

**The Necessity of Lectionary Preaching  
in Korean Presbyterian Context:  
A Practical Theological Research**

by

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## **Declaration**

I, the undersigned, Keonsoo Lee, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted to any other university or tertiary institute for a degree.

Signature: .....

Date: .....

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## **Abstract**

This research has started because of a concern that the Korean Presbyterian Church is not utilizing the lectionary. Very few Korean Presbyterian churches follow the lectionary and this situation fosters many problems in their preaching and worship. However, the lectionary can remedy them.

Firstly, many Korean Presbyterian preachers do not have a long-term plan for preaching and choose a sermon text week by week. Consequently, they are pressed for the time to preach and this easily leads them to do topical preaching. One of the weaknesses of topical preaching is that a preacher might approach a text with a preconceived topic or theme and use the text as a pretext. This is contrary to the principle of biblical preaching. However, the lectionary assures the biblical mentality because it prevents preachers from imposing their preoccupied ideas onto a text. The lectionary makes them consider and listen to the text first.

Secondly, the texts for preaching are confined by the preacher's preference. The arbitrary choice of the texts narrows the scope of the sermon texts. However, the lectionary expands the range of the texts for preaching because it covers most books of the Bible.

Thirdly, worship in the Korean Presbyterian churches lacks coherency among its parts. Due to lack of a long-term plan of preaching, various parts of worship do not harmonize with one another. However, the lectionary offers a long-term plan for preaching, and it enables the parts of worship to be prepared to have the same voice.

Fourthly, the Korean Presbyterian ministers have to preach a lot. Therefore, practical helps such as lectionary commentaries or worship guides can be of assistance to them.

Fifthly, worship in the Korean Presbyterian churches is highly sermon-biased, that is, preaching has precedence over worship. However, the lectionary preconceives the context of worship and puts preaching within this context. Furthermore, the lectionary restores the balance between the Word and the Eucharist. It is designed for experiencing the paschal mystery that is the core of Sunday worship.

Sixthly, the Korean Presbyterian churches are failing to appreciate the church year's

theological and educational value. The church year they observe is fragmentary. However, the lectionary is founded on the traditional church year, which has a Christological focus. It enables us to celebrate the life and works of Jesus through the year, and instills faith and hope in people's mind.

Lastly, the individualism of the Korean churches is another problem. These churches are plagued by an internal division and competition. It appears as if they are not concerned about the unity of the church as the body of Christ. However, the ecumenical feature of the *Revised Common Lectionary* inspires them to have a community mind. It reminds them of the unity of the church.

Of course, the lectionary is not a perfect plan. It has some limitations as well as the strengths. Nevertheless, the lectionary is surely a useful instrument that would improve the worship and preaching in the Korean Presbyterian Church.

## Samevatting

Hierdie navorsing het voortgespruit uit 'n besorgdheid oor die Koreaanse Presbiteriaanse Kerk se aanwending van die Leesrooster. Die feit dat bitter min Koreaanse Presbiteriaanse Kerke die Leesrooster volg, gee aanleiding tot verskeie probleme in hulle prediking en aanbidding. Nietemin kan die Leesrooster hierdie probleem regstel.

Eerstens beskik baie Koreaanse Presbiteriaanse predikers nie oor 'n langtermyn plan vir prediking nie en word 'n preek op 'n weeklikse basis gekies. Gevolglik is hulle tyd om te preek beperk en lei dit maklik tot aktuele prediking. Een van die swakpunte van aktuele prediking is die feit dat 'n prediker 'n teks met 'n vooropgesette onderwerp of tema mag benader en die teks as dekmantel mag gebruik. Dit is strydig met die beginsel met bybelse prediking. Die Leesrooster verseker egter die bybelse mentaliteit omdat dit verhoed dat predikers hulle vooropgesette idees op die teks afdwing. Die Leesrooster noop hulle om die teks in ag te neem en daarna te luister.

Tweedens beperk die prediker se voorkeur die tekste wat vir prediking gebruik kan word. Die omvang van tekste word begrens deur die willekeurige keuse daarvan. Die Leesrooster kan egter die bestek van tekste vir prediking uitbrei omdat dit die meeste Bybelboeke insluit.

Derdens word aanbidding in die Koreaanse Presbiteriaanse Kerk gekenmerk deur 'n gebrek aan samehang tussen die verskillende elemente daarvan. As gevolg van die afwesigheid van 'n langtermyn plan vir prediking, ontbreek die harmonie tussen die verskillende dele van aanbidding. Die Leesrooster bied egter 'n langtermyn plan vir prediking en help dat die elemente van aanbidding so voorberei kan word dat hulle dieselfde gewig dra.

Vierdens moet Koreaanse Presbiteriaanse predikante baie preek. Dus kan hulle baat vind by praktiese hulpmiddels soos kommentare op die Leesrooster of aanbiddingsriglyne.

Ten vyfde is aanbidding in Koreaanse Presbiteriaanse Kerke hoogs predikasie gebaseerd, d.w.s. prediking geniet voorkeur bo aanbidding. Die Leesrooster bepaal egter die konteks van aanbidding vooraf en plaas prediking binne hierdie konteks. Voorts herstel die Leesrooster die balans tussen die Woord en die Nagmaal. Dit is ontwerp vir die ervaring van die paas geheimenis as die kern van die erediens op 'n Sondag.

Ten sesde waardeer die Koreaanse Presbiteriaanse Kerk nie die teologiese en opvoedkundige waarde van die kerkjaar nie. Die kerkjaar wat deur hulle gehandhaaf word is fragmentaries. Die Leesrooster is egter gefundeer op die tradisionele kerkjaar met 'n christologiese fokus. Dit stel ons in staat om die lewe en handeling van Jesus die hele jaar deur te vier, en vul mense se gemoed met geloof en hoop.

Ten laaste is die individualisme van die Koreaanse Kerke nog 'n probleem. Hierdie kerke gaan gebuk onder interne verdeeldheid en kompetisie. Dit wil voorkom asof hulle nie besorgd is oor die eenheid van die Kerk as die liggaam van Christus nie. Nietemin inspireer die ekumeniese karakter van die *Revised Common Lectionary* hulle om 'n samehorigheidsgevoel te hê. Dit herinner hulle aan die eenheid van die Kerk.

Natuurlik is die Leesrooster nie 'n perfekte plan nie. Dit het sekere beperkinge sowel as sterktepunke. Nogtans is die Leesrooster ongetwyfeld 'n bruikbare instrument wat aanbidding en prediking in die Koreaanse Presbiteriaanse Kerk kan verbeter.

# Table of contents

<b>1. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION OF THE RESEARCH .....	1
1.2. THE MAIN PROBLEM.....	1
1.2.1. <i>Arbitrary choice of text (lack of a long-term plan for preaching)</i> .....	2
1.2.2. <i>Preponderance of some particular texts</i> .....	3
1.2.3. <i>Misappropriation of the church year's theological and educational value</i> .....	3
1.2.4. <i>The overload of the preaching ministry</i> .....	4
1.2.5. <i>An overemphasis of preaching</i> .....	5
1.2.6. <i>Lack of integrity of worship</i> .....	6
1.2.7. <i>The independency of the churches</i> .....	7
1.3. AIM OF RESEARCH .....	8
1.4. HYPOTHESIS.....	8
1.5. METHOD OF RESEARCH.....	8
1.6. THE POSSIBLE VALUE OF THE RESEARCH .....	10
1.7. THE DELIMITATION.....	10
<b>2. THE REALITIES OF THE USE OF LECTIONARY AND THE CHURCH YEAR .....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1. HOW THEY CHOOSE A TEXT FOR PREACHING .....	12
2.2. LECTIONARY AND THE CHURCH YEAR IN THE KOREAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH .....	14
2.2.1. <i>The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Kosin)</i> .....	15
2.2.2. <i>The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (Kijang)</i> .....	16
2.2.3. <i>The Presbyterian Church in Korea (Daesin)</i> .....	16
2.2.4. <i>The Presbyterian Church of Korea (Tonghap)</i> .....	17
2.2.5. <i>The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea (Hapdong)</i> .....	18
2.2.6. <i>Presbyterian General Assembly in Korea (Hapdongjungtong)</i> .....	19



2.2.7.	<i>The Korean Presbyterian Church (Hapsin)</i> .....	19
<b>3.</b>	<b>HISTORY AND STRUCTURE OF LECTIONARY</b> .....	<b>22</b>
3.1.	WHAT THE LECTIONARY IS .....	22
3.2.	HISTORY OF LECTIONARY .....	23
3.2.1.	<i>Scripture lessons in the Jewish synagogue</i> .....	23
3.2.2.	<i>Lectionaries in the early church</i> .....	25
3.2.3.	<i>Lectionaries in the Medieval Age</i> .....	27
3.2.4.	<i>The Reformation and its subsequent era</i> .....	28
3.2.5.	<i>The Second Vatican Council lectionary reform</i> .....	29
3.2.6.	<i>Lectionary reform in Protestant after the Second Vatican Council</i> .....	32
3.3.	STRUCTURE OF THE <i>REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY</i> .....	34
<b>4.</b>	<b>LECTIONARY IN KOREA</b> .....	<b>38</b>
4.1.	WHY LECTIONARY HAS NOT TAKEN ROOT IN THE KOREAN CHURCH.....	38
4.1.1.	<i>Missionaries' influence</i> .....	38
4.1.2.	<i>The Nevius method's influence</i> .....	41
4.1.3.	<i>The influence of Revival Movement</i> .....	42
4.1.4.	<i>Preaching in subsequent era</i> .....	43
4.2.	THE ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT PREACHING MINISTRY .....	47
4.2.1.	<i>Arbitrary choice of the texts</i> .....	47
4.2.2.	<i>Preponderance of some specific texts</i> .....	49
4.2.3.	<i>Misappropriation of the importance of the church calendar</i> .....	51
4.2.4.	<i>The overload of preaching ministry</i> .....	53
4.2.5.	<i>An overemphasis on preaching</i> .....	54
4.2.6.	<i>Lack of coherence of worship</i> .....	55
4.2.7.	<i>The individualism of churches</i> .....	56
<b>5.</b>	<b>STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF LECTIONARY PREACHING</b> .....	<b>58</b>

5.1.	STRENGTHS OF THE LECTIONARY PREACHING .....	58
5.1.1.	<i>Biblical mentality</i> .....	58
5.1.2.	<i>Expanding the scope</i> .....	60
5.1.3.	<i>An ecumenical effect</i> .....	61
5.1.4.	<i>The liturgical understanding of preaching in worship</i> .....	63
5.1.5.	<i>The formation of faith through the church year</i> .....	66
5.1.6.	<i>Practical helps for preparation of sermon</i> .....	70
5.1.7.	<i>Coherency of worship</i> .....	71
5.2.	THE LIMITATIONS OF LECTIONARY .....	73
5.2.1.	<i>Rigidity</i> .....	73
5.2.2.	<i>Priority of the Gospels</i> .....	74
5.2.3.	<i>Superficial connection</i> .....	76
5.2.4.	<i>Omission of some scriptures</i> .....	77
<b>6.</b>	<b>PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS</b> .....	<b>79</b>
6.1.	PREACHING THE OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS IN LECTIO CONTINUA .....	79
6.2.	CONTEXTUALISATION OF THE <i>REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY</i> FOR KOREA.....	81
	<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>85</b>

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background and motivation of the research

The researcher worked as a pastor for five years before coming to South Africa. What he found most difficult at the ministry was to choose a text for the coming Sunday. Immediately after delivering a sermon, he fretted about finding a text for the next sermon. Needless to say, this was quite stressful. Most preachers probably have a similar experience.

Then, during his study in South Africa, the researcher read a book about liturgy and learnt about the lectionary. His first impression of the book about liturgy was that, had he known about the lectionary, selecting a text for the coming Sunday's sermon would have been less stressful? Because of this, he became concerned about the reality of the Korean Presbyterian church, that is, his personal background of faith. Although he had been a Christian for 20 years and worked as a pastor for five years in Korean Presbyterian churches, he never heard about the lectionary or a sermon based upon it – something that kindled his interest in the lectionary. It has many advantages for the preaching ministry and can spare preachers much trouble.

## 1.2. The main problem

Very few Presbyterian churches follow the lectionary. A well-known Christian institution and publisher, *Mokhwoi and Shinhak* surveyed the Korean Protestant pastors' awareness of preaching (Park 2003)<sup>1</sup> and one of the questions is meaningful to this research. "Question 8:

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<sup>1</sup> Outline of this survey: 1) survey area: South Korea; 2) survey subject: 500 Protestant pastors regardless of the denomination; 3) sampling method: random; 4) method of survey: questionnaire; 5) survey period: 2003.1.13-14; 6) 330 questionnaires have been collected ( $\pm 60\%$ ); 297 valid questionnaires are the source of these statistics.

Park, S 2003. *한국교회 목회자들의 설교에 관한 의식연구 (A survey about the Korean Protestant ministers' awareness of preaching)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=11207](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=11207) [29 June (2009)]

What is your favourite style of preaching?” The result is as follows: 72.1% is expository preaching; 18.5% is topical preaching; 6.4% is exegetical preaching; 2.7% is lectionary preaching; and 0.3% is exemplary preaching.

Of course, this response might differ from the reality, because the question is about their preference, not about the practice, and the confusion about the concepts of some terminology should also be taken into account. However, the portion regarding lectionary preaching implies many things. In this regard, the Lutheran, Anglican and Methodist Churches in Korea have a more positive attitude towards the lectionary than the Presbyterian Church and, as the survey included all Protestant denominations, the number of Presbyterian Churches that use the lectionary could be less than the survey reveals.

In the Korean Presbyterian context this situation presents some practical problems, which are connected to the failure to conceive the benefits that lectionary preaching can offer.

### **1.2.1. Arbitrary choice of text (lack of a long-term plan for preaching)**

The first problem of the Korean context is the arbitrary choice of a text for a sermon. Choosing a text is the first step in sermon preparation, but it is not easy for a preacher to choose a text for a sermon week after week without a previously prepared plan. In his article, Lee (2007)<sup>2</sup> states that many Korean Protestant Churches choose a text for a sermon according to sudden inspiration, which means that they have no monthly or yearly plan for their sermons. The smaller the church is, the stronger this tendency is, he reports. The arbitrary choice of a text holds the risk of the preaching ministry lacking integrity and the preachers possibly being pressed for the time to preach every week. The fact that they do not

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<sup>2</sup> He is the professor for Homiletics in the *Graduate Studies of Practical Theology* in Korea and studied at the *University of Stellenbosch* (Th.M., Th.D.).

Lee, S 2007. *내면화된 메시지를 위한 설교준비* (*The sermon preparation for an internalised message*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=61737](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=61737) [3 July (2009)]

have a long-term plan for their sermons implies that they tend to improvise, thus good sermons cannot be expected.

However, the lectionary provides texts from which to preach. A lectionary provides systematic texts on which preachers can prepare sermons (Sleeth 1986:105). Thus, preachers need not fret about Sundays' sermons and the lectionary enables them to set a long-term plan for sermons and the ministry.

### **1.2.2. Preponderance of some particular texts**

The second problem is that preachers persist with preferred texts, which narrows the range of texts for their sermons. Buttrick (2002:56) says: "Of late, homileticians have noticed that ministers are mostly preaching from the Gospel lessons - some informal surveys calculate about 70 percent of the time!" This is not a problem of solely American preachers – Korean preachers have the same problem. The survey mentioned above asked a question regarding the Testament on which they mostly preach (Park 2003); 22.2% of the respondents chose the Old Testament, and 69% chose the New Testament – thus, the frequency of preaching the New Testament prevails by far. This reflects a severe imbalance in the preaching of the two Testaments. The tendency to persist with some preferred texts results in a narrow scope of texts for preaching. Thus, the congregation receives unbalanced spiritual sustenance.

Lectionary preaching expands the scope of preaching texts. The lectionary compels preachers to explore 'new lands' of the Bible that, otherwise, they would not have done. Preachers must not repeatedly use their preferred texts. Sometimes, they must struggle with unfamiliar texts (Craddock *et al* 1992:2).

### **1.2.3. Misappropriation of the church year's theological and educational value**

Christianity is a historical religion. We receive God's revelation in time and place. In history,

He worked for the Jews' salvation and they commemorated his works throughout the year. In their time and land, this also applied to the early Christians, among whom Jesus lived, died and was resurrected, and who commemorated his works throughout the year. This memory of salvation was the means of instruction of faith generation after generation, and which functions as a method of faith formation.

However, the Korean Presbyterian church is failing to appreciate the benefits of the church year. The calendar, which this church observes, differs from the universal one of the *Revised Common Lectionary (RCL)*. They observe Christmas, New Year's Day, the Holy Week, Easter, and the Children's, Parents' and Thanksgiving Days. Since they have no thematic coherence, it is doubtful whether they function as a means of conveying faith and the memory of Jesus' redemption. Moreover, this misses a dear legacy of the Christian tradition.

However, based on the church year, the lectionary can remedy this. The lectionary plants the Christological perspective into people's minds as it is organized by means of Jesus' life and works – his incarnation, ministry, death and resurrection. In South Africa, for instance, a liturgical group publishes guidance material titled, *Leesrooster*, based on the church year. This book aims at encouraging people to live by the liturgy on weekdays as well as to celebrate by liturgy on Sundays. The book asks people to read the broad range of books in the Bible according to the church year, to listen to God's voice in it, as well as that of others, and to live according to God's commands. This is an integral model of the pastoral use of the church year (Orsmond 2009).<sup>3</sup> The lectionary, which has the Christological annual cycles, relates the time of the church year to people's lives (cf. Biddle Jr. 1987:9).

#### **1.2.4. The overload of the preaching ministry**

Another problem of the Korean Presbyterian church is too many preaching times. Most Korean Protestant Churches have six or seven early morning services, plus Wednesday

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<sup>3</sup> Orsmond, E 2009. [Personal communication]. 24 August.

evening, Friday night, and Sunday services,<sup>4</sup> – all official services. Besides these, there are unofficial services, for example, visiting home services. Jeong (2007)<sup>5</sup> reports that Korean Protestant preachers' frequency of preaching is 13.1 times a week (8.9 official services, and 4.2 unofficial services).

The Korean preachers' overload is the direct cause of many problems in the pastoral field. It prevents them from having enough time to prepare a sermon. Therefore, they are easily tempted to use other preachers' sermons. This eventually desists the preachers from their own affective and persuasive messages, which is not beneficial to both the preachers and their congregations.

This situation is exactly the reason why Korean Presbyterian preachers need to do lectionary preaching, which can relieve them of the burden of preparing sermons, because it already provides the texts on which they must work. Thus, there is no need to worry about the choice of a text. Furthermore, other material, such as lectionary commentaries and worship guides, can be of assistance.

### **1.2.5. An overemphasis of preaching**

The Korean Presbyterian church's understanding of worship is biased towards preaching (Park 2008).<sup>6</sup> The Reformation tradition especially emphasized preaching because the Reformers were convinced that the Medieval era's fault was the belittlement of preaching.

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<sup>4</sup> According to the size of the church, the times of Sunday services vary. Small churches have one service, but mega-churches have up to six or seven services.

<sup>5</sup> He is the professor for Homiletics at *Seoul Theological University* and studied at *Bonn University* (D.Th.) in Germany.

Jeong, I 2007. 설교의 위기를 극복하는 설교 리모델링 (*Remodeling of sermon overcoming the crisis of preaching*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=61726](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=61726) [3 July (2009)]

<sup>6</sup> Park, J 2008. 몸, 감성, 그리고 새로운 예배: 새로운 예배의 필요성에 대하여 (*Body, sensitivity and new liturgy: about the necessity of a new worship*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=69126](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=69126) [29 June (2009)]

The Roman Catholic Church did not preach in worship, but only emphasized the sacraments. The Reformers tried to correct this fault through the restoration of the tradition of preaching in worship services.

However, the successors of the Reformation have committed the opposite fault, that is, the overemphasis on preaching – the sermon dominates the whole worship service. Every part of the service sustains preaching. The sermon becomes the climax of the worship, and eventually this turns the preacher into a star! Preachers and congregations consider the sermon as a barometer of a ‘successful worship’. Preachers thus succumb to huge pressure that they must impress the audience. This unhealthy and biased understanding of preaching spoils the meaning of the very worship. Congregations become mere audiences, not worshippers. The preacher also becomes a star or an eloquent orator, rather than a worshipper. Of course, we cannot deny that preaching is a very important factor of a worship service. Still, it is only one part of the whole worship activity. It is neither representative of worship nor the be all and end all of worship.

However, lectionary preaching puts the sermon in the context of liturgy. According to Sloyan (1984:11-12): “Our preaching is one of the several prayerful things we do in a context of worship.” Our understanding of worship should be balanced in the integrity of Word and Sacrament, even though we do not celebrate the Eucharist weekly.

