

**A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE AUDIENCE-
ORIENTED PREACHING THEORIES OF FRED
CRADDOCK AND EUGENE LOWRY**

by

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, 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 at any university for a degree.

Signature

Date

ABSTRACT

This dissertation aims to evaluate the Audience Oriented Preaching (AOP) methods of Fred Craddock and Eugene Lowry. Though no one can deny that AOP provides a new and creative method for participation of the audience in the whole sermon process, in my view, it has many theological and homiletic problems. But before asking how we can use their method skillfully in our preaching ministry, it is necessary to scrutinize their theories with theological reflection.

Chapter 2 explores the relation between the text and the listener (context) in the light of contextualization and rhetoric, in which we can find the present place of AOP, as developed by Craddock and Lowry. This chapter functions as a guide map for the direction and argument of subsequent chapters.

In Chapter 3 we review the inductive preaching theories of Craddock, and the narrative preaching theories of Lowry. Here our concern is first to find the theological, historical and cultural background of AOP. Following this, we examine AOP theories themselves, which propose preaching methods that differ radically from the more traditional ones.

In Chapters 4 and 5 this dissertation considers and evaluates both positive and negative aspects of AOP. AOP provides several benefits that have so far been ignored in traditional preaching methods. Primarily, it is closely related to active participation of the audience in the sermon process. A less favourable view of AOP is that it fails to proclaim the identity of Jesus Christ and as a result of this, to build up the community of Jesus in the church. Campbell's Christological-ecclesiological approach, based on post-liberal theology, has been one of the most important theological critiques of AOP theories and their roots in western individualism.

Although Campbell argues persuasively in his criticism of AOP, his arguments are not wholly adequate in addressing the issue of congregation-oriented preaching. Chapter 6 is mainly focused on an alternative congregation oriented preaching

method. I argue that this can be accomplished in a vision of collaborative preaching, which incorporates the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This dissertation suggests Bohren’s pneumatological-ecclesiological approach as the most effective method for congregation oriented preaching beyond the individualistic trend of AOP. Where Campbell’s critique, though articulate, overlooks the pneumatological perspective, Bohren’s is significantly more comprehensive than Campbell’s.

Therefore, the approach that I develop in this thesis acknowledges the contributions of both Campbell and Bohren in shaping a truly congregation-oriented preaching. If we are to overcome the limitation of AOP, my argumentation is that AOP must be interrogated and complemented by both the Christological-ecclesiological approach of Campbell and the pneumatological-ecclesiological approach of Bohren.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie proefskrif het ten doel die evaluering van die gehoor georiënteerde prediking (GGP) metodes van Fred Craddock en Eugene Lowry. Hoewel dit nie betwyfel kan word dat GGP 'n nuwe en kreatiewe metode vir die deelname van die gehoor in die hele preekproses bied nie, het dit myns insiens heelwat teologiese en homiletiese probleme. In hierdie opsig is dit noodsaaklik dat hulle metodes d.m.v. teologiese refleksie ondersoek word, voordat daar gevra word na hoe hulle metodes op 'n gepaste wyse binne die bediening van prediking aangewend kan word.

Hoofstuk 2 ondersoek die verhouding tussen die teks en die hoorder (konteks) in die lig van kontekstualisering en retoriek, waarbinne ons die huidige plek kan vind van GGP – soos ontwikkel deur Craddock en Lowry – binne die hele teologiese en homiletiese vloei. Hierdie hoofstuk dien as 'n gids vir die rigting en argument van hieropvolgende hoofstukke.

In hoofstuk 3 word die induktiewe preekteorieë van Craddock, sowel as die narratiewe preekteorieë van Lowry van nader beskou. In hierdie hoofstuk is die primêre fokus om die teologiese, historiese en kulturele agtergrond van GGP te vind. Daarna word die GGP teorieë self – wat metodes van prediking voorstel wat radikaal verskil van meer tradisionele metodes – ondersoek.

