistic participant ecclesiology for an essentially and effectively balanced ministry, both within the church and with culture*.

5. Christian culture

A strategic model proposed for the Korean church is *selective engaging and disengaging in participation*.

Ultimately, preaching should be understood as an interaction between church and culture. The preacher, who was considered the main actor in the old setting that placed him or her in the center of church practices, is essentially an *inter-*

actor in this new setting. As an inter-actor, the preacher should be a servant who serves and stands between God and the congregation. As an inter-actor, the preacher should be an intercultural missionary who works between cultures.

At this point, the focus should return to contextual experience so that the relevance of the developed strategies may be tested in the actual preaching context of the Korean church. The conclusions of strategic practical theology, however, play back on the entire hermeneutical circle because the practices that emerge from the judgments of strategic practical theology soon engender new questions. Subsequently, the hermeneutic circle starts once again. Within the flux and turns of history, our present practices seem to be secure only for a period before they meet a new crisis that poses new questions that take us through the hermeneutic circle again (Browning 1991:58).

It is my sincere hope that this study will encourage Korean preachers to place preaching appropriately and efficiently in the interaction between church and culture. Preaching should not simply be at the center of the church. To be more precise, it should be understood as interaction between church and culture. My expectation is that this thesis will challenge Korean preachers to ask themselves what they have achieved so far and where they are in terms of preaching theory for a culturally appropriate, theologically accurate, and holistically balanced communication of the gospel. My sincere hope is that this work will encourage Korean preachers to identify themselves afresh as inter-actors to stand *between* the cultures to serve God and the congregation. My wish is also that this study would help Korean preachers to reconsider conversion preaching in relation to the congregation and cultural context and to redefine conversion as a holistic hermeneutical communal divine process in preaching. In doing so, they would defend conversion preaching without compromising. They would also exercise it without cease in contemporary pluralistic Korean society.

My hope is that this thesis will inspire the Korean church to accept a theocentric communalistic participant ecclesiology. In doing so, the church would participate selectively in engaging and disengaging seriously and theologically in a participation model. This would be in the hope that she might regain the cultural initiative she lost over the Korean society and even formulate an admirable Christian culture within it.

Above all, however, our hope is only in God. We serve God who so loved us that He gave His one and only Son (Jn 3:16). We serve Christ who says that He will be with us always (Mt 28:20). We serve the Spirit who empowers us to be His witness (Act 1:8). Through our faith in God, Christ, and Spirit, there is always only hope. The Korean church needs not only preachers who are dedicated to the expressed visions of this study, but who are also disciplined to make these visions possible.

5.2 Recommendations for further study

While this thesis has raised more questions than it has been able to address, it is convinced that further research on the following issues needs to be undertaken in the near future:

On the integration of the multi aspects of preaching:

We have attempted to integrate only two elements of preaching, namely proclaiming and teaching. One of the important findings of this study is the fact that preaching can be seen as an activity with many aspects, which are highlighted by New Testament words such as *proclaiming, announcing 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.

On the identity of Korean Christian:

A recent issue of interest to many people is the identity of Korean Christians in relation to Korean culture and/or traditional religions (cf Chapter 2 in this thesis; S W Cho 2001; M J Lee 2000; C M Son 2002; D C S Lee 2003). Chapter 2 discussed whether the Korean Christian identity is multifold (such as the Shamanistic Christian or Confucianistic Christian identities). This is in line with what the liberal theologians claim in relation to religious pluralism. It is declared that such twofold or multifold identity does not fit the Korean religious ethos.

It is reasonable to add that besides cultural view, we should not overlook the theological view of God (theology, Christology, pneumatology), of human nature (theological anthropology), of the church (ecclesiology), of the church's relation to other human groups (missiology, evangelism), of nature (theology of creation), and of time orientation (eschatology) (cf L Tisdale 1992:159-68). The conversation partners for the qualitative interviewing in this study also indicated the identity crisis of Korean Christians. The question is therefore to determine genuine Korean Christian identity and how to help Korean Christians to establish their Korean Christian identity. These are challenging but worthy subjects for further study.

On the new understanding of practical theology:

A discussion of practical theology in Korea (1.2.4) in Chapter 1 challenges our attention to a new understanding or paradigm shift of practical theology for the Korean Church. While such a discussion has been theoretical in nature, further study on this has yet to be carried out on a more practical level in order to present the implications based on the new understanding.

APPENDIX 1

Profiles of the conversational partners

(They are all postgraduate students at the University of Pretoria)

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5
Name	K S Hong	S K Jin	P K Choi	S M Sim	K O Seo
Age	41	43	36	41	35
Gender	M	M	M	M	M
Marital Status	Married				
Vocation	Minister				Lay missionary
Academic specialty	Old Testament	New Testament	Pastoral counseling	Homiletics	Law
Number of years ministering	11	10	8	6	8
Areas of ministry	Parish ministry & administration	Teaching & preaching	Youth ministry	Teaching & parish ministry	Campus mission & administration

APPENDIX 2

Letter of intent

1 March 2002

Dear

Greetings from your brother in Christ, Hyunchul Henry Oh. As you know, I am writing my PhD thesis in practical theology at the University of Pretoria. The topic of my research is on preaching in the interaction between church and culture, with specific reference to the Korean church. As part of my research, I attempt a critical description of the interaction between the church and culture in Korea and of preaching with regard to this interaction (Chapter 2). To give relevance to this work, I seek to obtain empirical interpretations based on qualitative interviews with you and other conversational partners.

The information provided through the interviewing sessions will be presented in my thesis. It will be used to give relevance and valuable insight to my research. Your response is thus very crucial to this study. I encourage you to provide deep, detailed, vivid, and nuanced answers to the given theme and questions. The interviews will consist of group and individual sessions. The group interview will be led by themes and questions. The individual interview aims to clarify and develop what you and other conversational partners say during group sessions. Probes and follow-up questions will be used.

Thank you for your participating in this special way in my research. I look forward to seeing you at the first group session on 12 March.

Giving thanks in Christ,

Hyunchul Henry Oh

APPENDIX 3

Conversational guide for the first group session (3/12)*

Research topic: Preaching as interaction between church and culture, with specific reference to the Korean church.

Conversational theme 1: General

Main question 1: What is your understanding or experience of the significant problems in the Korean church?

- a. Own thought
- b. Own experience

Main question 2: What did the Korean church do in order to deal with the problem you pointed out or experienced? Explain how it was done.

- a. What did the Korean church do?
- b. How did the Korean church do this?

Conversational theme 2: Church and culture

Main question 3: What do you think about the relationship between the problems between the church and the culture (that is rapidly undergoing change?).

- a. Are they related to one another?
- b. How?

* The individual session that aims to clarify what conversational partners mean (by asking probes and follow-up questions) follows this group session.

APPENDIX 4

Conversational guide for the second group session (3/22)*

Research topic: Preaching as interaction between church and culture, with specific reference to the Korean church

Conversational theme 1: Preaching in the interaction between church and culture.

Main question 1: Do you think the problems that you and your colleagues identified of the Korean church towards her culture are related to the problems of preaching?

- a. Church problem(s) and preaching problem(s)
- b. Preaching in the interaction between church and culture

* The individual session that aims to clarify and develop what conversational partners mean (by asking probes and follow-up questions) follows this group session.

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