### **1.2.6. Lack of integrity of worship**

This problem is connected to the lack of a long-term plan for sermons mentioned above. Because they do not have a plan for sermon texts, other worship leaders too cannot prepare each part of the worship service in advance. Consequently, the parts of the worship service do not coordinate with one another. The prayers, hymns, the choir, sermon, and other parts do not address the same theme of the week. If the plan is set beforehand, the various parts of the



worship service can be prepared so that the whole service can convey the same message (Huh 2008).<sup>7</sup>

The lectionary determines the texts for sermons beforehand. Therefore, worship leaders can prepare the service in advance, and each part of the service will have the same voice (cf. Lowry 1992:32-33).

### 1.2.7. The independency of the churches

Finally, one of the problems of the Korean Presbyterian churches is their independency. This is a serious obstacle to Christianity's growth and maturity in Korea. The basic notion of this phenomenon is competition – they compete with one another in order to be bigger than the neighbouring churches. The goal of their ministry tends to be self-centred rather than concerned with the whole body of Christ or God's Kingdom. Thus, they do not care about social issues – social justice, human rights, the socially weak, etc. (cf. Jeong 2007).<sup>8</sup> Although some churches have become mega-churches due to their success in the competition, the body of Christ is dwindling in the perspective of the Kingdom of God. Furthermore, non-Christians have a negative impression of the church, which cares only about its own security and prosperity. This is truly a danger signal for the Korean Protestant church.

However, the lectionary has an ecumenical effect. It reminds us that we are not isolated (Sleeth 1986:106). By participating in the common texts universally, we will have a comprehensive perspective of the body of Christ and the Kingdom of God. A church is not

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<sup>7</sup> Huh, J 2008. 신앙의 중심을 회복시키는 교회력과 성구집 (*The church year and lectionary restoring faith*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=72237](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=72237) [3 July (2009)]

<sup>8</sup> He is the professor for Christian education at *Chongshin Theological Seminary* in Korea. He studied at *Rheinische-Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universitat Bonn* (D.Th.) in Germany

Jeong, I 2007. 한국교회 마이너스 성장에 대한 원인분석과 대안 (*The analysis of the causes of the Korean Protestant Church's decline*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=60122](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=60122) [7 July (2009)]

separated from the church of the world and, furthermore, is not isolated from the world society. The lectionary imparts a 'community mind' to people.

### **1.3. Aim of research**

The aim of this research is to propose lectionary preaching as an alternative to the Korean Presbyterian context, as they are missing the benefit and importance of using the lectionary for the preaching ministry. In order to achieve this, the researcher will examine the present problems of the Korean Presbyterian church, highlight the strengths and limitations of lectionary preaching, and evaluate its possible contribution to the Korean Presbyterian context.

### **1.4. Hypothesis**

- Lectionary preaching can provide more than a free choice of texts to the biblical and systematic base.
- Lectionary preaching offers preachers a greater opportunity to deal with the broader range of the Bible than does a free choice of texts.
- Lectionary preaching has a more educational effect on the congregation than a free choice of texts.
- Lectionary preaching can again balance the overemphasized understanding of preaching in the liturgical context.
- Lectionary preaching imparts more concern to the church about the church of the world as the body of Christ, than does a free choice of texts.

### **1.5. Method of research**

In order to carry out the research, the researcher will adopt Richard Osmer's practical theological methodology. In his book, *Practical theology: An introduction*, he articulates four

tasks of practical theological methodology: the descriptive-empirical, interpretive, normative and pragmatic tasks. Each task answers each of the following four questions: What is happening? Why is this happening? What ought to be happening? How might we respond? (Osmer 2008:4).

The first task is paying attention to what is happening in the context of the subject of research (Osmer 2008:33-34). This research will deal with the matter of choosing texts for sermons and the reality of observing the church year in the Korean Presbyterian context. For this, some information from a survey will be collected and several Korean Presbyterian denominations' regulations of worship will receive attention in chapter 2.

The second step is an *interpretive task* that draws on some theories and tools to better understand and explain the context (Osmer 2008:83). Chapter 3 will adopt lectionary preaching as an interpretive tool and examine both the history and development of the lectionary, as well as the structure of the *Revised Common Lectionary*, which is most commonly used at present.

Chapter 4 will investigate why the lectionary has not been used in the Korean Presbyterian church. For this, a historical investigation of the preaching ministry of foreign missionaries and Korean pastors during the early stages of Christianity in Korea will be done. Then, the present situation of the Korean Presbyterian context will be analysed from the perspective of lectionary preaching, and the problems will be specified.

The third stage is the *normative task*. In this step, an alternative of what ought to happen should be suggested. Theological concepts will be used to interpret a particular context and to construct norms to guide our responses (Osmer 2008:131).

Chapter 5 will examine the strengths and limitations of lectionary preaching and articulate

how the use of the lectionary can contribute to the preaching ministry in the Korean Presbyterian context. Here, the question whether we need to adopt the lectionary so that we can improve our preaching ministry will be answered.

Finally, the fourth phase is the *pragmatic task*. In this step, strategies of action that will influence situations in ways that are desirable will be determined (Osmer 2008:175-176). Chapter 6 will present some practical suggestions for the use of a lectionary in the Korean context.

## **1.6. The possible value of the research**

It is believed that the Korean Presbyterian church is in crisis because of its segmentation into over 90 denominations and the independency of their churches. Because of this situation, churches are becoming isolated from one another and indifferent to the catholicity of the church as the body of Christ.

However, the use of the lectionary for the Korean Presbyterian church's preaching and worship services will enable them to participate in the unity of the church of Christ and join in the conversation with the church of the world as the lectionary offers such an ecumenical base. Therefore, this research will urge the Korean Presbyterian churches to pay more attention to the lectionary and the church year. Moreover, it will acknowledge the benefits of lectionary preaching, clarify its Christian traditional foundation, and encourage preachers, who have not followed the lectionary, to adopt it.

## **1.7. The delimitation**

The limitation of the research is bound to the Korean Presbyterian church, as these Churches are the slowest denomination to use the lectionary in Korea. The Lutheran, Anglican and

Methodist denominations are more active than the Presbyterians at adopting the lectionary. Although Professors Jangbok Jeong<sup>9</sup> and Jongyeol Kim<sup>10</sup> have tried to encourage preachers to use the lectionary, very few Presbyterian Churches utilise it.

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<sup>9</sup> He is the current president of *Hanil University and Presbyterian Seminary*. He studied Homiletics and Liturgy at *San Francisco Theological Seminary* and, as from 1984, has been publishing *예배와 설교 핸드북* (*A handbook of worship and sermon*), which is guidance material based on the lectionary.

<sup>10</sup> He is the former president of *Youngnam Theological University and Seminary*. As from 1988, he has been publishing *예배와 강단* (*Worship and pulpit*), which is a lectionary guide.

## 2. The realities of the use of lectionary and the church year

### 2.1. How they choose a text for preaching

Preparing for a sermon begins with choosing a text. This is the first step that decides the preacher's message. Long (1989:62-64) highlighted four options available to preachers when choosing a text for the sermon: First, there is a preaching method following the continuous reading of the Bible (*Lectio continua*). This method has a very long history. Preachers preach verse by verse, book by book in serial order. According to Justin Martyr's *First Apology*, in early Christianity, the Apostles' Epistles or Prophets were read in continuous way and preachers held a sermon about the Scriptures. The method of continuous reading was also used by Calvin and Zwingli (Joo 2005).<sup>11</sup> Secondly, preachers can choose the text according to a local plan. Local churches set their own plan for a sermon in consideration of the plan of their ministry and local events of the church. The third method refers to the preacher's random choice. This method is used when preachers do not have a plan for the sermon and choose a sermon text as the occasion demands every week. Fourthly, there is the method of following the church year and lectionary. A lectionary is a systematised list of scriptures for reading and preaching in worship according to the church year. It provides the sermon plan of three years covering the whole Bible.

Although all four methods are being used in Korean Presbyterian churches, two of them are dominant while the other two are not employed very much. *Mokhwoi and Shinhak* did a survey about how preachers choose the text for a sermon.<sup>12</sup> The survey offered seven options

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<sup>11</sup> He is the professor for Homiletics and Liturgy in *Presbyterian College and Theological Seminary* in Korea, and studied at *Boston University* (D.Th.) in U.S.A.

Joo, S 2005. *설교를 위한 간단한 주석방법 (An exposition method for preaching)*. [Online]. Available: <http://blog.naver.com/taekhan2/120011971358> [16 July (2009)]

<sup>12</sup> Outline of this survey: 1) survey area: South Korea; 2) survey subject: 578 Protestant pastors regardless of

for the method of choice of the sermon text. Whereas 60.3% of middle or big churches choose the sermon texts according to their local plan, 25% of them follow the random method. As far as smaller churches are concerned, 46.4% of them adopt the local plan method and 32.6% choose the sermon texts at random (Lee 2007).<sup>13</sup>

The result of the survey indicates that the prevalent methods of choosing texts are the local plan and the random choice. As is the case with all methods, these two also have their strengths and weaknesses. The local sermon plan can be sensitive to the needs of congregation and it can provide a long-term plan for worship. However, it has a weakness of independency. Churches that develop their own local sermon plan might be engrossed in their own interest and growth. They might forget the fact that they are a part of the whole body of Christ, the church of the world. Furthermore, they could be indifferent to the catholicity of the church. This is the actual problem of the Korean Presbyterian context. Churches are competing rather than cooperating and denominations are segmented rather than united (cf. Jeong 2003; Kim 2007).<sup>14</sup> Therefore, we need to pay more attention to an approach that enhances the wholeness and oneness of the church. The method of following the lectionary and participation in the same Word of God in worship on Sundays can achieve the unity of the church.

While the random choice of texts method has some strengths like preacher's freedom and flexibility, it also has many limitations. First of all, the method limits the scope of sermon texts because preachers tend to cling to the texts they are familiar with when they choose the

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the denomination; 3) sampling method: systematic random sampling; 4) method of survey: phone, fax and internet; 5) survey period: 2007.1.22-2.5; 6) standard error:  $\pm 3.9\%$  (95% trust level)

<sup>13</sup> Lee, S 2007. *내면화된 메시지를 위한 설교준비 (The sermon preparation for an internalised message)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=61737](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=61737) [3 July (2009)]

<sup>14</sup> Jeong, J 2003. *개교회주의 - '내 교회' 넘어선 '우리의 교회'로 (Individualism of the church - getting over 'my church' to 'our church')*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.kidok.com/news/quickViewArticleView.html?idxno=11653> [9 October (2009)]

Kim, S 2007. *거울에 비춰본 2007년 개신교의 모습 (Reflection on the state of the Protestant in 2007)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=60102](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=60102) [7 July (2009)]

text for a sermon (Long 1989:64). This is what happens in Korea because the Korean preachers have to preach a lot. Since they do not have sufficient time to prepare sermons, they use familiar texts and books repeatedly. This deprives the congregation of the broad range of meaning of the Word for the church in Korea.

Furthermore, preachers spend much time on selecting a text for the sermon (Long 1989:63). They could spend two or three days worrying about what they should preach while the next Sunday is approaching. Preachers might also bring their own topic to the text rather than induce a topic from the text. Eventually, this method has the weakness that preachers put preconceived ideas into the text.

Yet, a lectionary is an effective solution to these problems. It broadens the scope of the sermon text and covers the various books and verses. A lectionary helps preachers to face difficult texts and challenges them to explore the world of the Bible. Moreover, a lectionary offers preachers the texts to start to work on. They do not have to be worried about what they should preach from. Furthermore, this becomes the groundwork for biblical preaching. Because the lectionary offers a systematic and holistic set of scripture for reading and preaching in advance, preachers can listen to the message of the texts itself rather than approach the texts with a predetermined topic or idea. A lectionary system can solve the problems associated with preachers' random choice and local plan for sermon text, which are the preferred methods in the Korean Presbyterian church. Lectionary preaching is an effective alternative to the ministry in the Korean Presbyterian context.

## **2.2. Lectionary and the church year in the Korean Presbyterian church**

The statistical data, presented above, show that the total portion of preacher's random choice of text and local plan is 79% (small churches) to 85% (big churches). Although it is difficult to see the percentage of preachers who follow the lectionary, there is an indication that the



number of preachers who use lectionary is low.

This prompts the question: what do they think about the lectionary in reality? To answer this question, it is important to examine the regulations of liturgy in the constitutions of the Korean Presbyterian denominations besides the statistical data because they reflect the mind of denominations. We will also be able to determine how much they consider the lectionary and the church year. This will be another description of the Korean Presbyterian context. For this, the researcher will refer to seven denominations among the Korean Presbyterian church. Since there are over 90 Korean Presbyterian denominations, it is actually impossible to deal with them all in this research. Accordingly, the researcher will look at the regulations of seven denominations that, he thinks, form a large majority of the Korean Presbyterian church.

### **2.2.1. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Kosin)**

At first, the researcher will focus on the regulations of Kosin denomination. The following is the regulations for liturgy in the Constitution of Kosin denomination (The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea [Kosin] 1999):

#### Section 19 Preaching

Preaching is a means by which God save people's lives, therefore, the preachers should do their best to interpret the word of truth rightly.

##### 1. Selection of sermon text

The purpose of preaching is to interpret a portion of God's truth and to teach it so that the congregation could discern their duty as believer. Therefore, the preachers select the range of the text at their discretion in consideration of circumstances and harmony with other parts of service.

##### 2. Way of preaching

The preachers should prepare a sermon in prayer and meditation, and should not preach without preparation. Grounded on the purity of gospel, they should accord with the Bible and use easy expression in speech, and should not boast of their scholarship and knowledge.

### 3. Assignment of time

The preachers should assign the time of preaching properly in harmony with the entire time of service.

Kosin denomination's regulation of liturgy is mentioning the selection of a sermon text. However, they leave the matter to preacher's discretion. There is no reference to any possible method including the use of the lectionary. This could be an indication that they do not consider the matter of selecting a text seriously. Of course, some preachers in the Kosin denomination might use the lectionary system of their own volition, but we can anticipate that very few pastors use the lectionary because of an indifference to the lectionary and the church year at a denominational level.

#### **2.2.2. The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (Kijang)**

The Constitution of Kijang denomination (Paragraph 24 of Chapter 4) states that it follows the lectionary and the church year in the regulations for worship (The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea [Kijang] 2006:179): "The second order of worship is preaching. The preacher should read and preach a text according to the lectionary and the church year of the church of the world." Kijang has a regulation that urges their preachers to use the lectionary and the traditional church year, agreed on by the church of the world. Judging from this, Kijang denomination is very active in using the lectionary among the Korean Presbyterian denominations. It understands the importance of the lectionary and the church year very well, something that is reflected in the liturgy regulations of their constitution.

#### **2.2.3. The Presbyterian Church in Korea (Daesin)**

Let us consider the case of Daesin denomination. As regards preaching, Article 19 of its regulations of liturgy states the following (The Presbyterian Church in Korea [Daesin] 2003):

1. Preachers should prepare a sermon with studying, meditating and praying. They should preach in easy expression so that anybody can understand it and should

not boast of their scholarship and knowledge. They should bring glory to the truth with practicing what they preach and be a model of believers in thought, word and deed.

2. The most important thing in the official services is to glorify God the Most High altogether. The preacher should preach in appropriate length not too long or too short.
3. They should offer thanks to God after sermon and sing hymns, and then give the benediction.

In Daesin denomination's regulations of liturgy, there is no reference to the lectionary and the universal church year. It mentions only preachers' sincerity and attitude to their ministry. This shows that they fail to recognise the necessity of the lectionary.

#### **2.2.4. The Presbyterian Church of Korea (Tonghap)**

In Tonghap denomination's regulations for liturgy, their attitude towards the lectionary and the church year is expressed as follows (The Presbyterian Church of Korea [Tonghap] 2007):

##### 1.3. Time of worship

##### 1.3.2. The church year

1.3.2.1. It is important that the church as the body of Jesus should plan worship so as not to be force of habit. For this, using the lectionary and the church year is proper, which the church of the world follows.

1.3.2.2. The church year which is focused on the redemptive work of Jesus is as follows: Advent – the season of expecting and getting ready to the second coming of Jesus. Christmas – the season of giving praise and worship to Jesus the King of Peace. Epiphany – the season of emphasising the calling for mission, remembering the God' grace through Christ. Lent – the season of preparing to receive Jesus with repent, self-restraint and meditation. The Holy Week – This is the week when we preach the redemption of Jesus on the cross and discipline ourselves for godliness remembering His passion. Easter – the season of giving thanks for Jesus' victory and power over death, which be with us, and taking fast hold of the hope and faith of resurrection. Pentecost – the season of emphasising the vigorous life of the early Christians by the Holy Spirit's presence and work to them. Besides them, the

Baptism of the Lord, Transfiguration, Ascension, Trinity Sunday and Christ the King Sunday may be observed.

The regulations of Tonghap denomination recommend the adoption of the lectionary system and the worldwide church year. This means that they are aware of the importance and value of the lectionary and continuously strive to use it at a denominational level.

### **2.2.5. The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea (Hapdong)**

The following is the sixth chapter of the Constitution of Hapdong denomination about the delivery of a sermon (The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea [Hapdong] 2008):

1. Preaching is a way that God saves people. Therefore, preachers should take much care of it. They should interpret the word of truth so that they would not become shameful workers.
2. It would be better to select a verse or a few verses for the text of preaching. The purpose of preaching is to interpret a part from the God's word of truth, to explain the truth and to teach what we ought to do and not to do.
3. The preachers should prepare the preaching by studying hard, meditating and praying. They should not do it without preparation. They should speak in easy expression following the simplicity of the gospel so that an ignorant person can understand it. They should not boast of their scholarship and knowledge. By their deeds, they should glorify the truth which they teach and be a model of believers in thought and words
4. The most important thing in an official service is to glorify God altogether. The pastors would better not preach too long or too short. They should spend appropriate time in preaching.
5. The pastors should give thanks to God in prayer after preaching, and then, sing hymns and psalms and give the benediction.

As we see, the regulations of Hapdong denomination are not referring to the lectionary or the church year. They only contain a very vague and general recommendation for the selection of

the sermon text. Furthermore, they state that preachers had better select a verse or a few verses for a sermon text (cf. Article 2). Judging from this, we can conclude that Hapdong denomination has little understanding of the lectionary and the church year.

### **2.2.6. Presbyterian General Assembly in Korea (Hapdongjungtong)**

The sixth chapter about the delivery of a sermon in Hapdongjungtong denomination's regulations of liturgy is almost the same as that of Hapdong denomination (Presbyterian General Assembly in Korea [Hapdongjungtong] 2006). Particularly, parts for the selection of a text are exactly the same as that of Hapdong denomination. They do not allude to the lectionary and the church year. This indicates a lack of awareness of the value of lectionary and the church year.

### **2.2.7. The Korean Presbyterian Church (Hapsin)**

Lastly, we consider Hapsin denomination. The following statements are made in Sections 3 and 6 of their regulations of liturgy (The Korean Presbyterian Church [Hapsin] 2006):

Section 3. Reading Scripture in official services apart from reading the text of sermon

1. Reading the Scriptures is a part of the official services. This aims to bring the congregation's growth in knowledge of the Bible apart from reading the text of sermon. The range should be decided appropriate to length of the service.
2. The scriptures to read are the Old and New Testaments. (excluding the Apocrypha) It should be done with the Korean Bible well translated so that congregation can understand it well.
3. A reader should not look only at the Bible, give eye contact with congregation. Blessed are the readers and listeners of the Bible. (Rev 1:3)
4. Reading scriptures apart from reading the text of sermon is the tradition from the early church. The early church considered this to be important. The reason is because this is a good way for congregation to know all over the Bible.

Section 6. Preaching

### 1. The importance of preaching

The Word of God is the salvific power. Preaching, delivering the power, is the most great activity. A preacher presents himself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. (2 Tim 2:15), saves himself and his hearers (1 Tim 4:16)

### 2. Qualification of the preacher

He should have the knowledge of the original language of the Bible, the general knowledge of theology and the knowledge of arts and sciences which attend on theology. He should have also the knowledge of the Bible itself more than common believers and be respectable in personality.

### 3. Composition of a sermon

The introduction of sermon should be simple and clear, and it should be derived from the text scripture. In expounding a text, too many propositions make congregation incomprehensible and the obscure expression is a burden to congregation.

### 4. The clearness of sermon

Anecdotes can be used for this. Most of all, they should be the kind of illustrating the truth and bring about the spiritual impression. Anecdotes should be such things that illuminate the difficult texts.

In Hapsin denomination's regulations of liturgy, we find no reference to the lectionary or the church year. Thus, it is clear that they fail to appreciate the lectionary as an important aspect of the Christian liturgical tradition.

Striking, however, is the inclusion of the public reading of the Bible in worship. Even though the public reading of the Bible is a Christian tradition, inherited from the ancient Jewish worship, it has been ignored in Korean Presbyterian context. It is very encouraging that Hapsin denomination recognizes and articulates the value of the public reading of the Bible in worship, although we are not sure how many of the churches put it into practice.