In hoofstukke 4 en 5 word beide die positiewe en negatiewe aspekte van GGP oorweeg en geëvalueer. GGP bied veskeie voordele wat tot dusver geïgnoreer is deur tradisionele metodes van prediking. Van primêre belang is dat GGP nou verbind is tot die aktiewe deelname van die gehoor in die preekproses. 'n Minder gunstige beskouing van GGP is dat dit nie daarin slaag om die identiteit van Jesus Christus genoegsaam te verkondig nie en as 'n resultaat, ook nie om die gemeenskap van Christus binne die kerk op te bou nie. Campbell se christologies-ekklesiologiese benadering, gebasseer op post-liberale teologie, bied een van die belangrikste vorme van teologiese kritiek op GGP teorieë, sowel as die gewortelheid daarvan in westerse individualisme.

Hoewel Campbell oortuigend argumenteer in sy kritiek op GGP, is sy argumente nie in alle opsigte voldoende in die aanspreek van gemeente georiënteerde prediking nie. Hoofstuk 6 se primêre fokus is op 'n alternatiewe gemeente georiënteerde metode van prediking. Ek argumenteer dat dit bereik kan word binne die visie van samewerkende prediking, onder leiding van die Heilige Gees. Hierdie proefskrif stel voor Bohren se pneumatologies-ekklesiologiese benadering as die mees effektiewe metode vir gemeente georiënteerde prediking, wat strek verby die individualistiese neiging van die GGP. Waar Campbell se kritiek, hoewel geartikuleerd, die pneumatologiese perspektief ignoreer, is Bohren se benadering aansienlik meer omvattend as die van Campbell.

Die benadering wat ek in hierdie proefskrif ontwikkel gee erkenning aan beide Campbell en Bohren in die vorming van 'n ware gemeente-georiënteerde prediking. My argument is dus dat, indien die beperkinge van die GGP oorkom wil word, GGP ondersoek moet word deur beide die christologies-ekklesiologiese benadering van Campbell, sowel as die pneumatologies-ekklesiologiese benadering van Bohren.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Statement of the problem	1
1.2 Purpose of this study	2
1.3 Hypotheses	3
1.4 Methodology	5
1.5 Plan of this study	7
1.6 Delimitation of area of research	8
CHAPTER II	9
<i>PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS: THE RELATION BETWEEN THE TEXT AND THE LISTENER IN MODERN PREACHING</i>	9
2.1 Contextual issues in considering the relation between text and reader (context)	9
2.1.1 The traditional evangelical position: The reluctance of contemporizing the biblical message	10
2.1.1.1 Relation of text to context	10
2.1.1.2 Structure of relevance: The dualistic two-step model	12
2.1.2 Reader-response criticism: The centrality of the reader (relevance)	14
2.1.2.1 Reader-response theory	14
2.1.2.2 The relationship of the text and the context	15
2.1.2.3 Structure of relevance: The circle model	16
2.1.3. An integrated approach for contextualization	17
2.1.3.1 The centrality of the text	18
2.1.3.2 Intentional approaches	18
2.1.3.3 The creative-metaphoric approach to contextualization	19
2.1.3.4 The interactional-dialogical process	20
2.2 Rhetoric and its influence in recent homiletics	21
2.2.1 A swing of the pendulum between hearer-driven and message-driven	21
2.2.1.1 The hearer-driven position of classical rhetoric	22
2.2.1.2 The message-driven position of the Latin Fathers	23
2.2.1.3 The neutrality of rhetoric and preaching in Augustine	23
2.2.1.3.1 Rhetorical artistry and God's role	24
2.2.1.3.2 The ethos of the preacher in preaching	24
2.2.1.4 Barth's dilemma: The return of the message-driven position	25
2.2.1.5 The rebirth of the hearer-driven model in contemporary homiletics	26
2.2.2 Paul's alternative approach	27
2.2.2.1 The cross-event-proclaimed	27
2.2.2.2 Reverse-ethos	28
2.3 Conclusion	30
CHAPTER III	32