## **Conclusion**

The researcher exemplified the lack of understanding and utilization of the lectionary and the worldwide, traditional church year by highlighting two illustrations. Results from a survey, which was conducted by a well-known Christian institution and publisher, *Mokhwoi and Shinhak*, show that 80 to 85% of the Korean Protestant preachers use their local plan or random choice to select the text for a sermon. This is an indication of a limited utilization of the lectionary system in their worship. In addition to this, the researcher presented the seven Korean Presbyterian denominations' regulations of liturgy to illustrate the failure of these denominations to employ the lectionary. Two of them (Kijang and Tonghap) specify and recommend using the lectionary system because they consider it important to follow the worldwide church year. Yet, the other five denominations do not comment on the lectionary and the church year in their guidelines for the liturgy. This means that they pay no attention to the lectionary and do not consider it for their preaching ministry. Certainly, the lectionary is not known to them.

### 3. History and structure of lectionary

The tool which the researcher employs to analyse the Korean Presbyterian context in this research is the lectionary preaching. Therefore, the researcher will look into what the lectionary is and how it has been developed in history. In addition to its definition and history, the structure of the *Revised Common Lectionary*, which is the most universally used lectionary, will be dealt with.

#### 3.1. What the lectionary is

*Consultation on Common Texts*, which is an ecumenical institution to develop lectionary, defines the term lectionary as “a collection of readings or selections from the Scriptures, arranged and intended for proclamation during the worship of the people of God” (*Consultation on Common Texts* 1992:9). The word derives from Latin ‘legere’. ‘Legere’ means ‘to read’, and forms the root of words such as ‘lesson’, ‘lectern’, ‘lector’, and ‘lecture’ (Bantz 1993:224). Although there have been various lectionaries, the important ones are the Roman *Lectionary for Mass* of 1969, the *Common Lectionary* of 1983, and the *Revised Common Lectionary* of 1992.

Lectionaries are found in two basic forms. The first is a simple table of readings that offers the table of the liturgical Days and the Scripture references for the texts to be proclaimed. In this case, readings are usually proclaimed from a pulpit Bible. The *Revised Common Lectionary* is an example of such a table. The second one is a full-text edition, which includes not only the list of the liturgical Days and Scripture references, but also the specific texts to be read from a particular Version of the Bible. Examples of this are the Roman Catholic *Lectionary for Mass*, containing the Sunday and weekday texts, and the lectionaries of the Episcopal, Lutheran, and Methodist Churches in the United States (*Consultation on Common Texts* 1992:9).



## **3.2. History of lectionary**

Lectionaries have a very long history from the pre-Christian synagogue to the *Revised Common Lectionary* in 1992. Lectionaries have played an important role in Judaism and Christianity (Reumann 1977:116). They have provided, in order, sequences of texts from Scripture to be read and preached at public worship.

One of the evidence, though it could be disputed, is the scene in Luke's Gospel where Jesus begins his public ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth (4:16-30). As it was customary to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, Jesus went and, at the service, opened the scroll and 'found the place ('heuren' in Greek)' (4:17) where Isaiah 61:1-2 was written. Reumann (1977:117-118) evaluates this evidence as follows:

It has been argued that *heuren* here means to find the "prescribed passage" which had been "marked in the scroll by the archisynagogus" from the prophetic cycle of readings then coming into existence alongside the set cycle of readings from the Pentateuch.

... The passage in Luke 4 is fraught with difficulties - source, redaction, and whether a synagogue lectionary with readings from the prophets clearly existed in Jesus' day.

The origins and history of pericopes are very vague. However, Luke 4 is read as a foundational idea by scholars stressing that existing lectionaries have developed from synagogue lectionaries (Reumann 1977:118).

### **3.2.1. Scripture lessons in the Jewish synagogue**

The reading of sacred scripture in Christian worship is an inheritance from the synagogue (Reumann 1977:118; Bonneau 1998:5). Before Christianity began, Jewish communities had already developed an extensive order of scriptural lessons to be read at their weekly Sabbath synagogue services. Although archaeological evidence of synagogues dates back only to the

second century before Christ, it is generally believed that the Jewish tradition of congregating regularly for prayer and for the study of the scriptures reaches back to the time of the Babylonian Exile, which was a difficult period for the Jewish people. After the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, some Israelites were scattered among the neighboring countries, while others were taken away to Babylon as captives. Judah and its capital city Jerusalem were desolated and the temple of the Lord lay in ruins. Without a temple, they could not offer sacrifices to God. The offering of sacrifices was their principal form of worship. It was probably in these circumstances that the liturgy of the Word for which they regularly gathered on the Sabbath had been developed as a replacement of animal sacrifice. The Scripture was the only assembly point for worship among the diaspora Jews. Once the Exile was over, they reinstated the temple worship and animal sacrifices in Jerusalem. However, even with this restoration, the tradition of the liturgy of the Word in the synagogue continued to spread. Not only did the diaspora Jews in foreign lands continue to gather in synagogue, but even those in Judah and Jerusalem, who could access the temple, did so as well. Assembly in the synagogue became one of the distinctive features of Jewish people. By the time of Jesus, the practice was already considered an ancient tradition, and synagogue worship was a standard feature in most Jewish communities both in Palestine and in the diaspora (Bonneau 1998:5).

The prominent feature of the synagogue service on the Sabbath was the reading of Torah. The Jewish tradition of this practice goes back to Moses (Deut. 31:10-12; cf. II Kings 22:8-13; 23:1-3) and Ezra (cf. Neh. 8). There were two different traditions of reading the Torah in synagogue service. In the Babylonian tradition, the entire Pentateuch was divided into fifty-four sequential segments that were read over a one-year cycle of Sabbaths, and it began after the Festival of Booths in the fall. The other was the Palestinian tradition. It divided the Pentateuch in 153-167 sequential segments, starting in the spring month of Nisan. It extended over a three-year cycle of Sabbaths (Reumann 1977:118-119).

In addition to the first reading from the Torah, each Sabbath synagogue service included a second reading called the 'haftorah'<sup>15</sup>. It comprised the periscopes selected from what the Jewish tradition identified as the Prophets (Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings constituted the 'former prophets'; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets constituted the 'latter prophets'). These prophetic passages explained, or complemented the theme of the Torah extract of the day (Bonneau 1998:5-6).

### **3.2.2. Lectionaries in the early church**

Did the Jewish lectionary system persist in the early church? Concerning this question, Reumann (1977:119-120) states:

A "genetic connection" here seems doubtful, when in the New Testament there is "nowhere ... certain evidence ... for the reading of the Old Testament in the liturgy," nor proof it was read in the order followed by the synagogue. ... Nonetheless, a number of proposals about New Testament books have been made by proponents of the "lectionary school." ... A priori, one cannot exclude the possibility that Christian books could early have been written for use at worship services.

Some scholars in the field lectionary studies developed their theories about the origin of the Christian lectionary in the New Testament. The Anglican Archbishop of Quebec, Philip Carrington, proposed a theory in 1952 that Mark's Gospel is a collection of periscopes, and it comprises forty-eight (or 49) lections for the liturgical year and fourteen more for the annual commemoration of the Passover. The calendar he focused on is the ancient Hebrew agricultural one, beginning in the fall, with festivals to which Marcan passages are matched. The fullest application of the lectionary theory to Matthew has been contended by M. D. Goulder. He appropriated Carrington's lectionary hypothesis and maintained that Matthew was developed liturgically according to the lections of the Jewish Year, the festal cycle of the synagogue. Aileen Guilding attempted to see the pattern of the Fourth Gospel as a reflection

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<sup>15</sup> Its literal meaning is 'dismissal' because it was used at the end of service.

of the triennial synagogue cycle of lessons from the Pentateuch and Prophets. Guilding goes further to hold that the triennial cycle of readings existed in the fourth century B.C. and helped shape the Pentateuch, translation of which into Greek was for lectionary purposes. These Pentateuch and prophetic lections formed a background for Jesus' sermons in synagogues. Her theory has not been accepted without reservation, despite the fact that commentators find it useful chiefly for the discourse in John 6. Besides, there have been also attempts to find lectionary readings behind passages in Acts and Paul (Reumann 1977:120-122).

Though the exact history of lectionary from the synagogue to the early church is shrouded in mystery, the synagogue model of cyclic reading of the Torah and Prophets developed and shaped in the new light of the gospel of Jesus and the instructional or identificational needs of church. The evidence of lectionaries in early Christianity include specific accounts in patristic writings, the church fathers' sermons, manuscript markings in biblical texts, lists of pericopes, and eventually lectionary books. Justin Martyr's statement is well known: at the Sunday assembly "the memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as much as time permits."<sup>16</sup> (Bettenson 1956:86). The homilies of Augustine suggest two lessons at mass as a norm, three on festivals; sometimes *lectio continua* is evidenced, but there are interruptions and considerable freedom in choosing pericopes. Occasionally in manuscripts, to help a lector pick out a lesson, 'beginning' or 'end' were marked ('incipit' and 'explicit' in Latin), sometimes with a note in red denoting the day liturgically. A next step was the creation of lists of readings arranged according to the church calendar and copied at the front or conclusion of a manuscript; these are termed 'capitulare' since they give the chapter ('capitulum' in Latin) and 'incipit/explicit'. Then came books with the full text of lessons arranged calendrically, called a 'comes' (companion). The clear evidence of a complete Christian lectionary appeared in the fourth century: The *Apostolic Constitutions* refer to 'reading of the law and the prophets, of our epistles and the Acts, as well as the Gospels', a five-lesson sequence. (Reumann 1977:123).

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<sup>16</sup> *Apologia I* 67

The tradition of reading scriptural passages in worship had been developed continuously through history from the Jewish synagogue to the early church. The specific factors, which shaped the system of lectionaries, were the natural association of certain biblical books with certain seasons on the basis of contents. Mostly books were read in continuous fashion. However, the calendrical festivals and seasons of the early church often interrupted such sequences and set the mood for choices from Scripture (Reumann 1977:124).

### **3.2.3. Lectionaries in the Medieval Age**

During the Middle Ages, the liturgy in Western and Northern Europe underwent dramatic changes. “Progressive privatization is perhaps the best way to characterize the overall tendency of liturgical change in this period (Bonneau 1998:13).” The Eucharist increasingly became a ritual restricted to the priest, and the assembled community was reduced to passive spectators. This was due to the retention of Latin, which fewer and fewer people could understand as the centuries went on. Maintaining Latin in the liturgy helped create a unified worship throughout Europe, but at the cost of preventing congregations from experiencing the joy of worship and liturgy. Unless they were educated, people in the assembly did not understand what priests said. The priest read the assigned scriptural passages in a low voice in Latin, and whispered the Eucharistic Prayer to himself. Since the priest did everything, there was no need for a variety of ministries such as lector, cantor, and Eucharistic minister. This priestly exclusive appropriation of the liturgy was reflected in the development of the missal. The meaning of the original liturgical year faded into ever-greater obscurity. The addition of Masses on all the weekdays, the proliferation of private votive Masses and the growing number of saints’ days – all of these worked together to deprive the Sunday of its paschal meaning. As a result, the liturgical year, which was rooted in and resulted from the Sunday celebration, also lost its distinct form and order (Bonneau 1998:13-14).

By the end of the Middle Ages, the lectionary was totally absorbed into the missal and became the area of the priest alone. As regards lectionaries of the Middle Ages, Bonneau (1998:14) concludes “Many prescribed readings were reassigned; traditional Sunday readings were relegated to weekdays; saints’ day readings replaced Sunday readings; the practice of

sequential reading fell away. Already by the seventh century, the Old Testament readings had been eliminated almost totally. Clearly there was need for reform.”

### **3.2.4. The Reformation and its subsequent era**

The sixteenth century witnessed the reshaping time of Christianity. The Reformed tradition varied. By and large, the “radical Reformation” and “Free Churches” rejected lectionaries. Zwingli felt they prevent access to the entire Bible. He preferred *lectio continua*. Calvin favored one reading at a service, usually from the Gospels. He read a chapter or so each Sunday, and his practice became customary in the Church of Scotland through John Knox. The Council of Trent fixed the lectionary for the Church of Rome in 1570. The Church of England sought to preserve the traditional lectionary which comprises Gospels and Epistles, but there was also a tendency toward sequential reading so as to cover the entire Bible or its parts periodically. Luther, though he thought many of the Epistle choices too moralizing, took over the historic Western lections, in the vernacular, for preaching as well as for reading. With such variations, the liturgical churches of Western Christendom had a lectionary of Epistle and Gospel lessons for each Sunday and festival, which had evolved over a thousand-year period. From the sixteenth century until 1970, this was “the canon within the canon” which determined the Scriptures which, by and large, church-goers heard read (Reumann 1977:126).

In post-Reformation era, the revision of lectionaries took place one after another in Protestant churches. Lutherans in the U.S.A. and Canada who cooperated in the *Service Book and Hymnal* (1958) altered a number of lessons from the inherited lectionary, including the assignment of a third reading from the Old Testament. German Lutherans also worked on their historic lectionary extensively, and it led to a system where the historic Western or traditional lections of Epistles and Gospels were read annually (thus ensuring continuity and a certain pedagogical value from repetition) and, in addition to these two texts, four other series of ‘preaching texts’ were assigned (which include the Old Testament). (Reumann 1977:127)

### **3.2.5. The Second Vatican Council lectionary reform**

The liturgical reform of the Second Vatican Council was a revolutionary event not only to the Roman Catholic but to the Protestant as well, because it became a stimulus and a resource of the revision of Protestants liturgy. Reumann (1977:127) describes the atmosphere just before the Second Vatican Council reform as follows: “The situation in the nineteen sixties may be summed up thus: widespread loyalty to the traditional gospels and epistles; a willingness to revise and explore alternatives, often constructed on the same principles as the ancient series; a new sense of the church year; and growing ecumenical impulses.”

Pope John XXIII called the Second Vatican Council, hoping to modernise the Roman Catholic Church. In the case of the lectionary, it was the most radical change in the 1500 years during which the annual series of traditional gospels and epistles had developed. Bonneau (1998:21) explains the historical context of the Second Vatican Council lectionary reform as follows:

... the full-scale renewal of the Church ... had been in preparation for decades, both in the writings of scholars and in the praxis of communities throughout the world who keenly felt the need for change. Among the wishes for change, a desired reform of the lectionary had surfaced above all in three fields of study ... : biblical studies, the liturgical movement, and the catechetical movement.

The rise of critical biblical studies in the Catholic circles led to a rediscovery of the riches contained in the Bible as a whole. The rediscovery of the riches of scripture also made people realize the limited scope of the Sunday and Feast Day readings contained in the *Roman Missal* of 1570. As a result, a broader and more representative selection of biblical passages, from both the Old and New Testaments, began to be demanded. Moreover, new research in the history of liturgy demonstrated the centrality of Sunday and the importance of the liturgical seasons in the ancient Church. The ancient liturgy was paid much attention as the source for proclaiming the paschal mystery of Christ and the primary moment for the celebration of the Eucharist. It was hoped, therefore, that the intimate relationship between

liturgy and scripture might once again be actively fostered in church just as a characteristic of the early Church was so. In addition, voices for the reform of the lectionary in the realm of catechetics were raised in Europe as well as in missionary lands. Although the *Roman Missal* lectionary constituted a prime source of evangelization and instruction in the Roman Catholic Church, it was disappointingly poor due to the limited number of biblical passages it contained. Preachers who were more attuned to the biblical dimension of liturgy felt that the lectionary of the *Roman Missal* offered too narrow a selection of readings from which to work. In each of these fields, scholars presented, debated, and published proposals for lectionary reform, laying a broad and solid foundation for the Council's revision. The committee which implemented the Second Vatican Council renewal of the lectionary chose its members from these movements and drew much of its inspiration from their various studies (Bonneau 1998:21-22).

The liturgical reform of the Second Vatican Council began with the promulgation of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (December 1963). Reumann (1977:128) describes the process briefly as follows:

... the Council fathers asserted themselves and set the tone for other reforms: almost every change they voted "was liberalizing rather than restrictive." The document laid great emphasis on sacred Scripture in liturgy (Article 24, 33, and 35) and above all enjoined: "The treasures of the Bible are to be opened up more lavishly, so that richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God's Word. In this way a more representative portion of the holy Scriptures will be read to the people *over a set cycle of years.*"

It was the task of eighteen members of a working group on lectionary, under the *Consilium* for implementing this Constitution, to make proposals. These experts began in 1964 to study existing pericope systems and to formulate principles. Some thirty biblical scholars were asked to list passages which ought to be included. By 1967 a draft was circulated and revisions made in 1968 in light of replies. The finished Order of Readings was decreed to begin November 30, 1969.

Over 1500 years, the Roman Catholic Church put an emphasis on the Sacrament only, but it



sought to find a place for the Word in worship. This intention is reflected in the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. According to Bonneau (1998:25-28) the five principles guiding this lectionary reform are as follows:

1. *The scriptures are an essential component of liturgical celebration.*

The importance of the scriptures for the celebration of the liturgy is a broad principle. It contains a number of facets expressed in several related ways:

- a. Scripture is the source of liturgy: “The importance of scripture in the celebration of the liturgy is paramount. For it is texts from scripture that form the readings and are explained in the homily; it is scripture's psalms that are sung; from scripture's inspiration and influence flow the various kinds of prayers as well as the singing in the liturgy; from scripture the actions and signs derive their meaning” (SC, no. 24). ...

2. *Priority is to be given to the Sunday and Feast Day Lectionary.*

... The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy expressed the role of Sundays and Feast Days in such phrases as: “For on this day, christian believers should come together, in order to commemorate the suffering, resurrection and glory of the lord Jesus, by hearing God's word and sharing the Eucharist ...” (SC, no. 106); “... taking account of Masses celebrated with the people present, particularly on Sundays and holydays of obligation” (SC, no. 49).

3. *The lectionary is to contain more scripture.*

The Lectionary is to contain the more representative or essential parts ... of the scriptures. Realizing that it would be both impossible and inappropriate to read every part of every book of the scriptures at liturgy (for example, the purity laws of Leviticus, the long descriptions of the Ark of the Covenant in Exodus, the violent stories in Judges, etc.), the writers of the Constitution on the Sacred liturgy proposed three criteria for selecting the “essential” or “most important” part of scripture: (1) focus on Christ as (2) the center and fulfillment of salvation history (3) proclaimed for Christian life. ...

4. *The lectionary is to be adapted to modern times.*

The pastoral care of the Church was one of the major thrusts of the entire council. ...

5. *The lectionary is to take into account previous tradition.*

The council's wish that the revised liturgy be closely connected to tradition is expressed this way: “In order that healthy tradition can be preserved while yet

allowing room for legitimate development, thorough investigation – theological, historical and pastoral – of individual parts of the liturgy up for revision is always to be the first step. ... care should be taken to see that new forms grow in some way organically out of the forms already existing” (SC, no. 23)

### **3.2.6. Lectionary reform in Protestant after the Second Vatican Council**

Protestant denominations adopted the result of liturgical reform of the Second Vatican Council and began to produce variants of it. During this time, Protestant lectionaries proliferated to slightly different versions of the Roman *Lectionary for Mass* (1969). It was the result of their recognition of the value of the Roman lectionary in 1969. However, it increased confusion among the Protestant preachers due to the different versions. This eventually called for a harmonization of the lectionaries, which led to the production of the *Common Lectionary*. The following is the description of the *Consultation on Common Texts* (1992:75-76):

Within less than a year of the issuing of the Roman lectionary for Mass in 1969, the value of this table Sunday readings was recognized by other churches in the United States and Canada. ...

The proliferation of versions of the original Roman table of Sunday readings was both ecumenically encouraging and also dismaying. Each of the five versions differed slightly from the others. Attempts by local clergy to meet for sermon planning were hampered by the different texts and arrangements, and published materials were confronted by multiple options. There was an increasing demand for some standardization.

...

The Consultation on Common Texts set up a working group, the North American Committee on Calendar and Lectionary, composed of pastors and scholars from the Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Lutheran, and United Methodist churches. ... The finished work of this committee was published in 1983 as the Consultation’s proposal to the churches of North America. This book, entitled *Common Lectionary* (New York: The Church Hymnal Corporation, 1983), contained an introduction, the tables of readings, some explanation of the specific choices, and showed how it had moved toward a consensus among the variety of versions published in the 1970s.

The *Common Lectionary* was the first standardised form of ecumenical lectionary. The *Consultation on Common Texts* tested the lectionary in two three-year cycles, and after, examining the existing problems, it identified some points of critique. The *Consultation on Common Texts* (1992:77) articulates them as follows:

It was always understood by the CCT [*Consultation on Common Texts*] that the 1983 table of readings was for experimental use, and criticisms were invited. After two three-year cycles of testing, the CCT appointed a task force to examine the tables, to listen to critiques from many levels and many groups, and to take them into account. Hundreds of individuals and dozens of churches submitted helpful criticisms. All of these have been carefully noted, evaluated, and considered by the task force in its process of revision.

The critiques received were generally in one of five different areas: a) the use of Scripture; b) the place of women in the lectionary; c) problems of the common calendar; d) the need for a cycle of first readings more directly linked to the gospel of the day in the Sundays after Pentecost; e) and sensitivity to the way some Scripture texts are heard by Christian congregations today.

Accepting these points of critique, the *Consultation on Common Texts* began to work on a revision of the *Common Lectionary*. The result was the *Revised Common Lectionary* (1992), which is the most commonly used lectionary in the world today.

The *Revised Common Lectionary* is revised with regard to the Old Testament prophets, which was one of the main criticisms of the *Common Lectionary*. In its revision, the *Consultation on Common Texts* presented the prophets chronologically in the Sundays after Pentecost and the ministry and teaching of Jeremiah has become central to the cycle. The place of women in the lectionary was another criticism. The *Consultation on Common Texts* recognised the significant, if often overlooked, role played by women in the biblical story. The *Revised Common Lectionary* has included “a number of readings which are relevant to the women in the Bible: for example, the promise of God to Sarah for her faithfulness, the contribution of the Hebrew midwives to the saving of the children of the Hebrew slaves in Egypt, the encounter of the Syro-Phoenician woman with Jesus, and the apostolic ministry of Lydia. In

addition to these, there have been other revisions (Consultation on Common Texts 1992:77-78).

### **3.3. Structure of the *Revised Common Lectionary***

The *Revised Common Lectionary* is the most widely used lectionary among Protestants although others such as the Episcopal or Lutheran lectionaries are also available. Therefore, the researcher will focus on the structure of the *Revised Common Lectionary*.

The basic structure of the Roman Catholic Ordo, which is a three-year cycle, has been taken over by its Protestant variants including the *Common Lectionary* and the *Revised Common Lectionary*. The three-year sequence concentrates on Matthew in Year A, Mark in Year B, and Luke in Year C for the gospel lessons. John is read each year, especially during Christmas, Lent, and Easter, and in the year of Mark due to its shorter length. This is basic to the system. Each year, one of these three synoptic gospels leads people to a deeper knowledge of Jesus' story. Preachers using the lectionary can proclaim the paschal mystery of the saving death and resurrection of the Christ Jesus through the readings and preaching (Consultation on Common Texts 1992:13).

On each Sunday, four scriptural passages are assigned. The first one is usually from the Old Testament, the second from the Epistles, and the third from one of the Gospels. In addition to these, the fourth excerpt is from the Psalm, which is chosen as the liturgical response to the first reading, fitted in harmony with the general tone of the celebration (Consultation on Common Texts 1992:77).

The *Revised Common Lectionary* provides two options for the first passage to be read. Normally, the first reading from the Old Testament is closely related to the gospel passage for the day from the first Sunday of Advent to Trinity Sunday of each year. Yet, from the first Sunday after Trinity Sunday to Christ the King Sunday, the lections of the Old Testament are

provided in two patterns. One is a pattern of paired reading in which the Old Testament and gospel readings are closely related, and the other is a pattern of semicontinuous Old Testament readings. The former set of Old Testament readings, which is the Roman lectionary pattern, pursues the thematic coherence among the lections on each Sunday while the latter allows a larger variety of the Old Testament themes to be offered (*Consultation on Common Texts* 1992:11).

The alternative options have been provided in light of the criticism of the Roman lectionary's typological use of the Old Testament. For a long time, the Old Testament had been ignored and not been included in lectionaries in the practice of West. It was used only for the daily office or read only as a kind of completed or fulfilled prophecy which has been superseded by the New Testament Church and its writings, rather than reading and exegeting it as Scripture in its own right, rite, and historical context. Therefore, the *Consultation on Common Texts* in 1983 revised the Roman lectionary's handling of the Old Testament in Ordinary Time (the Season after Pentecost) to offer an alternative to the week-by-week correlation of a gospel reading and the Old Testament passage. The *Common Lectionary* applied the semicontinuous principle to the Old Testament readings just like the epistle reading. The response to the alteration was divided into pros and cons during a test. Several churches of *Consultation on Common Texts* members, particularly the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Episcopal churches, followed the tradition of correlating the first lesson to the gospel reading, desiring the Eucharistic liturgy and its readings to be unified around the paschal mystery. As a result, the *Revised Common Lectionary* has provided the two options – the selective reading and continuous reading for the Old Testament which are given equal status (*Consultation on Common Texts* 1992:17-18).

Historically, lectionaries have been made in two different and complementary patterns of reading: One is an arrangement of selective or thematic readings (*lectio selecta*), and the other is *lectio continua*, that is, continuous or semi-continuous reading of books of the Bible (Vasey *et al* 1997:7). The Jewish synagogue probably combined both *continua* and *selecta*: mostly, the readings were taken in continuous fashion, *lectio continua*. However, the

calendrical feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles interrupted the sequence of Torah readings, and selective lessons were read (Bonneau 1998:6). The early lectionaries also combined selecta and continua. Lectionaries in the Middle Ages were read in lectio selecta pattern. Then, three approaches to lectionary use appeared from the Reformation: (1) The Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Anglican churches continued the selective pattern of lectionaries, (2) the radical Reformers almost exclusively assumed continuous reading and (3) Calvin combined the two patterns, preferring continuous reading but selecting lessons for particular days and festivals (Allen 1992:238-239). The *Revised Common Lectionary* is following the lectio continua principle, the semicontinuous reading. Besides this, the selective and thematic lessons of the Old Testament, in the Ordinary Time after Pentecost, are provided equally.

The annual structure of the lectionary cannot be separated from the church calendar. The *Revised Common Lectionary* has taken the present Western calendar for Sundays. The calendar contains two cycles of festival Sundays – Easter and Christmas cycles – and the ordinary Sundays after the feasts of Epiphany and Pentecost (Consultation on Common Texts 1992:13).

Lent, Easter and Pentecost are applicable to the Easter cycle. Lent emerged as a period of preparation for baptism. The primary Lenten theme is placed at preparation for the joy of Easter, rather than to a penitential tone. On Palm or Passion Sunday, it is recommended that both the story of the palm procession and the passion narrative be used in order to provide a balanced understanding of the whole event of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection. Easter was the first Christian festival and was observed as early as the second century. It commemorated Jesus' resurrection and became an occasion for baptism. In addition, the church considered the fifty days after Easter as an extended celebration of the resurrection culminating in the day of Pentecost. In Pentecost, the power of God that was manifested in the raising of Jesus is dealt with (Allen 1992:237-238; Consultation on Common Texts 1992:13).

Advent, Christmas and Epiphany fall under the Christmas cycle. Advent originally had an eschatological focus, but a sense of preparation for Christmas was added later. In the readings, Isaiah features prominently. The gospel readings of the first Sunday of Advent in each year are all apocalyptic. The scriptures about John the Baptist fall upon the second and third Sundays, and on the fourth Sunday of Advent, the annunciation of Jesus' birth is proclaimed. On the Epiphany, the manifestation and revelation of God through Jesus Christ becomes the main theme. The passage of the sages from the East is read on that day. The Sunday after the Epiphany has the Baptism of the Lord as the pericope (Allen 1992:238; Consultation on Common Texts 1992:14).

The Ordinary Time is the period outside the two cycles. In the Roman lectionary, the gospel readings of the Ordinary Time are presented according to the semicontinuous principle, but lessons from the Old Testament are selected for the close relationship with the gospel passage of the day. The *Revised Common Lectionary* follows this pattern during the Sundays after the Epiphany. However, for the Sundays after Pentecost, it presents two alternate choices for the Old Testament – selective passages, which continue the Roman pattern or semicontinuous passages (Consultation on Common Texts 1992:14-15).

## 4. Lectionary in Korea

So far, the researcher has illustrated in chapter 2 that the Korean Presbyterian churches hardly use a lectionary or recognise it in their liturgy. The history and structure of the lectionary have been discussed in chapter 3. In this chapter, he will investigate the reason(s) why the lectionary has seldom been adopted as a preaching resource by looking at the history of the lectionary in Korea. In addition, he will highlight the problems of the Korean Presbyterian context concerning the preaching ministry from the angle of lectionary preaching.

### 4.1. Why lectionary has not taken root in the Korean church

The current situation of the limited use of the lectionary in Korea has something to do with the early history of Korean Christianity. Especially, foreign missionaries had a huge influence on the Korean church at that time. Their teachings and practices became a model for the Korean church and shaped a tradition of its preaching style. Moreover, the Nevius method, which was the strategy of their mission work in Korea, and the inclination toward the Revival Movement, which was the background of their faith, contributed to the current situation of the Korean church's preaching and liturgy.

#### 4.1.1. Missionaries' influence

Foreign missionaries who preached the gospel of Jesus to Koreans had a great impact on the preaching of the Korean church (Kim 2004:14; Jeong 2001).<sup>17</sup> As regards the aspect of preaching, topical preaching with three propositions has been the typical and most popular form of preaching throughout the history of the Korean church (Oh 2008).<sup>18</sup> It is still a very

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<sup>17</sup> Jeong, J 2001. *한국 교회 예배 예전의 분석과 그 대안* (*The analysis of the Korean church's liturgy and the counterproposal*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.wpa.or.kr/academy\\_bbs/view.asp](http://www.wpa.or.kr/academy_bbs/view.asp) [23 July (2009)]

<sup>18</sup> Oh, H 2008. *한국적 상황에서의 주제설교* (*Topical preaching in the Korean context*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71826](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71826) [3 July (2009)]



pervasive style in Korean churches. The practice of foreign missionaries can be considered the main reason for the prevalence of topical preaching. Lee (2006)<sup>19</sup> explains the influence of the missionaries as follows:

The first church in Korea was established in 1883 ... It was in 1901 when Methodist church produced the first pastor, and it was in 1907 when the first Presbyterian pastor was produced in Korea. At this time, the Korean Presbyterian churches numbered 785 in total, baptised people amounted to about 18,000 and the total congregation, including unbaptised people, added up to about 72,000 people. The number of foreign missionaries was 49. In 1912, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian was organised for the first time. The number of Presbyterian churches was 2,000 or so, and the believers numbered 127,000. However, Korean Presbyterian pastors were 69 people and the foreign missionaries amounted to 77. Supposing that one pastor ministers to one church, the proportion of the church which a pastor ministers to was just 7 percent. Therefore, Most of the churches were under missionaries' care and the missionaries were taking care of many churches. The main preachers were the missionaries. Consequently, it is not going too far to say that the missionaries' viewpoint of preaching decided the form and content of preaching of the Korean preachers subsequent to them.

Joo also states, "The reason why lectionary has not taken root in Korea seems to be attributed to the missionaries who did topical preaching mostly. ... Topical preaching was the style that they taught to Korean students in seminary" (Bartlett *et al* 2008).<sup>20</sup> Topical preaching was a prevalent pattern of preaching in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries during which it was shaped by revivalism. The missionaries in Korea, who were mostly offsprings of the Revivals in the nineteenth century, naturally followed the fashion of preaching. The style of their preaching soon became the style of the Korean church.

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<sup>19</sup> Lee, S 2006. *한국교회에서의 설교, 그 역사와 평가* (*Preaching in the Korean church, its history and evaluation*). [Online]. Available: <http://blog.naver.com/kaikk/70009424737> [17 August (2009)]

<sup>20</sup> Bartlett, D, Joo, S, Kim, K & Choi, W 2008. *교회력과 성구집을 통한 설교* (*Preaching from the church year and lectionary*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=72238](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=72238) [30 June (2009)]

Underwood (1859-1916), Clark (1878-1961), Moffet (1864-1939), Baird (1862-1931) and Reynolds (?-1951) were influential missionaries in the early Christianity in Korea. *Shinhakchinam*, which is the first theological magazine founded in 1918 by the Presbyterian seminary, carried the sermons of the missionaries. It shows that they mostly did topical preaching. In addition to this, the magazine began to feature anecdotes and illustrations from the third volume because the preachers needed anecdotes and illustrations in order to support and strengthen the theme of the sermon (Jeong 1995:32). Besides, *원두우 강도취집* (*The collection of Underwood's sermons*), the first book of sermon collections, published in 1920, also affords us an insight into the missionaries' preaching (Lee 2006).

Korean preachers could not escape from the missionaries' sermons. They used to imitate the missionaries' preaching style. The leading preachers in those days were Seo, Kyeongjo (1852-1938); Han, Seokjin (1868-1939); Bang, Kichang (1851-1911); Yang, Jeonbaek (1870-1933); Kil, Seonju (1869-1935); Lee, Kipoong (1865-1942); Song, Linseo (?-1967) and Kim, Ikdoon (1874-1950). They were ordained as the Presbyterian pastors in 1907. Besides them, there were Jeon, Deokki (1875-1914); Choi, Byeonheon (1858-1927); Kim, Jongwoo (1883-1940) who were Methodist pastors. A resource of their sermons is *백묵강연* (*Baekmokkangyeon*) which is the first collection of Korean preachers' sermons published in 1920. Lee (2006), analysing the book, states that the themes of their sermons centered around one of the following five: invitation to salvation; transformation of life; God's judgement on evil; emphasis on otherworldliness; and emphasis on loyalty and patriotism. The sermons of the Korean preachers had a dual focus at the time: not only did they proclaim the saving gospel of Jesus, but also sought to rescue the country from the Japanese rule through the Christian faith.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, there was no room for lectionary to take root in Korean Presbyterian church during its

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<sup>21</sup> Japan occupied Korea at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1894 and 1895, Japan fought China for the rule of Korea, and fought with Russia in 1904 and 1905. Through the wars, Japan won the control of Korea virtually, and finally annexed Korea in 1910.

early history due to the influence of the foreign missionaries who mostly practiced topical preaching.

#### **4.1.2. The Nevius method's influence**

The Nevius method is a missionary policy that the missionaries in Korea adopted to direct their mission work. Although they came to Korea with passionate hearts, they had no experience of mission work. Because they did not know what to do, Underwood asked the Board of Foreign Mission (PCUSA: Presbyterian Church in U.S.A.) to send an experienced missionary to teach them a method of missionary work. Accepting the request, the Board sent John Nevius, a missionary in China. He visited Korea for two weeks in 1890 and lectured about the Nevius method, a missionary policy, to the missionaries. It can be summed up in three principles: self-support, self-government and self-evangelism. The Nevius method aimed at helping the evangelized people to be politically and financially independent. Bible study forms the foundation of the method. Nevius strongly emphasised Bible study as a source of the transformation of people (Park 2007).<sup>22</sup>

The Nevius method maximised the involvement of the indigenous people. Nevius believed that evangelism by the indigenous people would be much more effective than evangelism by the missionaries. His method allowed indigenous laity to lead worship services and offered some guidelines to help lay worship leaders because they were inexperienced in leading the worship service. Firstly, Nevius recommended that laity leaders read and interpret scriptures in worship rather than preach, acknowledging that they would have difficulty in preaching in a systematic and organised manner. That is to say, he encouraged teaching the Bible, not preaching. Secondly, he simplified the order of worship so that the laity could lead the worship services with ease. The order of worship is as follows: ① Hymn, ② Prayer, ③ Reading of scripture, ④ Hymn, ⑤ Bible teaching, ⑥ Prayer, ⑦ Offering and ⑧

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<sup>22</sup> Park, Y 2007. *네비우스 선교 정책의 채택 (Adoption of Nevius's Method)*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.1907revival.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=1122> [2 November (2009)]

Hymn. Thirdly, Nevius suggested a union service for worship leaders. In the meeting, the laity leaders were reeducated regularly. Fourthly, he proposed to run the Group Bible Study, an intensive course done during winter. In this course, the missionaries imparted some basic theological knowledge to laity leaders. Later on, it was developed into revival services, which used to be held for one week or two weeks intensively in winter (Kim 2003).<sup>23</sup>

The Nevius method had a huge impact on the Korean church's growth during the early stages of its (the church) development. However, as regards the aspect of liturgy, the researcher is of the opinion that the Nevius method caused the poor liturgy of the Korean church because it oversimplified the order of worship and ignored the sense of worship as a ritual. Furthermore, it promoted teaching the Bible rather than preaching in worship.

#### **4.1.3. The influence of Revival Movement**

The missionaries' background of faith has an impact on two Great Revivals of the Korean church in 1903 and 1907. Protestant missionaries helped Christianity to blossom in Korea. The first Protestant missionary entered Korea in 1884, and others from different denominations followed afterwards. Many of the missionaries were strongly influenced by the Moody Revival Movement. Moody's preaching inspired many young American students and many of them volunteered to be missionaries. As a result, the Student Volunteer Movement was established. J. Gale, S. Moffet, W. Blair, G. Lee, W. L. Swallen, C. F. Bernheisel and W. Hunt and others were all leading missionaries of the Great Revivals of the Korean church (Kim 2006; Park 2006).<sup>24</sup> The missionaries wished that the spiritual awakening they had experienced would take place in Korea too. Their message was mostly about winning souls. Byars (2008:384) explains the influence of the Great Awakening and

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<sup>23</sup> Kim, K 2003. *형성사를 통해 본 한국 교회의 예배* (*The Korean church's service reflected in the history of its formation*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.wpa.or.kr/academy\\_bbs/view.asp](http://www.wpa.or.kr/academy_bbs/view.asp) [7 September (2009)]

<sup>24</sup> Kim, N 2006. *한국교회 초기 선교사들의 신학과 신앙* (*Early missionaries in Korea, their theology and faith*). [Online]. Available: <http://www.ranews.co.kr/bbs/view.php?id=mission&no=1> [1 October (2009)]

Park, Y 2006. *무디 부흥운동의 시카고* (*Chicago, the origin of Moody's revival movement*). [Online]. Available: <http://www.1907revival.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=233> [2 October (2009)]

the Revival Movement on preaching in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as follows:

However, preaching based on a systematic approach to a broad spectrum of Scripture, whether by a *lectio continua* or *lectio selecta* method, soon gave way to an altogether different style shaped by revivalism both in Britain and in the United States. In the Great Awakening of the eighteenth century, preachers like George Whitefield and John Wesley based their sermons on "a short, freely chosen word of Scripture and this method subsequently became normal in all sermons in the English language." Nineteenth-century revivalism reinforced the practice. The pragmatic goal of making conversions drove the choice of texts.

At last, the Korean church's Revival occurred in 1903 and in 1907. The spiritual awakening occurred throughout the whole country and during the period from 1903 to 1907, the number of Christians increased four times.

The form of the Korean Protestant church's service surely has a relation with the Revivals (Kim 2003).<sup>25</sup> They contributed to the worship pattern of the Korean church whose notable feature is the individual and subjective experience of religion. The conversion of nonbelievers became the main purpose of the service. The focus of preaching was the repentance of non-Christians. The worship as evangelism became dominant while the sense of liturgy diminished. The Revivals made enormous contributions to the growth of the Korean church. However, we could say that it prevented the adoption of the liturgical heritage of the early church.

#### **4.1.4. Preaching in subsequent era**

From 1920 to 1945, variety and change occur in the churches of Korea. The Korean preachers' sermons during this period contained more variety compared to sermons from the preceding

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<sup>25</sup> Kim, S 2003. *한국교회를 위한 예배신학적 재고와 방향 (Reconsideration of the Korean church's liturgy and the direction of it)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.wpa.or.kr/academy\\_bbs/view.asp](http://www.wpa.or.kr/academy_bbs/view.asp) [9 September (2009)]

era. Theologically, it was the time when diverse theological ideologies – for example, liberal theology, mysticism and the nonchurch movement – appeared (Lee 2006).<sup>26</sup> Politically, a very meaningful event, the March First Movement took place on March 1, 1919.<sup>27</sup> The leading role played by Christians in the Movement and their suffering through it naturally won the respect of many Koreans. However, the nation was still far from independence. After the March First Movement, the oppression by Japan became far more brutal than before. This caused the Korean church to focus on otherworldliness in preaching after the Movement (Song 1976:200, 248-249).

The resources through which we can trace the sermons of the particular period are *조선의 강단 (Pulpit of Korea)*, *한국교회 순교사와 그 설교집 (The history of Korean martyrs and their sermons)* and *희년기념 목사 대 설교집 (The collection of sermons in commemoration of Jubilee)*. According to Lee (2006), three characteristics of the sermons are noticeable in the books: “Firstly, subjectivistic and mystical sermons appeared in those days. Secondly, otherworldly tendency was strong in them. The third is that nationalism lies in the sermons.” Judging from the sources, he goes on to say that from 1920 to 1945, the topic of sermons centered on otherworldliness or the independence of Korea.

Korea gained independence from Japan on August 15, 1945. After independence, the Korean church suffered from a conflict between those who rejected Shinto worship<sup>28</sup> and those who

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<sup>26</sup> Lee, S 2006. *한국교회에서의 설교, 그 역사와 평가 (Preaching in the Korean church, its history and evaluation)*. [Online]. Available: <http://blog.naver.com/kaikk/70009424737> [17 August (2009)]

<sup>27</sup> It was a nonviolent nationwide demonstration for the independence of Korea from Japanese rule. Although it ended in a failure, the church entered a period of growth after the Movement because many Christians participated in and led the Movement.