AUDIENCE-ORIENTED PREACHING (AOP) THEORIES OF CRADDOCK AND LOWRY.....32

3.1 Background of AOP	32
3.1.1 The Changes in hermeneutic and theology	32
3.1.1.1 The Decline of historical-critical method	32
3.1.1.2 The Influence of the New Hermeneutic	33
3.1.1.2.1 The pivotal emphasis	33
3.1.1.2.2 Stimulus for rediscovery	34
3.1.1.2.3 Preaching and language	35
3.1.1.3 The Influence of the new literary criticism	36
3.1.1.3.1 General trend of literary criticism	36
3.1.1.3.2 The emphasis of the New Literary Criticism and Narrative Form	37
3.1.1.3.3 Preaching and story /story-line	39
3.1.2 The changes in the context of the Church during 1960-1970	39
3.1.2.1 The ecclesial circumstances	39
3.1.2.2 The growth of media	40
3.1.2.3 The challenge of traditional authority	41
3.1.2.4 The crisis in traditional preaching	41
3.1.2.5 Preaching and hearers	42
3.2.1 Theory of inductive preaching by Fred Craddock	43
3.2.1.1 Starting points: The diagnosis of problems	43
3.2.1.2 General preaching theology of Craddock	45
3.2.1.3.1 Overhearing of the gospel	46
3.2.1.3.2 Inductive theory and movement	48
3.2.1.3.3 Inductive theory and imagination	50
3.2.1.3.4 Inductive theory and unity	51
3.2.1.3.5 Inductive theory and identification by analogy	53
3.2.1.4 From interpretation to sermon	54
3.2.1.4.1 The interpretation of the listeners and the text	54
3.2.1.4.1.1 The interpretation of the listeners	55
3.2.1.4.1.2 The interpretation of the text	57
3.2.1.4.2 Shaping the message into a sermon	59
3.2.2 Sermon analysis of Craddock	60
3.2.2.1 What makes an impression on us?	60
3.2.2.2 Where does the sermon come from?	61
3.2.2.2.1 What type of God steps forth from the sermon?	61
3.2.2.2.2 How does the preacher treat the text?	62
3.2.2.2.3 What is the unique language of the preacher?	64
3.2.2.2.4 How does the sermon reflect the situation of the congregation	64
3.2.2.3 Where is the sermon headed?	65
3.2.3 Narrative preaching of Eugene Lowry	66
3.2.3.1 The definition of narrative preaching	66
3.2.3.2 The homiletical theory of Lowry	69
3.2.3.3 The homiletical techniques of Lowry	71
3.2.3.3.1 The role of need and theme in the homiletical plot	71
3.2.3.3.2 The specific stages of the homiletical plot	72
3.2.4 Preparation process and presentation of the sermon	76
3.2.5.1 What makes an impression on us?	79
3.2.5.2 Where does the sermon come from?	79
3.2.5.2.1 What type of God steps forth from the sermon?	79
3.2.5.2.2 How does the preacher treat the text?	80
3.2.5.2.3 What is the role of the preacher in the forming of the AOP?	81

3.2.5.2.4 How does the sermon reflect the situation of the congregation	82
3.2.5.3 Where is the sermon headed?	83
3.3 Summary and Conclusion	85
CHAPTER IV	86
THE HOMILETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF AOP	86
4.1 The significance of the listener in contemporary homiletics	86
4.2 The significance of sermon form in contemporary homiletics	90
4.3 The necessity of sermon movement in contemporary homiletics	94
4.4 The resurgence of story preaching in contemporary homiletics	99
4.5 Summary and conclusion	103
CHAPTER V	105
A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF AOP	105
5.1 Crisis in sermon goal: preaching as an experiential event	105
5.1.1 The primacy of experience	106
5.1.2 Secular audience images	107
5.1.2.1 Audience as the consumer	108
5.1.2.2 Audience as the spectator	113
5.1.3 The loss of theological vision	118
5.2 Crisis in Christological identity	121
5.2.1 The loss of the central character in the biblical narrative	121
5.2.2 The loss of Jesus' identity in the parabolic sermon	128
5.2.3 Preaching Christ: The Christological Orientation in "Pauline Theological Rhetoric" ..	134
The Thanksgiving (1.4-9)	137
1.10-17 : A statement of the letter purpose	138
1.18-2.5 Initial argument	139
5.3 The loss of communal identity of church	141
5.3.1 "The self-absorbed individuals"	142
5.3.2 Preaching on the basis of communal ecclesiology	147
5.3.2.1 "Covenant ecclesiology"	147
5.3.2.2 The peculiar community of Jesus	150
5.3.2.3 A Homiletical example of communal preaching	154
CHAPTER VI	160
TOWARD TRUE CONGREGATION-ORIENTED PREACHING : A CONVERSATIONAL- COLLABORATIVE MODEL GUIDED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT	160
6.1 Preliminary remarks: The limitation of the "either-or" option and its antidote	160
6.2 Definition of a conversational-collaborative approach under the guidance of the Holy Spirit	163
6.3. Preacher, text, and congregation in collaborative process	168
6.3.1 A brief sketch of three factors in the collaborative relation	168
6.3.2 Preacher, text and congregation in a conversational-collaborative setting	169
6.3.2.1 The preacher in a conversational-collaborative setting	169