<sup>28</sup> Shintoism is Japan’s indigenous syncretistic religion that worships ‘*Kami*’, and forms the religious background of the Japanese people at large. The Japanese word ‘*Kami*’ indicates a deity, or a spiritual being. From ancient times, the Japanese worshipped *Kami* as represented by awesome natural phenomena, mythological figures, historical heroes, and the spirits of their ancestors. In 1918, Japan began to build a *Shinto* shrine in Seoul. This was completed in 1925. Shrines were then built in every town and every sub-county. The chauvinistic militarists who prevailed in Japan during the 1930s required Koreans to make shrine worship as an expression of their unconditional loyalty to the Japanese emperor (Kim 2004:35).

accepted it. In addition, a civil war between North and South Korea broke out in 1950. It was an ideological confrontation between the communistic North and capitalistic South. During these tribulation times, repentance and rebuilding of the Korean church were the focus of preaching. Sermons emphasised a recurrence of the spiritual awakening (Lee 2006).

Politically, the 1960s have a profound significance for Korea. Jeonghee Park, who was a military officer, seized power through a coup in 1961 and started a military dictatorship. He pursued economic growth as a primary aim of the country. The *zeitgeist* of this era can be summed up in one word, viz. 'growth'. The 'growth' ideology gave rise to materialism and supremacy of growth. This eventually resulted in a sacrifice of other virtues and values. The ideology of 'growth' soon became the Korean churches' sense of values (Jeong 2007).<sup>29</sup> Naturally, the sermons of the 1960s focused on the growth of the church and evalgelism. Evangelism is definitely a good thing, but the focal point was the self-centred growth of the individual churches rather than the growth of Kingdom of God. Moreover, material prosperity and material blessing were other main themes of preaching. Attaining one's desire or earthly security was misunderstood as the evidence of God's approval. Although this was the main trend, there was another stream of liberals in the Korean church who opposed the military regime. Human rights and democratization were main subjects of preaching in liberal camps. Thus, the contents of preaching were divided between conservative and liberal camps, but both of them equally did exemplary preaching in the main. Even though both were different in content or purpose of preaching, they adopted the same form of sermon. Conservative preachers exemplified the stories in the Bible in order to communicate God's blessing, and liberal preachers exemplified the Exodus in order to stress liberation and freedom (Lee 2006).<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Jeong, I 2007. *한국교회 마이너스 성장에 대한 원인분석과 대안* (*The analysis of the causes of the Korean Protestant church's decline*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=60122](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=60122) [7 July (2009)]

<sup>30</sup> Lee, S 2006. *한국교회에서의 설교, 그 역사와 평가* (*Preaching in the Korean church, its history and evaluation*). [Online]. Available: <http://blog.naver.com/kaikk/70009424737> [17 August (2009)]

In the early 1980s, the church in Korea experienced a meaningful change in the homiletical trend. It witnessed the introduction of redemptive historical preaching. Books and articles about redemptive historical preaching and expository preaching were translated and introduced to Korea. Homiletical interest grew and preaching began to be varied in Korean churches. In the former times, topical preaching and exemplary preaching shaped the main stream of preaching. Yet, expository preaching became another since the 1980s (Lee 2006). Although homiletical diversity arose during this decade, we can hardly find any evidence that the liturgical appreciation of preaching has increased. Despite the growth of the liturgical movement in the Western church since the Second Vatican Council, the church in Korea has not made significant progress in this regard. It must be said, however, that there have been efforts to encourage the use of the lectionary in some churches in Korea (Kang 1993).<sup>31</sup>

## Summary

An investigation into the history of preaching in the Korean church indicates that foreign missionaries exerted an immense influence on the church during the early stages of its development. Early Korean preachers learned from them and followed their preaching style. Their sermons centered on some topics and issues of the time and consisted of three propositions, which were a popular way of preaching in those days. This form became a tradition and preachers of successive generations inherited it.

The Nevius method is another factor that shaped the worship structure of the Korean church. It simplified the order of worship so that indigenous laity leaders could lead services with ease. Furthermore, the Nevius method recommended they teach the Bible rather than preach during worship.

The Great Revivals of 1903 and 1907 contributed to the structure of church services, too. The

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<sup>31</sup> Kang, Y 1993. *교회력을 따르는 예배* (Worship according to the church year). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=4448](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=4448) [14 July (2009)]



result of the Revivals, in the aspect of liturgy, was not very desirable although they contributed greatly to the growth of the Korean church. The focus of worship slanted toward conversion and repentance of nonbelievers, so the message of preaching also centered on an invitation to salvation. Consequently, the abundance of liturgy of Christian worship could not take root in the Korean church.

In the 1980s, homiletical concerns arose with the introduction of redemptive historical preaching and expository preaching. As a result, the form of preaching became diverse. However, we note that the lectionary has rarely been given attention during the history of the Korean church. Topical preaching, exemplary preaching and expository preaching are still the most popular sermon forms in the Korean context.

## **4.2. The analysis of the current preaching ministry**

Thus far, the researcher focused on the historical reason of unemployment of lectionary in the Korean Presbyterian context. In this section, the current problems of the preaching ministry in Korean Presbyterian churches will be examined.

### **4.2.1. Arbitrary choice of the texts**

The first problem comes from preachers' arbitrary choice of sermon texts. A good many of the Korean Presbyterian preachers are still choosing their sermon texts in an arbitrary manner week by week (Oh 2008).<sup>32</sup> Because of this, they spend too much time in the early stage of sermon preparation. They spend a few days per week in selecting a topic for the sermon. As a result, the preparation for preaching is hurried and done poorly.

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<sup>32</sup> He exemplifies his analysis of *한국설교대전집* (*The grand collection of the Korean preachers' sermons*) which is a collection of representative preachers' sermons for the last 100 years. Topical preaching amounts to 78% of them, he said.

Oh, H 2008. *한국적 상황에서의 주제설교* (*Topical preaching in the Korean context*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71826](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71826) [3 July (2009)]

Moreover, the arbitrary selection of sermon texts easily leads preachers to do topical preaching. Topical preaching has its strengths as well as weaknesses. It has the flexibility of meeting the needs of the congregation or a particular situation. In case of an important issue or event occurring in the congregation or society, topical preaching can be demanded. However, one of the weaknesses of topical preaching is that the preacher might approach a text with a preconceived topic or theme to find verses, which can support his or her topic (cf. Byars 2008:384; Jeong 2007,<sup>33</sup> Lee 2006,<sup>34</sup> Sloyan 1984:25; West 2000:291; Willimon 2001:340). “Scripture texts often became a springboard for diving into the preacher's subject, rather than one of the instruments through which God addresses a worshiping community” (Anderson 1986:65). Oh (2008) explains this weakness as follows:

A problem of topical preaching is that it might lapse into non-biblical preaching. ... preachers are prone to deal with their personal miscellanies, their political disposition or the news of the day. Rather than to give a biblical answer to congregation's matter and suffering, they give psychological and sociological answer or moralistic instructions.

In addition, topical preaching might pervert the original meaning of text. This is because a preacher does not take into consideration the context of a passage so that they try to relate their preoccupied topic to the text, using it as a pretext.

Topical preaching is liable to make the preacher find supporting scriptures rather than draw an idea for the sermon from the scriptures. The scriptures might be pushed to the side and the “idea” might grow into a sermon, with the text as a pretext. It sometimes has little to do with the original meaning of the text in the context, or may impose upon the text a theme strange to it (Achtmeier 1981:23). It is contrary to the principle of biblical preaching because it might result in a distortion of the scriptures when we interpret the scriptures through a prism

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<sup>33</sup> Jeong, J 2007. *설교 잘하는 방법: 본문설교의 장점과 주의점 (How to preach well: the strengths and weaknesses of textual preaching)*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=183241> [15 July (2009)]

<sup>34</sup> Lee, S 2006. *한국교회에서의 설교, 그 역사와 평가 (Preaching in the Korean church, its history and evaluation)*. [Online]. Available: <http://blog.naver.com/kaikk/70009424737> [17 August (2009)]

of the preacher's advance intention. Tipton (2007:214) describes the inadequacy of the topic controlling the text as follows:

For many ministers who choose not to use any formal lectionary, the reason to choose a text may have something to do with the situation of the congregation, the world, or the current sermon series. These reasons appear to make sense, but one could argue that the situation is determining the text rather than the text determining the sermon. Too many sermons fail because the text only serves to illustrate the three points of the sermon or a good story. Ideally, the minister should be reading the text and from that experience ideas, insights, and inspiration should arise that speak to the minister and congregation alike.

This is a widespread problem among Korean preachers who practice topical preaching. They are hardly faithful to the text in its context. The text often succumbs to the pretext of their topic.

#### 4.2.2. Preponderance of some specific texts

The second problem is that some books and scriptures are dealt with frequently while other texts are never preached on throughout the whole year. Especially, the preponderance of New Testament texts is striking (cf. Kim *et al* 2007,<sup>35</sup> Jeong 2007,<sup>36</sup> Jeong 2007,<sup>37</sup> Park 2003<sup>38</sup>). This is not only the case in Korea, but also in other countries. The preponderance of specific texts is a general phenomenon among preachers who ignore the lectionary system and prefer

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<sup>35</sup> Kim, W, Ryu, E, Lee, S & Ji, Y 2007. *설교 사역의 진단과 개선 방안 (Examination of preaching ministry and its remedies)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=61825](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=61825) [14 July (2009)]

<sup>36</sup> Jeong, I 2007. *설교의 위기를 극복하는 설교 리모델링 (Remodeling of sermon overcoming the crisis of preaching)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=61726](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=61726) [3 July (2009)]

<sup>37</sup> Jeong, J 2007. *설교 잘하는 방법: 본문설교의 장점과 주의점 (How to preach well: the strengths and weaknesses of textual preaching)*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=183241> [15 July (2009)]

<sup>38</sup> Park, S 2003. *한국교회 목회자들의 설교에 관한 의식연구 (A survey about the Korean Protestant ministers' awareness of preaching)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=11207](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=11207) [29 June (2009)]

to choose sermon texts in an arbitrary and instant way. This imbalance of sermon texts occurs not only between the Old and New Testament, but between books of the New Testament as well. Preachers preach on texts and books familiar to them. They “avoid texts or themes that were uncomfortable, difficult, or embarrassing or that did not serve an immediate goal.” (Byars 2008:384)

Moreover, the selection of sermon texts could be affected and biased by the preacher’s theological or dogmatical inclination. For example, a preacher who has an Arminianistic disposition might exclude the scriptures, which imply justification by faith, while a preacher who strongly believes in the doctrine of justification by faith might avoid preaching on the texts that emphasise the responsibility and deeds of human being.

Therefore, preachers who do not have a certain balanced system for selecting sermon texts are prone to preach only on texts they prefer. However, the Western Protestant denominations saw in the three-year lectionary a solution to this problem. It offered a large and varied selection of biblical texts. The following is the observation of Westerhoff III and Willimon (1980:59-60):

Churches that fail to order their preaching and prayer along the lines of the traditional calendar and the lectionary invariably find it more difficult to give adequate treatment to Scripture and to express and enact the full Gospel in their worship. Much Protestant preaching and worship suffer from this paucity of themes.

Too many free church Protestants say they honor Scripture but then fail to read from significant portions of Scripture in worship. The Epistles are haphazardly read; the Old Testament is completely overlooked. Too often, when Scripture is read, it comes from the pastor’s own favorite texts. The lectionary is a corrective to this neglect of Scripture. ... The three-year ecumenical lectionaries give us a wonderful opportunity to restore the Word of God to the people’s worship of God.

### 4.2.3. Misappropriation of the importance of the church calendar

White (1981:46) explicated the importance of time as follows: “The church shows what is most important to its life by the way it keeps time. Here again the use of time reveals priorities of faith and practice.” As a means of nonverbal communication, the church calendar transmits the church’s faith. The third problem of the Korean Presbyterian church is its failure to notice this important role the church calendar has (cf. Kang 1993; Jeong 2001; Joo 1999).<sup>39</sup>

Most of the Korean Presbyterian denominations except two – Tonghap and Kijang – observe a church calendar that is different from the traditional one. The feasts, which they celebrate, are Christmas, New Year’s Day, the Holy Week, Easter, Children’s Day, Parents’ Day and Thanksgiving Day. While the traditional church calendar is integrated into a Christological perspective for doxological purpose so that it offers the effect of faith formation, the Korean church’s calendar is fragmentary and disconnected, not conveying a coherent theme. Compared with the ecumenical church year, the church year that most of the Korean Presbyterian churches are observing has the following problems:

Firstly, their observance of the Christmas cycle is limited to Christmas, ignoring Advent and Epiphany. Advent is the season of anticipation in which we wait and hope for the second coming of Jesus in an eschatological perspective and remind ourselves of the meaning of Jesus’ first coming (O’day 2008:357). The Korean Presbyterian church, however, do not pay attention to season of Advent. Besides, they ignore Epiphany.

Secondly, not enough attention is devoted to Lent and Pentecost, as part of the Easter cycle.

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<sup>39</sup> Kang, Y 1993. *교회력을 따르는 예배* (*Worship according to the church year*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=4448](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=4448) [14 July (2009)]

Jeong, J 2001. *한국 교회 예배 예전의 분석과 그 대안* (*The analysis of the Korean church’s liturgy and the counterproposal*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.wpa.or.kr/academy\\_bbs/view.asp](http://www.wpa.or.kr/academy_bbs/view.asp) [23 July (2009)]

Joo, S 1999. *핍박이 없어도 고난은 있습니다* (*There is no persecution, but still there are afflictions*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=5421](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=5421) [14 July (2009)]

Lent is the season of preparation. Originally, it began as the period for catechumen to prepare for the baptism carried out at Easter. The sense of preparing for Easter was added during the Constantinian era (Joo 1999).<sup>40</sup> Pentecost is also a meaningful season for the church. It celebrates the birth of the church and sending of the Holy Spirit to us believers. However, the Korean church calendar has ignored the significance of these seasons.

Thirdly, some of the new observances, filling this gap in the calendar, interrupt the Christological cycle of the traditional church year. New Year's Day celebrates the change of natural calendar. Children's Day and Parents' Day honour particular groups of people. Thanksgiving Day, although it has religious overtones, is alien to the Korean context.<sup>41</sup> Lastly, the Korean Presbyterian church has a strong tendency to regard the Lord's Day as a Sabbath with bans on labour and pleasure rather than as a celebration of the risen Christ.

The Korean Presbyterian churches are failing to appreciate the precious values the church year has. Many of them misunderstand this important liturgy by saying that it belongs to the Roman Catholic only (Joo 1999). The Reformers' abandonment, except Luther, of the lectionary contributed to the current situation (Kang 1993;<sup>42</sup> Byars 2008:383). White (1981:62-63) asserted emphatically that we need to recover the traditional church year and criticised the interruption of the calendar by a humanistic focus:

All these aspects of the modern *de facto* calendar betray one great difference from that of the early church. *Our de facto calendar stresses human agency; that of the early church centered upon what God had done and continues to do through the*

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<sup>40</sup> Joo, S 1999. *핍박이 없어도 고난은 있습니다* (There is no persecution, but still there are afflictions). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=5421](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=5421) [14 July (2009)]

<sup>41</sup> Thanksgiving Day was introduced to the Korean church by foreign missionaries. They were mostly from U.S.A. For this reason, the date of Thanksgiving Day falls in early winter, November. This has a temporal gap from the Korean traditional season of thanksgiving *Chooseok*, which usually falls in autumn, September or early October.

<sup>42</sup> Kang, Y 1993. *교회력을 따르는 예배* (Worship according to the church year). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=4448](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=4448) [14 July (2009)]

*Holy Spirit.* Our keeping of time has a strongly humanistic tint. ... Throughout the year, the various seasons and days remind us that salvation is a gift offered to us in all its different aspects. Humanizing the year by making it a recital of our own activities misses the point altogether. ... Recovery of the church year can help us determine our real priorities. Keeping time with the rhythms of the early church can be a source of renewal for us today in sorting out our own priorities. In briefest terms, the church's year of grace functions to show forth Jesus Christ until he comes again and to testify to god the Holy Spirit indwelling the church in the meantime.

Suffice it to say that his criticism also applies to the Korean context.

#### **4.2.4. The overload of preaching ministry**

The fourth problem is the fact that the Korean Presbyterian pastors have to preach a lot (Kim 2008; Lee 2006; Park 2003).<sup>43</sup> This is a hindrance to the betterment of their preaching. The frequency of Korean pastors' preaching is thirteen times a week on average as mentioned in the introduction of this research. It is one of the major reasons for the deteriorating quality of their preaching. Korean preachers cannot wait until a sermon becomes mature enough because they have to preach many times a week. In addition, they have to perform many other tasks as well: home-visiting, leading Bible study, preparing church events and administrative work. Supposing that they spend a few days in selecting a sermon text in such a situation, it would be no wonder that their preaching becomes poor. On that account, online sites, which supply preachers with ready-made sermons, are prevalent. Preachers can download an instant sermon from the internet when they need one.

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<sup>43</sup> Kim, K 2008. *성구집의 한국적 적용을 위한 제언 (Suggestion for application of lectionary to Korea)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71818](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71818) [3 July (2009)]

Lee, S 2006. *한국교회에서의 설교, 그 역사와 평가 (Preaching in the Korean church, its history and evaluation)*. [Online]. Available: <http://blog.naver.com/kaikk/70009424737> [17 August (2009)]

Park, S 2003. *한국교회 목회자들의 설교에 관한 의식연구 (A survey about the Korean Protestant ministers' awareness of preaching)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=11207](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=11207) [29 June (2009)]

Therefore, Korean preachers, who bear the heavy burden of frequent preaching, need to utilize the lectionary. It reduces the time they (preachers) spend choosing sermon texts. In addition, it can be used for early morning services and weekday services, and it can be applied to the Bible study material or catechism. The lectionary can be an integrated and pastoral instrument to the busy pastors in Korea.

#### 4.2.5. An overemphasis on preaching

The fifth problem is that preaching is considered an overriding order of worship (cf. Kang 1993;<sup>44</sup> Kim 2007;<sup>45</sup> Kim 2004:12; Kim *et al* 2007;<sup>46</sup> Jeong 2007<sup>47</sup>). This causes practical problems for both the preacher and the congregation in the Korean church.

Preachers are often under huge pressure because they must impress the people. As a result, they have the propensity to preach a great sermon each Sunday. They might strive to be a pyrotechnical orator rather than a worshipper. They possibly forget the fact that we are not called to be great but to be faithful. The worship service can be dependent not on God's grace and favor, but on the preacher's personality or tact in speech. Moreover, it deprives the congregation of active participation in worship. They just become onlookers, not active worshippers. They are asked to 'just sit and listen'.

Preaching is often regarded as the worship itself in the Korean context. The success of worship pivots on the success of preaching. Korean pastors and congregations frequently

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<sup>44</sup> Kang, Y 1993. *교회력을 따르는 예배* (*Worship according to the church year*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=4448](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=4448) [14 July (2009)]

<sup>45</sup> Kim, W 2007. *설교에 대한 신학적 숙고* (*Theological consideration on preaching*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=61574](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=61574) [3 July (2009)]

<sup>46</sup> Kim, W, Ryu, E, Lee, S & Ji, Y 2007. *설교 사역의 진단과 개선 방안* (*Examination of preaching ministry and its remedies*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=61825](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=61825) [14 July (2009)]

<sup>47</sup> Jeong, I 2007. *설교의 위기를 극복하는 설교 리모델링* (*Remodeling of sermon overcoming the crisis of preaching*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=61726](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=61726) [3 July (2009)]



identify preaching with worship itself. However, Anderson (1986:66) states that “sterility emerges in worship when everything is word-oriented and instrumental to preaching the sermon.” While sermon-oriented services have lasted over 100 years, Korean Presbyterian churches lost the liturgical sense. They have lost concrete actions and rituals for worship and their liturgical form became completely poor. Preaching came to rule over the Korean Presbyterian worship and other parts of worship became accessories for preaching (Jeong 2001).<sup>48</sup>

Besides this, an overemphasis on preaching disturbs the balance between Word and Sacrament (Park 2008).<sup>49</sup> Historically, the Protestant Reformers emphasised the centrality of preaching in worship. Sola Scriptura was their motto objecting to the Roman Catholic service, which was extremely inclined to the Eucharist but the pendulum has swung to the other end afterwards. Many of the Korean Presbyterian churches perform the Eucharist twice a year, usually on Easter Sunday and Thanksgiving Day, which is not enough for them to enjoy the abundance of communion with Christ. Though the restoration of the balance between Word and Sacrament has become an ecumenical trend since the liturgical movement arose in the twentieth century, the Korean church is still far from the balance between Word and Sacrament. The rare cases of Eucharist in Korean Presbyterian churches prove that their services are highly sermon-oriented. However, preaching is an activity that is performed in the context of service. It should be understood in the context of worship and as a part of worship.

#### **4.2.6. Lack of coherence of worship**

A lack of consistency among the parts of worship is another problem of the Korean Presbyterian church (Joo 1997:278). This is caused by the lack of a long-term plan for

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<sup>48</sup> Jeong, J 2001. *한국 교회 예배 예전의 분석과 그 대안* (*The analysis of the Korean church's liturgy and the counterproposal*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.wpa.or.kr/academy\\_bbs/view.asp](http://www.wpa.or.kr/academy_bbs/view.asp) [23 July (2009)]

<sup>49</sup> Park, J 2008. *몸, 감성, 그리고 새로운 예배: 새로운 예배의 필요성에 대하여* (*Body, sensitivity and new liturgy: about the necessity of a new worship*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=69126](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=69126) [29 June (2009)]

preaching. Because the text for a sermon is not decided on in advance, the parts of a service such as prayer, hymns and chorale are not integrated to one message. If each component – songs, prayers, preaching, etc – is integrated in the same theme of the Sunday, a powerful message will be transmitted to the congregation (Park 2006).<sup>50</sup> The use of a lectionary can be the first step to such an integrated worship because it enables the worship leaders of each part of the service to prepare it in advance by providing them with the long-term plan of preaching. The lectionary brings coherency to worship because it offers not only the advance plan of the sermon but a unifying theme as well, which is the redemptive work of Jesus.

#### 4.2.7. The individualism of churches

The last problem, namely the individualism of the churches, is probably the biggest obstruction to the development of the Korean Presbyterian church (cf. Kim 2008).<sup>51</sup> The Korean Presbyterian churches have a propensity pursuing the self-interest and self-centredness rather than considering a church as a branch of the whole body of Christ. This independent mentality has originated in the ideology of “growth” from 1970s. The ideology of “growth” together with secularization, mega-church-orientedness, and materialism has incited the individualism and division of the Korean church (Cho 2008; Yang 2003).<sup>52</sup>

The spread of individualism indicates that a sound and healthy ecclesiology is absent from the church in Korea. Churches compete with one another rather than cooperate in missionary work or evangelising ministries. This leads to inefficiency of the ministries (Lee 2009).<sup>53</sup> In

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<sup>50</sup> Park, H 2006. *현대 예배의 극복 과제* (*The difficulties of modern worship to be overcome*). [Online]. Available: <http://www.kmctimes.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=19791> [2 November (2009)]

<sup>51</sup> Kim, B 2008. *한국 교회의 사회적 신뢰도는 C-* (*The Korean church's social trust level is C-*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71827](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71827) [7 July (2009)]

<sup>52</sup> Cho, I 2008. *한국 교회, 과연 어디로 가야 하는가?* (*The Korean church, what should they head for?*). [Online]. Available: <http://www.christianitydaily.com/oc/view.htm?id=190118> [9 October (2009)]

Yang, B 2003. *개교회주의, 교회론 부재의 산물* (*Independency of churches, a product of lack of ecclesiology*). [Online]. Available: <http://www.newsjoy.co.kr/news/quickViewArticleView.html?idxno=5678> [22 July (2009)]

<sup>53</sup> Lee, D 2009. *북한선교, 먼저 개교회주의 넘어야* (*Mission to North Korea: overcoming independency of*

the domestic context, these excessive competitions result in the collapse of small churches. Moreover, the self-centred individualism of churches has a negative impact on Christians' awareness about their responsibility towards the society. It is questionable whether the churches that focus on their own growth and interests can be involved in practicing sacrificing love for others, something which Jesus did and commanded us to do. Such a church might neglect its responsibility towards society. Eventually, non-Christians might have negative perceptions towards Christians and the church (Noh 1992;<sup>54</sup> cf. Cho 2008; Jeong 2003<sup>55</sup>).

Therefore, overcoming individualism is a pressing issue for the Korean Presbyterian church. The lectionary can be an important instrument in this regard because of its ecumenical effect. The employment of the *Revised Common Lectionary*, which is the lectionary being used universally, can convince the individual churches that they form part of the catholic and universal church. Churches can remember the unity of the body of Christ through the fact that the same word of God is proclaimed on the same Sunday. Moreover, the lectionary makes it possible for preachers from different denominations to join a group for study and preparation for preaching. It opens a channel of conversation and a path of cooperation among denominations.

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*churches should be done first*). [Online]. Available: <http://www.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=199859> [22 July (2009)]

<sup>54</sup> Noh, C 1992. *교회의 재정과 사회봉사* (*The Korean Church's use of finances and social service*). <http://blog.naver.com/inyouwithyou/10046657306> [9 October (2009)]

<sup>55</sup> Jeong, J 2003. *개교회주의 - '내 교회' 넘어선 '우리의 교회'로* (*Individualism of the church - getting over 'my church' to 'our church'*). [Online]. Available: <http://www.kidok.com/news/quickViewArticleView.html?idxno=11653> [9 October (2009)]

## 5. Strengths and weaknesses of lectionary preaching

In chapter 4, the researcher researched the reason why the lectionary has not been adopted in the Korean Presbyterian context and diagnosed the problems it has in the perspective of lectionary preaching. In this chapter, he will articulate the strengths of a lectionary, which he has proposed as a criterion of analysis and contemplate how they can contribute to solve the problems of the Korean Presbyterian church. Furthermore, he will explore the limitations of the lectionary.

### 5.1. Strengths of the lectionary preaching

#### 5.1.1. Biblical mentality

The first strength of a lectionary is that it assures the biblical mentality (cf. Kim 2008;<sup>56</sup> Huh 2008;<sup>57</sup> Joo 2005;<sup>58</sup> Sleeth 1986:107; Tipton 2007:233; Watkins 1979:123-124). A lectionary prevents preachers from imposing their preconceived ideas onto the text or from searching for a text to support their predetermined topics. Preachers should draw an idea for preaching from the text itself because the text for a sermon is already given. Compare Bantz' assertion (1993:225) in this regard:

Using the RCL [*Revised Common Lectionary*] as the selector for the pericopes to be used in worship and for exposition changes the style of biblical preaching. The sermon is given birth by the study of the text, rather than the text being studied with a particular topic or subject matter in mind that has already been chosen even before the texts have been studied. This latter method does not ignore the Scripture but uses

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<sup>56</sup> Kim, K 2008. *성구집의 한국적 적용을 위한 제언 (Suggestion for application of lectionary to Korea)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71818](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71818) [3 July (2009)]

<sup>57</sup> Huh, J 2008. *신앙의 중심을 회복시키는 교회력과 성구집 (The church year and lectionary restoring faith)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=72237](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=72237) [3 July (2009)]

<sup>58</sup> Joo, S 2005. *설교를 위한 간단한 주석방법 (An exposition method for preaching)*. [Online]. Available: <http://blog.naver.com/taekhan2/120011971358> [16 July (2009)]

it to support the ideas as contrasted to letting the Bible offer the ideas. The topic sets the agenda and guides the choice of the lessons and the use of the Bible. It is not the Bible, but the lessons which give rise to the topic. The use of the RCL encourages the preacher to confront the text without prior notions of what ought to be its message.

While topical preaching has the tendency to use texts, which express the preacher's preconceived ideas rather than what the text wants to say, lectionary preaching makes preachers listen to the texts first. The preacher with the lessons at hand every week makes a natural progression to the sermon issuing from those texts. Before deciding on topic for the sermon, the preacher engages with the texts, reads them over time after time, and becomes immersed in the week's readings (Sleeth 1986:40).

The use of a lectionary makes a meaningful contribution to the recovery of the centrality of the Bible. The use of a lectionary in preaching reemphasised the Bible as a source, as Lowry (1992:33-35) explains:

Unlike the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Episcopal, and even Lutheran traditions which have understood the Service of the Table as the central liturgical focus, middle Protestantism has focused on the Service of the Word, presumably centered on the Bible. But given the rise of biblical higher criticism in the nineteenth century, it could no longer thump the pulpit with biblical prooftexts ... Its growing dis-ease with difficult to understand and, perhaps to some, embarrassing passages resulted in the Bible's removal to the side of the podium for the sake of the newer focus of topical address. Biblical expository preaching got replaced with thematic life-situation sermons which had a biblical text to be sure, but often not a generative one which could serve as the core of the sermon. The core of the sermon more likely was a salient idea, a relevant theme - like love, or stewardship, or service. The Bible became a resource, and the preacher could pick a brief text with care (one that didn't have any problem features like fishes swallowing people).

... The notion of the Bible as *source* ... became the property of the "unenlightened" right wing of Protestantism. ... Though certainly not in theory, yet in practice the Bible increasingly became peripheral.

But the emergence of lectionary use in preaching now signals a new direction in the

life of the church. ... the very fact that the lections are given, not chosen, is a powerful symbol that the church is something other than a voluntary association of like-minded people. ... The cycle of the Christian year and the “givens” of the lectionary in worship signal the community as other than some kind of private entrepreneurship. And the Bible is recognized as the centerpiece of the covenant community. ...

In short, lectionary use bespeaks a new centering, a new mentality in the life of the church - and the Bible is at the core, not as *resource* but as *source*.

Surely, the lectionary can help the church put the Bible in the center of its existence. The symbolic meaning of the scriptures being “given”, not “chosen” can encourage preachers to be controlled by the Word and not the other way around.

### 5.1.2. Expanding the scope

Many scholars refer to the expansion of the range of sermon texts as another merit of lectionary (cf. Bartlett 2008;<sup>59</sup> Charles 2006:15; Holeyton 2006:239; Huh 2008;<sup>60</sup> Kim 2008;<sup>61</sup> Oh 2008<sup>62</sup>). According to Hickman *et al* (1993:43):

It [the lectionary] provides the best means for the Christian community to recall systematically its corporate memories. ... Without a lectionary or a program of continuous reading, a congregation is likely to be subjected to a patchwork of the pastor’s favorite passages and thereby restricted to the narrow measure of one person’s grasp of the gospel. The lectionary can free a congregation from the limits of the pastor’s private canon of Scripture and give a much whole, balanced presentation of the whole story and teachings of the Bible.

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<sup>59</sup> Bartlett, D 2008. *성구집에 따른 설교 (Preaching from the lectionary)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71822](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71822) [3 July (2009)]

<sup>60</sup> Huh, J 2008. *신앙의 중심을 회복시키는 교회력과 성구집 (The church year and lectionary restoring faith)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=72237](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=72237) [3 July (2009)]

<sup>61</sup> Kim, K 2008. *성구집의 한국적 적용을 위한 제언 (Suggestion for application of lectionary to Korea)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71818](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71818) [3 July (2009)]

<sup>62</sup> Oh, H 2008. *한국적 상황에서의 주제설교 (Topical preaching in the Korean context)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71826](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71826) [3 July (2009)]

The lectionary makes possible a wider use of different passages than a free choice of texts allows. Though it is true that some preachers object to the lectionary because it seems to limit one's message or restrict the freedom of the preachers, empirical evidence show that their objection is completely opposite to reality. Allen (1992:240) mentions that "pastors who switch from randomly choosing a text week by week to following a lectionary usually report two things: (1) the lectionary vastly broadens their range of preaching texts, and (2) the lectionary encourages them to wrestle in a positive way with difficult texts which they would otherwise avoid." Preaching from the lectionary does not limit one's messages, or narrow one's range of sermon texts. Rather, preachers following a lectionary will find freedom and variety in their sermons. Those who do not follow a lectionary and choose texts randomly usually have pet themes or hobby horses that dominate their preaching (Bantz 1993:226). The lectionary disciplines preachers to engage with the difficult texts and prevents them from preaching only from their favourite texts. The lectionary forces preachers to look at the sections of Scripture and themes that have been neglected and overlooked. The issues that are not discussed will be brought to the fore, and preachers will find that their sermons have more variety than previously. They cannot help dealing with the given texts from various books in the Bible, even if some of them are difficult to interpret.

Lectons sometimes challenge our viewpoint. Dealing with such texts is an opportunity for growth both for the preacher and for the congregation (Carl III 1981:15; Hultgren 2004:444). The temptation, which most preachers face, is to take up texts that are familiar or consistent with their theological and social preferences. However, the lectionary prevents preachers from this bias. Preachers must struggle with the passages, which might not be in agreement with their preconceived ideas and thoughts. At first, these passages might not seem to say anything to us, but through wrestling and struggling with them, preachers grow the most.

### **5.1.3. An ecumenical effect**

The third advantage of the lectionary is its ecumenical effect (cf. Anderson 1986:66; Bartlett

2008;<sup>63</sup> Buttrick 2002:53; Carl III 1981:15; Charles 2006:15; Huh 2008;<sup>64</sup> Sloyan 1984:26; Tipton 2007:235; Watkins 1979:125; Willimon 2001:334). Today, with a common lectionary of a commonly agreed Christian year, the various Protestant denominations and the Roman Catholic churches are using the same lessons in worship. These Christians are discovering a unity in their worship as they interrelate and share the Word. This is an ecumenical event that breaks down the barriers between them. Holeton (2006:239) explains this as follows:

One effect of the RCL is that it has helped the churches to reclaim the Scriptures as a common possession and to understand their systematic proclamation and study is the common work of the whole Church. The appearance of the RCL has engaged a commitment from many churches around the world to proclaim the same Scriptures on a regular basis each Lord's Day. This solidarity in the proclamation of the word is not an insignificant matter and is a source of tangible unity among churches.

On any Sunday, literally a great many Christian worshippers are reading and listening to the same texts at the same time. Lowry (1992:31-32) refers to this as “an ecclesiological symbol.” Taking part in the common lectionary is a powerful symbol of the churches’ unity. Today, individualism is the chief cause of the churches’ division. It is the *zeitgeist* of this age. Self-centred interest is destroying the churches’ unity and reliability. However, lectionary provides ‘community mind’. It brings a communal experience to local churches by allowing believers to participate in the universal Christian practice of following the journey of our Lord through the Christian year (Webber 2002:169). Compare the remark of Allen (1992:240-241) in this regard:

The Christian year and the lectionary are apropos for our time. Much of current U.S. culture is individualistic, narcissistic, and even self-worshipful. The current liturgical renewal seeks to replace these destructive tendencies with a vision of life

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<sup>63</sup> Bartlett, D 2008. *성구집에 따른 설교 (Preaching from the lectionary)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71822](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71822) [3 July (2009)]

<sup>64</sup> Huh, J 2008. *신앙의 중심을 회복시키는 교회력과 성구집 (The church year and lectionary restoring faith)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=72237](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=72237) [3 July (2009)]



which is communal and is centered in a transcendent God. J. Irwin Trotter concisely says that “behind this lectionary lies an ecclesiology that is communal, organic, sacramental.”

The lectionary could be a remedy for the Korean Presbyterian church’s independent mentality. It reminds the church of the fact that it is the communal organ of Christ. The proclamation of the same lessons every Sunday would remind the local churches in Korea that they are sharing the same Word of God with the church of the world. The inter-demoninational dialogue in a lectionary study group would also accelerate cooperation in various fields of ministry among different people and different theological traditions. In addition, the ‘community mind’ stirred by the use of the lectionary awakes Christians to another truth that they are also part of this world. They have a responsibility to the world, not only the world society, but the nature as well. The lectionary would encourage us to think how to act in order to help the people in need around us. The use of the lectionary joins people together in one community. It helps them to transcend self-interest and individualism.

#### **5.1.4. The liturgical understanding of preaching in worship**

Another significant point of the lectionary is that it helps us to understand preaching in relation to liturgy (cf. Bonneau 1996:58; Bosch 1977:7; Ryu 2007;<sup>65</sup> Vasey *et al* 1997:9-10). Preaching is liturgical because it takes place in a context of worship (Sloyan 1996:228). However, regrettably, “separation between preaching and worship has been manifested in some of the Protestant traditions where the sermon was the entire focus and the worship around it was either considered opening exercises or designed merely to enhance the sermon (Sleeth 1986:103).” Preaching and worship must not be divided because preaching is part of a larger ritual experience of a faith community. A lectionary leads the preaching to the harmonious position of worship because it sets the worship context as a premise. Preaching should be understood in light of worship. It might be an important component of worship, but

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<sup>65</sup> Ryu, E 2007. *한국교회 설교비평의 분석과 평가 그리고 제언 (Analysis and evaluation of sermon criticism in the Korean church and the suggestions for it)*. [Online]. Available: <http://dabia.net/xe/9694> [9 September (2009)]

it should not rule the worship itself for worship is bigger than the preaching.

Furthermore, the lectionary helps to restore the balance between preaching and the Eucharist. As stated in the previous chapter, a conspicuous problem of the Korean Presbyterian churches' worship is the infrequent practice of the Eucharist. This is an indication that their services are highly sermon-biased. However, the lectionary can be a therapy for this imbalance because it is based on liturgical principles and purposes. The lectionary is designed for liturgical preaching which is welding and integrating Word and Table as one measure of worship through which the presence of God is experienced (Huh 2008).<sup>66</sup> It has "as its purpose putting worshipers in a frame of mind to partake fully in the prayer of the table that is to follow" (Sloyan 1997:390).

Liturgical preaching is as old as the Church itself. According to Coyle, a liturgical understanding of preaching is a distinct characteristic of the early history of the Church. He states that one of the homiletical principles that Augustine established in his book, *Christian Doctrine*, is the liturgical context of preaching: "The homily is proclaimed within the liturgy, is inspired by the Scriptural readings of the liturgy, and explains the same mystery of Christ's saving work that the liturgy celebrates." (Coyle 2006:4)

However, both the Protestant and the Roman Catholic traditions have not sustained the integral connection between preaching and liturgy very well. In the older Roman Catholic tradition, the reading and preaching of scriptures were regarded as an introduction to receiving the body and blood of Christ, namely the essence of Mass. In the Protestant tradition, preaching was the kernel and the most important facet of the service. Other elements like prayers, hymns, anthems, and lessons were just scenery, preparing the congregation for the sermon. In contrast to the Roman Catholic, the Protestant worship

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<sup>66</sup> Huh, J 2008. *이방인을 위하여 경계선과 산을 넘는 아름다운 설교 (A beautiful preaching getting over border and mountains for aliens' sake)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/gms\\_detail.asp?cts\\_id=68291](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/gms_detail.asp?cts_id=68291) [16 October (2009)]

trimmed the liturgy down to the level of introduction (Skudlarek 1981:65-66).

Meanwhile, the Second Vatican Council took steps to restore the interrelationship between preaching and sacrament. The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* speaks of preaching as an integral part of the liturgy itself.<sup>67</sup> According to Organ (2006:12), “The proclamation of the word in Scripture and preaching was acknowledged as the real presence of Jesus Christ in the community, just as the Eucharist is (albeit in different ways).” The unification of Word and Sacrament is one of the emphases of the Second Vatican Council.

Thus, Word and Eucharist are equal components of worship in which God is present. The Word of God is audible by preaching and visible by Eucharist. They are integral parts of the whole worship through which God’s self-giving love is celebrated and experienced.

Although the situation in Protestant communities has changed considerably since the Second Vatican Council, remnants of the old tradition remain. Especially, many Korean Presbyterian churches continue to regard the Eucharist not as the normal form of worship for the weekly gathering of Christians, but as a half-yearly or quarterly appendage to a preaching service. This sermon-biased worship causes deleterious problems. Clark (2001:25) claims that a division of preaching and Eucharist undermines the meaning of both. In addition, Fuller (1957:10-13) asserts that some problematic phenomenons occur when preaching is considered by itself and divorced from the liturgical context. He explains this as follows:

When the sermon is divorced from its proper context in the liturgical action, preaching degenerates in one or other of three directions. It becomes intellectualism, moralism or emotionalism. ... In the intellectualism of orthodoxy the preacher had the aim of conveying sound doctrine to the minds of his hearers and of securing their intellectual assent. But he did not produce an ecclesia, a congregation. In moralistic preaching the preacher appealed to the wills of his hearers. He produced a

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<sup>67</sup> *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* no. 52

congregation but, if his words fell on good soil, moral individuals. And the emotional preacher may succeed in producing all kinds of spiritual excitement, even, as in the Welsh revivals, glossolalia. But as St. Paul remarked long ago, glossolalia does not edify, nor do other kinds of spiritual excitement. They do not build up (oikodomein) the Church. All three kinds of preaching are individualistic. They leave a man in his isolation. They do not draw him anew into the ecclesia.

Worship is a communal act in which the congregation praises and gives thanks God for the redemptive work He has done for them. However, preaching separated from the worship context fails to strengthen the congregation because such preaching ends up in individualism. Preaching must be a communal act of worship because it takes place as a part of it in the gathering of congregation. The lectionary is the very means of preaching which meets the doxological purpose of the community of faith (Lowry 1992:15). For this, the lectionary presents the paschal mystery coupling the Old Testament with the Gospel lesson (West 2004:188-189). Preaching from the lectionary, with the Eucharist, provides the integrated context for the community's worship (West 1997:160-161). It surely is a good instrument to restore the balanced understanding of preaching and worship. Sands (1994:6) describes the possible effect of a joining of preaching and the Eucharist as follows: "If the community is led by the word to celebrate Eucharist genuinely, that is to give thanks and praise, to offer itself with Jesus to the Father, to accept and respond to his love by entering into communion with him and one another, then this community will live daily life as the Lord calls it to."