6.3.2.1.1 The preacher in the community of faith	170
6.3.2.1.2 The preacher as listener	172
6.3.2.1.3 The Preacher as witness	175
6.3.2.2 The text in a conversational-collaborative setting	178
6.3.2.2.1 The centrality of the text in collaborative preaching	178
6.3.2.2.2 Text in conversational character	181
6.3.2.2.3 Text with conversational process	184
6.3.2.3 The congregation in a conversational-collaborative setting	190
6.3.2.3.1 The congregation as participant in preaching	190
6.3.2.3.2 "Exegeting the congregation"	193
6.3.2.3.3 Imaging the congregation	197
6.4 The Importance of pneumatology for collaborative preaching.....	199
6.4.1 Two extreme opinions	200
6.4.1.1 Pneumatology without methodology	200
6.4.1.2 Methodology without pneumatology	201
6.4.2 Bohren's "theonomic reciprocity"	203
6.4.3 Pneumatological approach for the congregation	204
6.5 Conclusive remarks: Transformation as the goal of collaborative preaching	206
CHAPTER VII	212
CONCLUSION.....	212
APPENDIX 1	218
APPENDIX 2	223
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	230

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the problem

Unlike traditional sermon modes, Fred Craddock's 'inductive preaching' and Eugene Lowry's 'narrative preaching' suggest a new sermonic direction. Their starting point is to make sermons relevant for contemporary audiences. In other words, the kernel of their theories is how preachers can make their preaching optimally relevant through the active participation of the audience in the sermon process.

According to them, it is impossible for a contemporary audience – accustomed to visual technology – to experience the gospel within the narrow, cognitive-propositional approaches of traditional preaching. A unique solution to such powerless preaching is for the preacher to speak intentionally to the listener. For this, the contemporary preacher should learn new inductive and narrative techniques of creating experiential events for individual hearers.

Although AOP poses positive challenges for the preacher by suggesting creative and participatory preaching forms for the contemporary audience, they fail by applying the Christian gospel to western individualism based on secular anthropology. They emphasize the significance “of respecting the hearer’s ‘privacy’ in preaching” by which “contemporary homiletics runs the danger of selling out to the presuppositions of modern, liberal, American culture” (Campbell1997:143).

As E. Peterson aptly points out, the Christian message has personal aspects, but it is not the same as a private message:

Privacy is possessive and isolating. The private is what is withdrawn from the common good for individual control or use or enjoyments; it is stealing. When

we privatize Scripture we embezzle the common currency of God's revelation (Peterson 1999: 13).

A serious danger of this individualistic trend in AOP is to ignore the communal nature of the Christian message. When our preaching is focused on only the individual hearer, it depreciates Biblical claims, and devalues Biblical text rooted in covenant and community as Brueggemann (1993:30-31) argues.

From the above arguments, we can say that AOP cannot be sound homiletically if it fails to form the identity of God's people. Therefore, an important question to be asked is how AOP based on western individualism can be congregation-oriented preaching based on communal ecclesiology. This is the main problem, and in order to solve it we should first investigate how Campbell attempts to overcome the individualistic trend of AOP theories, and tries to proceed from individualistic AOP preaching to communal preaching on the basis of a Christological approach. The pneumatological homiletic of Bohren suggests an alternative solution to this problem. To Bohren, the pneumatological approach is a more practical answer than the Christological approach for overcoming the limitation of the individualistic trend of AOP, though he does not ignore the contribution of the Christological approach. We can say therefore that the serious problems of AOP that need to be addressed can be summarized as follows: the loss of the identity of Jesus, the loss of the identity of God's community, and the limitation of the role and importance of the Holy Spirit.