### **5.1.5. The formation of faith through the church year**

The fifth advantage of a lectionary has much to do with the church year's theological and educational value, that is, making people listen to Jesus' saving work and encouraging them to live a faithful life throughout the year (cf. Bartlett 2008,<sup>68</sup> Huh 2008,<sup>69</sup> Kim 2004:21-22).

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<sup>68</sup> Bartlett, D 2008. *성구집에 따른 설교 (Preaching from the lectionary)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71822](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71822) [3 July (2009)]

<sup>69</sup> Huh, J 2008. *신앙의 중심을 회복시키는 교회력과 성구집 (The church year and lectionary restoring faith)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=72237](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=72237) [3 July (2009)]

*The New Handbook of the Christian Year* explicates the importance of time to Christians as follows:

Christianity takes time seriously. History is where God is made known. Christians have no knowledge of God without time, for it is through actual events happening in historical time that God is revealed. God chooses to make the divine nature and will known through events that take place within the same calendar that measures the daily lives of men and women. God's self-disclosures take place within the same course of time as political events: "In the days of Herod king of Judaea" (Luke 1:5 NEB), or "it took place when Quirinius was governor of Syria" (Luke 2:2 NEB). God's time is our time, too, marked by a temporal order called a calendar.

...

The centrality of time in Christianity is reflected in Christian worship. ... How we structure time enables us to commemorate and reexperience those very acts on which salvation is grounded (Hickman *et al* 1993:16).

The use of time shows our priorities. How we use our time reveals what is important to us. The Hebrew's observance of the Sabbath was the foundation of their life. The Sabbath reminded them weekly that God created the world and that He is taking care of it. Their major feasts celebrated God's providence and redemptive work in history vividly through the cycles of the year. Likewise, the early church also demonstrated what was important to it by the way it kept time. Early Christians began to develop the church year starting from the Lord's Day. Easter, Lent, Pentecost, Epiphany, Christmas and Advent were added later. These feasts and seasons illustrate that Jesus' life and work of salvation is the center of Christian worship (White 1981:46).

According to Eckley, the church year has two possible educational values for the local church: "The first of these is the fostering of Christian identity within the pluralism of the broader community. The second is the learning and living the transformational dynamic." (Eckley 1982:560)

The church year forms the Christian identity, personal as well as communal. As regards the ritual's function of forming identity, Neville and Westerhoff III (1978:91-92) assert that the liturgy forms "the praxis (reflective action) by which the community is made aware of who and whose it is; learns that for which and by which it is called to live and die; and comes to understand why life is as it is, as well as, more importantly what it is to become." Ceremonial practices unite us in community; give meaning and purpose to our lives. Changes in our understandings and ways of life bring about changes in our ritual and vice versa. Thus, our rituals are the intensive expression of our understanding and way of life.

The church year, as a liturgical rite, helps believers to internalise Christian truths. The church maintains and bequeathes faith through its communal rites following the weekly and yearly rhythm of time. Since the lectionary is organized around the major events in Jesus' life and ministry, it can serve to expose church members to the key elements of the gospel message. The rhythm of the liturgical year inculcates the congregation with faith and identity in a Christological perspective (Huh 2008;<sup>70</sup> Lowry 1992:15; O'day 2008:358). It leads God's people to a deeper knowledge of Christ and faith in him through the three-year cycle. Furthermore, it helps the faithful to sense who they are, that is, people who are loved by God and atoned by the sacrifice of Jesus' life (cf. Allen 1992:239-240; Carl III 1981:14; Westerhoff III & Willimon 1980:54-55). Compare the remark of Tipton (2007:227) in this regard: "the lectionary offers a story intended to interpret our world in a manner entirely different from any other hermeneutic." It provides a way of reading life and a way of finding meaning in the world based on Jesus' story.

Besides this, the church year and lectionary encourage people to live and worship God uninterruptedly with an eschatological hope. From Advent to Christ the King Sunday, the liturgical year begins and ends its rhythm with an eschatological frame (González 2005:4-5). Each liturgical year begins with a renewal of God's eschatological promises in Advent and

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<sup>70</sup> Huh, J 2008. *신앙의 중심을 회복시키는 교회력과 성구집* (*The church year and lectionary restoring faith*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=72237](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=72237) [3 July (2009)]

each liturgical year ends with a vision of the assured accomplishment of God's eschatological justice on Christ the King Sunday. The eschatological frame of the church year, as well as the repetition of that frame year after year, drastically reform the way the worshipping community relates to time and the world (O'day 2008:360). The church is living in the eschatological time between the "already" of Jesus' resurrection and the "not yet" of the ongoing history of the world's suffering. We, the baptized, are given the ethical and social imperative, the calling to know Christ by following him in words and deeds witnessing to the reign of God that surely is coming (Morrill 2003:69-70). The eschatological character of the church year enables us to recognize now and then, here and there, fragmentary but nonetheless very real moments of the inbreaking of the reign of Jesus. It instills hope and faith in our minds even in times of trouble.

The second educational value of the lectionary exists in the fact that it can act as a transformational dynamic. *Leesrooster*, published in South Africa, is a good example of this. It is designed for the congregation to use the *Revised Common Lectionary* on weekdays for devotional purposes. This book encourages people to read God's Word through the week and to hear His voice in the readings and respond to it in action in their lives. The cycle of listening, which is the unique feature of this book, exists in three movements of eight stations. The three movements emphasise various phases of reading and listening. The first phase is that of "rest", which exists in two stations: "invited by God" and "entering into God's time".<sup>71</sup> These two stations emphasise the preparation for a meeting with God. The second phase is that of "listening" with the focus on listening to the Word, listening to each other and listening to the environment. The second phase has four stations – "listening to God's word", "listening to each other as Christians", "listening to other people in the times we live in" and then going back to "listening to God's word".<sup>72</sup> The third phase is that of "living", i.e. how to

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<sup>71</sup> The first station, "invited by God" focuses on the fact that God wants us to be with Him. He wants us to be close to Him. Here we think about what we have when we come to God and what we want from Him. The second station is entering into God's time. This means that we align ourselves with the seasons of the church year.

<sup>72</sup> In the third station, you listen to God's word and you focus on the word to understand what it actually means for you. In the fourth station, you listen to each other as Christians. You try to hear what God has given to other

translate the answer that God has given to us in our lives in action. The third phase consists of two stations, viz. “focusing on what God is doing now” and “answering with our lives”.<sup>73</sup> The cycle of listening is based on the firm belief that a listening church has four values, which they live by, namely the value of being able to learn, the value of trust, the value of having empathy with other people and the value of openness or transparency. These values are parts of the Bible’s description of how we should deal with the world. Moreover, they form the basis of the experience and view of Christian life that help to develop a character that God wants us to have. This book, *Leesrooster*, aims at making a concrete change in how we live by the method of listening to the Word of God. The lectionary can be used to fix and transform our daily life (Orsmond 2008:3-10).

### 5.1.6. Practical helps for preparation of sermon

The sixth advantage of a lectionary is that practical aids like lectionary commentaries or peer study groups are available to preachers (Huh 2008; Kim 2008).<sup>74</sup> Publishing houses are offering literature in the form of commentaries and liturgical guides. These are written by leading scholars in the fields of biblical studies and liturgy to help pastors in their task of preaching to the worshiping community. For example, *New Proclamation* published by *Fortress Press* and *Feast on the Word* by *John Knox Press* are available now (Bartlett *et al*

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people through the word and then receive it from them to discuss that in your lives or to express that in your lives. The fifth station is to listen to others in the times that we live in. In this way, you take people that are not part of normal environment and you try to think they would listen to this word of God. During the sixth station, you go back again to listening to God’s word. Here you look again at the word and think of all the different perspectives you get from the previous stations.

<sup>73</sup> During the seventh station, you think about the possibilities that God has created for you in the time of listening and about where you see God working and to what end God had called you to become available in the communities. At the eight station you apply it to things in your lives. You think about definite or concrete ways of how you can express God’s grace to other people in your lives and how you can serve and make sure that it becomes part of your daily life.

<sup>74</sup> Huh, J 2008. *신앙의 중심을 회복시키는 교회력과 성구집* (*The church year and lectionary restoring faith*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=72237](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=72237) [3 July (2009)]

Kim, K 2008. *성구집의 한국적 적용을 위한 제언* (*Suggestion for application of lectionary to Korea*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71818](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71818) [3 July (2009)]



2008).<sup>75</sup> Korean publications since the 1980s include *예배와 설교 핸드북* (*A handbook of worship and sermon*) and *예배와 강단* (*Worship and pulpit*). This literature, providing biblical interpretation of the lectionary texts, helps the preacher in the preparation of a sermon. Taking into consideration the overload of the preaching ministry in the Korean context, the lectionary commentaries and worship guides can be of great help to Korean preachers. If they use the resources, their preaching will be more biblical and effective in spite of the heavy burden of frequent preaching.

At the same time, peer study groups across denominations can be another help for sermon preparation. A common lectionary could generate a Christian conversation among various denominations (Carl III 1981:15; Hultgren 2004:444). Buttrick (2002:53) states that “in lectionary study groups, clergy of all faiths discover that, more often than not, they read Scripture in much the same way. So the lectionary has provided an occasion for ecumenical friendship and discussion.” The widespread use of the church year and the lectionary encourages pastors to join in lectionary study groups. In the dialogue, the imagination and insight of preachers could be stimulated by the diverse viewpoints of the group (Lowry 1992:30-31). For instance, an Anglican priest may offer a Baptist pastor a new insight into Paul’s sprinkle of holy water or a Presbyterian pastor could learn something about sanctification and ethic of saints from a Methodist preacher (Bartlett 2008).<sup>76</sup> The encounter with different theological traditions would be a good way of preparing for a sermon.

### **5.1.7. Coherency of worship**

Finally, coherency of worship is another value of lectionary use. A lectionary provides preachers with a long-term plan for sermons, and makes it possible for worship leaders to

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<sup>75</sup> Bartlett, D, Joo, S, Kim, K & Choi, W 2008. *교회력과 성구집을 통한 설교* (*Preaching from the church year and lectionary*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=72238](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=72238) [30 June (2009)]

<sup>76</sup> Bartlett, D 2008. *성구집에 따른 설교* (*Preaching from the lectionary*). [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71822](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71822) [3 July (2009)]

prepare integrated services in advance (cf. Charles 2006:15; Lowry 1992:32-33; Oh 2008;<sup>77</sup> White 1981:71).

Firstly, a lectionary offers a well-organised and comprehensive plan for preaching. The seasons of the church year and the lections of the lectionary supply places to start sermon preparation. Preachers do not have to struggle to find a text.

Secondly, a lectionary can be the foundation of a coherent worship. The seasons and lections allow for long-term planning, which can include all involved in worship. Tipton (2007:234) describes the benefit of advance planning of worship as follows:

... good planning will enable the spirit to speak with greater volume and allow more time for a congregation to respond and act upon the spirit's leadership. With a plan for the year, those who speak, sing, pray, and meditate upon the gospel will have a means to anticipate and prepare well for the act of worship.

The lectionary anticipates the seasons, events, and celebrations that mark the life of the church and its commitments. This kind of planning removes the need to be cute and entertaining because the emphasis is on the story of the gospel and its movements through the year rather than the minister's ability to find a good quote or entertaining story. It allows the people to consider what God in Christ will do next instead.

Well-organised worship transmits a powerful message to the congregation. If hymns, anthems, banners, vestments, paraments, and sermons, as components of worship, convey a coherent message based on lections every week, the congregation will sense God's working and word in Jesus more clearly. This strength of a lectionary surely is of much significance to the Korean Presbyterian worship because the Korean Presbyterian churches are now beginning to acknowledge the fact that the linguistic communication of preaching, on which their worship

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<sup>77</sup> Oh, H 2008. *한국적 상황에서의 주제설교 (Topical preaching in the Korean context)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71826](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71826) [3 July (2009)]

depends, has reached its limit. The Korean Presbyterian church needs the worship of multi-sensory, that is, seeing, touching and tasting as well as listening, in which they can experience God's presence on the whole (Huh 2008; Park 2008).<sup>78</sup> For such an integrated worship, colour, music, painting, gown, sermon, wine, bread etc, all of the parts included in worship should be prepared with heed and care in advance.

## 5.2. The limitations of lectionary

Obviously, a lectionary is a good instrument, which has many advantages to preacher and the church. However, it has some limitations .

### 5.2.1. Rigidity

Firstly, scholars point out rigidity as a possible problem of the use of a lectionary (cf. Allen 1992:242; Black 2002:60; Huh 2008;<sup>79</sup> Todd Jr 1987:36). They assert that a lectionary could restrict the freedom of a preacher or it could possibly not meet the needs of the congregation on any given Sunday. To use Lowry's (1992:24-25) phrase, "Use of the lectionary in preaching closes the door on many forms of sermon series preaching. For example, the lectionary will not provide a sequence for the parables of Jesus, nor passages for an ongoing season of doctrinal/credo sermons." Bartlett (2008)<sup>80</sup> exemplifies a mismatch of a given text and the context of congregation in a case that for the Sunday of the week in which President Kennedy was assassinated, the sermon title of a local church had already been determined to

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<sup>78</sup> Huh, J 2008. *이방인을 위하여 경계선과 산을 넘는 아름다운 설교 (A beautiful preaching getting over border and mountains for aliens' sake)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/gms\\_detail.asp?cts\\_id=68291](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/gms_detail.asp?cts_id=68291) [16 October (2009)]

Park, J 2008. *몸, 감성, 그리고 새로운 예배: 새로운 예배의 필요성에 대하여 (Body, sensitivity and new liturgy: about the necessity of a new worship)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=69126](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=69126) [29 June (2009)]

<sup>79</sup> Huh, J 2008. *신앙의 중심을 회복시키는 교회력과 성구집 (The church year and lectionary restoring faith)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=72237](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=72237) [3 July (2009)]

<sup>80</sup> Bartlett, D 2008. *성구집에 따른 설교 (Preaching from the lectionary)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71822](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71822) [3 July (2009)]

be “Such a good news to believe as a true”. Lysons (2004:264) even maintains that “The starting point should not be the Bible but the problems and beliefs with which people in a secular culture are concerned.” He claims that preaching should start from the life situation of the congregation and be sensitive to its needs.

Perhaps, the unchallenged use of the lectionary hampers the treatment of important social or theological issues that congregations struggle with from time to time. Undoubtedly, preaching must not ignore the needs of the congregation and its particular circumstances. However, we need to take notice of many lectionary users’ testimony that they have been amazed how applicable the assigned scriptures often are to their congregations’ contexts (Allen 1992:243; Bartlett 2008; Carl III 1981:16; White 1981:73). Many preachers, who use the lectionary, confess that their pastoral work and preaching have actually been enriched by this important instrument.

The lectionary is not a goal in itself. Because it serves and helps the church, one does not have to follow the lectionary rigorously. If special events call for a deviation from the lectionary, preachers can do so even though they would generally follow the lectionary under normal circumstances. This can be seen as another advantage of the lectionary because it provides a standard for decision-making regarding the continuation of lessons of the lectionary in such cases (Oh 2008).<sup>81</sup> To use a lectionary is not a forfeiture of freedom, but a voluntary selection of a guideline (Bantz 1993:229). The preacher is free to operate outside the lectionary in order to respond to the problems and needs of the community.

### **5.2.2. Priority of the Gospels**

The second limitation of the lectionary is that the Gospel lesson has priority over the Old

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<sup>81</sup> Oh, H 2008. *한국적 상황에서의 주제설교 (Topical preaching in the Korean context)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71826](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71826) [3 July (2009)]

Testament lesson. (Bartlett *et al* 2008,<sup>82</sup> Black 2002:62).

Many of the concerns that are raised about the lectionary concerns the Old Testament. With respect to quantity, while the first thirty-nine books of the Bible are nearly four times the length of the final twenty-seven books, the former represents no more than half of the readings in the *Revised Common Lectionary* (Huh 2008).<sup>83</sup> Furthermore, two-thirds of the Old Testament readings come from six books (Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, 1 Kings, Isaiah, and Jeremiah), with almost half of these coming from Isaiah alone. Twenty-eight books are represented by three or fewer readings, and five books do not appear at all. Two-thirds of the Epistle readings come from six books (Acts, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, and Hebrews). The Gospels, naturally, are more fully represented (Throntveit 2004:443).

The church year is built on the life and ministry of Jesus, and therefore, it is a natural consequence to focus on the Gospel passages (Willimon 2001:334-335). Although the *Revised Common Lectionary* offers as an option the semi-continuous reading of the Old Testament during Ordinary Time so that it can be read at its own pace, the lections from the Old Testament, during the Feasts Season, are chosen because it provides a background to the Gospel. The Gospel pericope sets the theme for the week. The reading from the Old Testament takes the role of a mere presage to the New Testament. Of course, the pastor can preach from the First Testament lection, but the lectionary presupposes the priority of the Gospel (Allen 1992:242).

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<sup>82</sup> Bartlett, D, Joo, S, Kim, K & Choi, W 2008. *교회력과 성구집을 통한 설교 (Preaching from the church year and lectionary)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=72238](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=72238) [30 June (2009)]

<sup>83</sup> Huh, J 2008. *신앙의 중심을 회복시키는 교회력과 성구집 (The church year and lectionary restoring faith)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=72237](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=72237) [3 July (2009)]

### **5.2.3. Superficial connection**

The third limitation of the lectionary is that there seems to be little connection between the readings on some Sundays (Lowry 1992:20-22; Willimon 2001:337).

In selective way of reading the Old Testament texts that are connected with the Gospel lesson, the pairings of the Old Testament and the Gospel lessons fall at different points along a continuum according to the degree of association between the lessons from the explicit to the implicit and even contrast. In the most explicit pairings, the Gospel lesson quotes the Old Testament lesson directly. Mostly in these cases, a prophecy-fulfillment relation is manifest. Alongside this are the typological correlations. People, events, and institutions in the Old Testament lessons are proposed as types of what is to come. Further down the continuum are the implicit connections, which are the allusions, analogies and common themes for correlating the Old Testament and Gospel texts. One of the complaints about the lectionary is that sometimes the pairings are so implicit that there is little connection between them. For example, Malachi 3:1-4, the Old Testament reading for 2 Advent C is paired with Luke 3:1-6, the account of John the Baptist's ministry. Yet, only the first line of the first verse of Malachi 3 refers to John. The rest of the text is about God's coming to His temple as a refining fire and launderer's soap. Although this is the main theme of the text, it is lost in the current pairing. Perhaps a connection with the account of Jesus cleansing the temple (John 2:13-22) would be more appropriate (Saleska 1999:284-285, 287-288).

The weak connection of some pairings should be accepted critically because they are paired by human beings based on certain principles and assumptions. In his or her study of the assigned lections, the preacher should ask himself or herself what the connection is and whether the pairing is proper or not. If it is not, he or she can choose alternative texts to create a proper pairing (Saleska 1999:289).

It should be mentioned that the scheme of pairing lessons has much value. The principle of linking Old Testament and Gospel texts can be a positive witness to the unity of the two

Testaments especially in an age in which many assign the Old Testament and the New Testament to separate interpretive communities, namely, Jewish and Christian (Black 2002:65; Saleska 1999:290). Furthermore, by interlocking an Old Testament reading with a Gospel reading, the lectionary offers another perspective to a congregation. The paired readings provide a means for the faithful to think, learn from, and be shaped by the ways these texts complement, integrate, and throw light on each other. This connecting brings out new perspectives and insights from the texts (cf. Bonneau 1996:56; Sands 1994:7; Tipton 2007:234; Willimon 2001:340).

#### 5.2.4. Omission of some scriptures

Lastly, the omission of some books of the Bible is another weakness of the lectionary (Bartlett *et al* 2008; Kim 2008).<sup>84</sup> The *Revised Common Lectionary* omits the whole of the following books in the Bible: 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Obadiah, and Nahum in the Old Testament and 2 John, 3 John, and Jude in the New Testament. In addition, some scriptures are omitted as well. For example, the lectionary omits Mark 2:23 to 3:6. This part is about the story where the opponents of Jesus condemn him for breaking the rules of Sabbath. Bartlett (2008),<sup>85</sup> emphasising that the focus of Mark's Gospel is placed on the passion and death of Jesus as the Servant of God, claims that verse 6 of the chapter 3 should not be omitted because it is one of the most dramatic scenes which leads Jesus to the cross.

In the Old Testament, the first lesson for Advent 4 in Year B can be an example. The lesson is 2 Sam 7:1-11, 16: God's dynastic promise to David. At issue here is the omission of verses 12-15:

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<sup>84</sup> Bartlett, D, Joo, S, Kim, K & Choi, W 2008. *교회력과 성구집을 통한 설교 (Preaching from the church year and lectionary)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=72238](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=72238) [30 June (2009)]

Kim, K 2008. *성구집의 한국적 적용을 위한 제언 (Suggestion for application of lectionary to Korea)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71818](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71818) [3 July (2009)]

<sup>85</sup> Bartlett, D 2008. *성구집에 따른 설교 (Preaching from the lectionary)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71822](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71822) [3 July (2009)]

When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. When he commits iniquity, I will punish him with a rod such as mortals use, with blows inflicted by human beings. But I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. (2 Sam 7:12-15 NRSV)

Throntveit (2004:443, 446) surmises that “When he commits iniquity” (14b) would be the underlying cause for the omission of these four verses. He suggests that paired with the announcement of Jesus’ birth (Luke 1:26-38), and appearing in the context of Advent, the “he” conflicts with other lections referring to Jesus who never commits iniquity. For this reason, the lectionary simply skips over these dissonant texts. This indicates that there would be texts, which preachers do not deal with when they follow the lectionary. Therefore, we should think of what we are going to do about the omitted texts when we use the lectionary.



## 6. Practical suggestions

Chapter 4 highlighted the problems of the preaching ministry in the Korean Presbyterian context where the lectionary is scarcely utilized. Chapter 5 focused on the contributions the lectionary can make and its limitations. The last chapter will offer two suggestions for the application of the lectionary to the Korean context: first, preaching the Old Testament books in the way of lectio continua, and second, including some Korean contextual festivals into the cycle of the church year.

### 6.1. Preaching the Old Testament books in lectio continua

As stated in the previous chapter, one of the limitations of a lectionary is that the Gospel readings have priority over other readings. The Old Testament passages are presented as a preface or a background in close relation to the Gospel lessons. The lectionary's treatment of the Old Testament is not enough to reflect the Old Testament's own voice and its significance to the Christian faith. However, it offers the Old Testament lessons with its own sequence in semi-continuous way for the Sundays after Pentecost. To this disadvantage of the lectionary, preaching the books from the Old Testament in continuous manner in weekday services can be a complementary means (Bartlett 2008).<sup>86</sup> Apart from the Sunday morning service in which the selective reading of the Old Testament could be more emphasised to make the congregation experience the revelation of the paschal mystery in a Christological perspective, reading and preaching the books of the Old Testament in continuous sequence may be performed during weekday services on a Wednesday evening, Friday night and early morning daily in order to make them listen to the innate message of the Old Testament which is drawn from its own context.

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<sup>86</sup> Bartlett, D 2008. *성구집에 따른 설교 (Preaching from the lectionary)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71822](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71822) [3 July (2009)]

Preaching the Old Testament books in continuous manner has three advantages. Firstly, this method enables congregations to draw the holistic picture of a book. It makes it possible to have a broad view of a book by reading it through from beginning to end, while the lectionary often represent some books with just a few passages from each of them.

Secondly, preaching in continuous fashion sets forth the unique voice of the Old Testament. Passages from the Old Testament, in selective reading of the lectionary, are often presented as the background to the Gospel passages. Yet, the Old Testament has its distinctive voices, and it sometimes represents the points that are absent from the New Testament. Bartlett (2008)<sup>87</sup> states two things in this regard: First, the scriptures dealing with social and political justice in the Old Testament complement the New Testament scriptures which concentrate more on the life of the community of faith. Second, the Old Testament complements the New Testament's apocalyptic and eschatological focus. For example, the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament are linked with 'kronos', the usual time and everyday life in which the people of faith live, while time of the New Testament is more absorbed in 'kairos', the time defined by the incarnation of Jesus and his second coming. Believers struggle with many problems in their routine lives. The Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament enables them to see how God works in their daily lives and how He manages the world.

Lastly, the omitted scriptures can be dealt with. Preaching through a book in a continuous way naturally enables the omitted passages from the lectionary to be dealt with, which is one of the limitations of a lectionary.

Although the lectionary is a well-organised plan for preaching covering most books of the Bible in three years, it is not a perfect plan because it omits some books of the Bible and represents other books with a few verses from them. Due to the constraints of time and space

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<sup>87</sup> Bartlett, D 2008. *성구집에 따른 구약설교 (Preaching and the Old Testament)*. [Online]. Available: [http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts\\_id=71821](http://www.duranno.com/moksin/detail.asp?cts_id=71821) [3 July (2009)]

of the lectionary, choices might be necessitated, and often this is done at the expense of the Old Testament lesson in order to keep the church year's integrated focus on Christology. The same applies to the Epistle texts. To appreciate the unique voice of the Old Testament as well as the Epistles in each context, we need to hold weekday services for preaching them in a continuous fashion, while the Sunday morning service focuses on delivering the paschal mystery of Jesus, paring the Old Testament lesson with the New Testament one.

## **6.2. Contextualisation of the *Revised Common Lectionary* for Korea**

Another problem concerning the use of the *Revised Common Lectionary* in Korea is that it does not include the Korean traditional festivals. Because the *Revised Common Lectionary* is compiled by the Western scholars, it naturally reflects the Western culture and feasts. Therefore, it needs to be contextualised for the Korean situation. For example, *Seol* (the New Year's Day in lunar calendar) and *Chooseok* (15<sup>th</sup> of August in lunar calendar) are two representative traditional anniversaries of Korea.

For the Korean people, the lunar calendar has important functions even today. Since the Koreans have reckoned time according to the lunar calendar for a long time, many people still observe their birthday and feasts according to the lunar calendar. *Seol*, the first day of the first lunar month is one of the two biggest traditional holidays in Korea. It commemorates the beginning of a new cycle and seasonal change. Traditional customs of the festival are as follows: The first day of the New Year begins with a morning memorial service at the ancestral tablets of the household. Early in the morning on the first day, in each household, food and wines are arranged in front of the ancestral tablet, and the ceremony of worshipping the family ancestors is carried out. This is the family ritual called *charye*. The New Year's Day is the day for paying respect to the ancestors. Upon finishing the memorial service, all members of the family dress up and each member visits and says new year's greetings to their grandparents, parents, and elder relatives and neighbors. This traditional custom of New Year's greeting is called *Sebae*. After *Sebae*, *Seongmyo* is performed. *Seongmyo* is a visit to

the ancestral graves to bow and inform them of the new year (The National Folk Museum of Korea 1996).<sup>88</sup>

The other traditional festival, *Choosok* is the Korean Thanksgiving. This holiday has been observed nationally to celebrate the harvest, cherish the memory of one's ancestors and renew family ties. Early in the morning on this day, every family dresses up. With freshly harvested grains and fruits, memorial services for the ancestors are performed and after the ceremony at home, the family visits the ancestors' graves to offer thanksgiving. After visiting the graves, each family exchanges gifts of food with its neighbors. *Choosok* is an event for the whole family and all the relatives to share (The National Folk Museum of Korea 1996).<sup>89</sup> To the modern society of Korea, the significance and function of *Choosok* lie more in reuniting families separated by urbanization and in recovering family unity through the ancestral ceremony rather than a harvest festival.

For these two traditional festivals of Korea, Joo (1997:153-155) asserts that the critical contextualization of Christianity in Korea is required very much. In a sense, Christianity has not taken root in the Korean people's heart, and many Koreans still think of Christianity as a disparate religion imported by foreign missionaries because in many cases they simply rejected Korean traditional culture as being pagan. On that account, the critical contextualization of Christianity in Korea is a very important issue that needs to be addressed. Christians in Korea should develop their own cultural forms for expressing the new meaning they found in Christ. Otherwise, Christianity would not become deeply rooted among the Korean people. In critical contextualization, the incarnational approach is to be used. The old tradition is neither rejected nor accepted uncritically (Hiebert 1984:290). The old tradition is evaluated in the light of biblical norms and is to be judged and discerned.

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<sup>88</sup> The National Folk Museum of Korea 1996. *열두달 세시풍속: 설날* (*The traditional customs of seasons through the year: Seol*). [Online]. Available: <http://www.nfm.go.kr/Data/cMjanu01.jsp> [16 November (2009)]

<sup>89</sup> The National Folk Museum of Korea 1996. *열두달 세시풍속: 추석* (*The traditional customs of seasons through the year: Choosok*). [Online]. Available: <http://www.nfm.go.kr/Data/cMaug.jsp> [16 November (2009)]

In the case of the Lunar New Year's Day, a contextualized Covenant Service with the renewal of the baptismal covenant and the Lord's Supper may be appropriate for the Lunar New Year's service.<sup>90</sup> The Lunar New Year's Day is a time to prepare for the new year and to look back upon the year that has passed. Hence, especially to Korean Christians, recollecting the past with penitence and renewing our faith can be appropriate meanings for this time. In biblical teachings also, New Year's Day is the Day of Remembrance, which is specifically associated with the memory of the Covenant.<sup>91</sup> Considering the implications of the festival *Seol* and the biblical teachings, three readings, viz. Jeremiah 31:31-34, Romans 6:3-11 and John 21:1-19 can be proposed on a Sunday near the Lunar New Year's Day. Jeremiah 31:31-34 clearly shows the theme of God's covenant with the people. Romans 6:3-11 may be one of the most meaningful texts to remind us of our baptism as a sign of our covenant with God. John 21:1-19 shows that the encounter with the risen Christ renews the relationship between him and his disciples, which was broken by the disciples' denial, within the context of the Eucharistic meal (vs. 9-14) (Joo 1997:169-170, 287-289).

The other Korean festival, *Choosok*, is comparable to the Feast of Tabernacles (or called as the Feast of Ingathering) (Exodus 23:16) which is the Jewish harvest festival celebrating the final harvest of the year,<sup>92</sup> or to Thanksgiving Day celebrated in America. *Choosok* is

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<sup>90</sup> The Covenant Service was established by John Wesley as an important part of the early Methodist church. According to his *Journal*, Covenant Services were held on a variety of occasions, but toward the end of his life, they were usually celebrated on New Year's Day or on a Sunday near the beginning of the year (Hickman *et al* 1992:78).

Through baptism, we enter the covenant. Baptism is a sign and seal of our covenant with God. Baptism itself cannot be repeated, but a renewal of it is a lifelong process because the covenant we make with God is frequently broken in our life due to our weaknesses. (Joo 1997:177-178)

<sup>91</sup> The Jewish New Year, *Rosh Hashanah*, is celebrated on the first day of *Tishri*, the first month of the Jewish calendar. It falls in September or October of the solar calendar. This commemoration is described in Lev. 23:23-27 and Num. 29:1-6 as the Feast of Trumpets, with instructions to observe it as a day of rest, convocation, and offering. The Jewish New Year's Day is a Day of Remembrance, which is a time of remembrance of God's mercies in the past and his gracious promises for the future (Joo 1997:157-158, 169).

<sup>92</sup> The frame of the Jewish year is composed of the three chief festivals (Exo. 23:14-17): the Passover (the Feast of Unleavened Bread), the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) and the Feast of Tabernacles. These three festivals were all agricultural festivals connected with the harvest thanksgiving. The Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:4-14; Deut. 16:1-8) was an agricultural feast at the beginning of the new harvest season in Canaan. However, this feast was superseded by commemorating the deliverance from bondage to Egypt. The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) was also a feast of thanksgiving for the harvest, beginning with barley and ending with wheat (cf. Deut. 16:9-10). It,

originally a harvest thanksgiving, but the meaning of the day for homecoming and family reunion is getting important as urbanization and industrialization have been progressing. Accordingly, if the observance on a Sunday near *Choosok* has the meaning of homecoming or uniting of the family, it would be an appropriate case. The church can celebrate thanksgiving with the whole congregation, the new spiritual family in Christ. By having a Thanksgiving Sunday near *Choosok* with the overtone of the unity of saints, Korean Christians may learn about what the spiritual family in Christ is and what the communion of the faithful should be like. This new family in Christ is much larger than a blood relationship and includes not only the living believers but also the faithful in heaven. In this respect, the Eucharist on the Thanksgiving Sunday near *Choosok* might become the meaningful rite in its context because the Eucharist has the meanings of thanksgiving to the Father as well as communion of the faithful (World Council of Churches 1982:10). As the lections of the Thanksgiving Sunday, the *Revised Common Lectionary* has already proposed the following passages of the Bible: The first readings are from Deuteronomy 8:7-18 (year A), Joel 2:21-27 (year B), and Deuteronomy 26:1-11 (year C). The second readings are from 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 (year A), 1 Timothy 2:1-7 (year B), and Philippians 4:4-9 (year C). The third readings are from Luke 17:11-19 (year A), Matthew 6:25-33 (year B), and John 6:25-35 (year C) (Consultation on Common Texts 1992:39, 55, 71). All of these are good choices and suit the context of *Choosok*. However, there is still one problem to be solved. Most of the Korean churches keep Thanksgiving Day on the third Sunday of November, which was introduced by the early Protestant American missionaries who were the spiritual descendants of the Puritans. The problem is that there is no atmosphere of thanksgiving among most Koreans in late November. Thus, the current practice of the Korean church's Thanksgiving is strange and unnatural to them because their great Thanksgiving Day, *Choosok* is celebrated two months earlier. In the respect, Thanksgiving Day of the Korean church needs to be contextualized in accordance with the date of *Choosok* (Joo 1997:237-238, 296-298).

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however, was gradually superseded by the commemoration of the gift of the Law (the Ten Commandments), which happened in the third month after their departure from Egypt (Exo. 19:1). The Feast of Tabernacles begins four days after Yom Kippur and extends through the week to the twenty-second day of *Tishri* (Lev. 23:33-36; 39-43; Deut. 16:13-15). This festival is the Jewish Thanksgiving as the feast of the final harvest at the end of the year (Exo. 23:16). It is a feast comparable to *Choosok*, the Korean harvest festival. (Joo 1997:225-228)

## Conclusion

More than one hundred twenty years have elapsed since the Protestant missionaries began to preach the gospel of Jesus to Korea. The Christian population in Korea increased to twenty or twenty-five percent. In addition, the number of churches also grew. At present, the Korean church is said to be in crisis. The number of Christians is declining and the new generations are drifting away from the Christianity. The crisis of the church is accepted as a crisis of preaching and worship in the Korean Presbyterian church, because they are basic ways in which Christianity is practiced every week and the means through which faith is transmitted to the next generation.

From a homiletical point of view, the Korean Presbyterian church has some problems in preaching. First of all, the texts for preaching are defined in terms of the preachers' preference. Their choices tend to be concentrated on specific books and texts that they like or that are consistent with their theological stand. This consequently causes the spiritual undernourishment of both preacher and congregation because they are not provided with the balanced spiritual meal of the whole Bible.

Furthermore, a free choice of texts bears another problem. The sudden inspirational manner of choice easily causes preaching to be topical. Although topical preaching has the advantage of flexibility to meet the needs of a congregation or its situation, preachers are inclined to convey their preconceived ideas rather than the message of the Scripture. This is at variance with the biblical mentality, which every method of preaching should seek after. They could look for a text that backs up their predetermined sermon idea and use it as a springboard to jump to their topic.

From a liturgical perspective, the Korean Presbyterian church is failing to appreciate the church year's theological and educational value. No religion exists without the ritual. The

church calendar, as a liturgical rite, transmits and plants the core truth of Christianity – the story of Jesus – in people’s mind throughout the year. Following the storyline of Jesus’ salvific work as well as his teachings, people can be inculcated with the essential Christian virtues, namely faith in God’s love for us through Jesus and eschatological hope. However, the Korean Presbyterian church’s calendar deviates from this traditional and ecumenical church calendar. Most of them observe Christmas, the Holy Week and Easter, plus some civil anniversaries and Thanksgiving Day. Thus, the Korean Presbyterian church’s calendar has no thematic coherency and it is very doubtful that the calendar could fulfill its function as a faith community’s ritual.

Moreover, an overemphasis on preaching is another problem of the Korean Presbyterian liturgy. Because preaching has precedence over worship, it is considered a key factor in deciding the success or the failure of worship. However, this recognition of preaching causes some practical problems. Firstly it may disregard the practice of the Eucharist, which is the other channel of God’s grace together with preaching. Actually, in most of the Korean Presbyterian churches, the Eucharist is celebrated twice a year, at best four times. The occasions are too few for them to appropriate the meaning and grace of the paschal mystery, and this is deeply related to their understanding of the centrality of preaching. Secondly, it causes the problem of their identity as worshippers. As the worship entirely becomes dependent upon preaching, the preacher is enticed to be an eloquent orator while the entire congregation is reduced to spectators. However, they should both be active worshippers in front of God. Thirdly, the notion of overemphasised preaching does not stimulate the members’ participation in worship. It just makes them a passive audience.

Besides these homiletical and liturgical problems, the Korean Presbyterian church has an ecclesiological problem too, that is, the individualism of Korean churches. It is very difficult to determine the total number of Korean Presbyterian denominations because they are constantly divided. We roughly estimate that there exist over ninety Presbyterian denominations in Korea. This shows that they might not care about the unity of the Church as the body of Christ. The egoism and competitive mentality of Korean Presbyterian churches



indicate that they are in great peril.

Thus, the Korean Presbyterian church requires a change in preaching and liturgy. The adoption of the lectionary can be a solution to the problems mentioned above. Firstly, as the solution to the homiletical problems of the Korean Presbyterian church, the lectionary provides a long-term plan for preaching that considers the whole Bible and not just the preacher's preference. Although some preachers might disagree with the way it deals with Scriptural texts or might be reluctant to use it because of some missing texts, the lectionary covers most books of the Bible and theological balance is incorporated in it by many eminent scholars from various denominations. When preachers use it as their plan for preaching, it will assure the biblical mentality because it prevents them from imposing their preoccupied idea onto a text. The lectionary forces them to consider and listen to the text first. Furthermore, it enlarges the range of sermon texts available to preachers. Sometimes, preachers should struggle with difficult and unfamiliar texts because in the process of studying and listening to such texts, they will grow spiritually. Moreover, helping materials like lectionary commentaries and worship guides are good resources for the busy Korean pastors. These resources can help them save much time on sermon preparation and make it possible to organise a coherent worship in advance.

Secondly, in regard to liturgy, the lectionary plays a vital role in the restoration of the Eucharist in worship. The lectionary aims at the congregation's experiencing of the paschal mystery of Jesus. The Eucharist, together with the Word of God, is the key element of worship and involves people giving thanks and praise to God. Furthermore, the seasons and feasts of the church year play a ritual role initiating the congregation into the essential truths of Christianity. The lectionary is a good instrument of transmitting an integrated message under the theme of Jesus' life and work, combining liturgy of the Word with liturgy of the Eucharist.

In ecclesiological terms, the lectionary can also be a solution to a problem in the Korean

Presbyterian church. The ecumenical feature of the *Revised Common Lectionary* inspires them to have a 'community mind'. The fact that the same Word of God is read and proclaimed universally on the same Sunday symbolizes the unity of the Church. The dialogue between different denominations in the peer study group could also afford us openness to each others in a climate of cooperation.

The Christian year and the lectionary do not solve every problem a preacher might have. Yet, it is open to his or her judgement and discretion. While the faithful lectionary preacher must use his or her discretion in deciding where texts ought to begin and end, what ought to be added or subtracted from the lectionary's appointed texts, and whether or not, and how, a given text ought to be related to the congregational context, it is probably even more important simply to submit to the practice of using the lectionary as a source for preaching (Willimon 2001:339). When preachers use it, they will be able to deliver the gospel and enrich our experience of worship and Scripture, and guide us toward the love and grace of God and toward one another as a community through celebration in and about time.

Thus far, the researcher has tried to prove that the lectionary can add homiletical and liturgical value to the Korean Presbyterian context. Historically, as a particular theological tradition of Revivalism and Nevius method have had a great impact on the Korean church's preaching and worship by the hands of the early missionaries, the Korean preachers' preaching has been confined to the topical preaching and their worship has been oversimplified, not adopting the traditional church year and the lectionary. However, now the Korean Presbyterian church needs to appropriate the liturgical heritage of Christianity, which has developed from the early church. In this respect, the researcher hopes that this study would encourage the Korean Presbyterian preachers, who were unaware of the value, to use the lectionary.

Finally, the following issues are suggested for further research. Firstly, the researcher proposed to contextualise the Christian liturgy so that it agrees with *Seol and Choosok*,

which are important festivals to Koreans. Likewise, there are some significant civil anniversaries, for example, March First Movement, Liberation and the Civil War Memorial Days. As these days are also engraved on the hearts and minds of the Korean people, the liturgical practice as well as the scriptural lessons needs to be developed.

Secondly, the ecumenical lectionary and the Eucharist are very important symbols for the unity of the Church. Especially, the Eucharist can surely be the means of reconciliation between the churches and the faithful. It unites the believers together and signifies that they are one body in Christ. However, it might be difficult for the Korean Presbyterian churches to celebrate the Eucharist every Sunday. If this is the case, it needs to present a practical guideline about the occasions in which the practice of the Eucharist is required. Thus, further development of these issues is necessary.

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