1.2 Purpose of this study

The proposed study has three purposes:

- 1) The first purpose of this study is to examine AOP theories and the techniques of Craddock and Lowry as new homiletical paradigms against traditional preaching methods.
- 2) The purpose of this paper is not just to summarize the theories of AOP, but also to evaluate contemporary AOP theories and methodologies, and to look at both positive

and negative features of these. In this way we can investigate the benefits and limitations of AOP for shaping contemporary homiletical paradigms.

- 3) The third and final purpose of this study is to suggest sound congregation-oriented preaching theories as alternatives to the individualistic AOP theories as espoused by Craddock and Lowry.

1.3 Hypotheses

- 1) AOP theories should begin with theological reflection or presuppositions rather than external form (Campbell 1997: xi-xiv). H. Stadelmann (1998: 227) indicates the central duty of contemporary preaching as restoring the theological evaluation of the empirical findings. Quoting Bohren, Stadelmann explains (1998:227) this as the most neglected area in modern-day practical theology:

A glance into handbooks shows that practical theology since Schleiermacher relinquishes this basic interaction with the tradition: the practice of the church is accepted as something given, perhaps a few recommendations for improvement are mentioned, so-called extremes and needy points are criticized, but the basic theological question is never posed.

Bohren's insights can be regarded as significant guidance in evaluating contemporary trends in the field of homiletics. In this regard, in investigating contemporary AOP, we need to ask theological questions such as "What is preaching really?" and "What is the nature of preaching in a biblical perspective?" before considering methodological questions such as "How can we capture the audience's interest?" though no one can deny the fact that both should enjoy equal attention in an effective preaching ministry (Jung 1995:22).

- 2) In theological evaluation, preaching, especially Biblical narrative preaching, should have an explicit Christological assumption. Without Jesus as the central character of biblical narrative, all efforts to make our preaching meaningful to today's audience are useless. Any plot-shaped method of preaching has to focus on the total biblical plot

(meta-narrative), at the heart of which is the story of Jesus Christ. Without this, preaching presents half-truths, and loses its relevance. Since Christians find their identities by remembering and reorienting on Christ, especially the cross-event-proclaimed, the main duty of the preacher is to preach Him, to tell His story. The church as the special community of Jesus can only be formed and sustained as the alternative community in a pluralistic society, in the sense that "the cross-event-proclaimed," as our epistemological key suggests a new life-style and worldview against a worldly standard. In this regard, the Christological assumption of preaching plays a role in building up the Christian church's identity as a community. That is, the Christological premise inevitably leads to the ecclesiological reflection, one that has been ignored in contemporary preaching.

3) A basic presupposition of this thesis is that preaching as ecclesiological hermeneutics and praxis must be a pneumatological hermeneutics and praxis (Louw 1995:9; Cilliers 1994:251; 2002:32; Bohren 1978:80, Korean translation). It means that building the church as God's community through preaching is only possible by the power of the Holy Spirit. This does not mean, however, that a human preacher in the preaching process should be merely a passive instrument; what it does mean is that the Holy Spirit makes things happen through the human agency. This indicates a certain relationship between the Holy Spirit and the human agency. This may be referred to as the "Spirit overpowering co-relationship." The involvement of the Holy Spirit in the process is what effects this empowerment. (Jung 1995: 7).

4) If Craddock and Lowry's AOP does not fully succeed in making preaching relevant for contemporary listeners by losing the Christological, ecclesiological and pneumatological perspectives, we should reconsider relevant preaching theologically and homiletically through a new understanding of the text, the preacher, the congregation, and the Holy Spirit. While AOP emphasizes the plot as the magical formula to make sermons relevant, B.A Muller treats the plot somewhat differently. For Muller, plot is a tool not just to impress and influence the audience but also to convey the message of the text biblically and rhetorically. Muller argues that, in order for the preacher to make a sermon meaningful for today's congregation, one should try to

"shape a homiletical plot which takes the congregation on a 'trip' from the total biblical textual plot to the 'now' of the listeners as participants in the 'play'." (Muller 1991: 132). This process, for Muller, requires an ongoing communicative experience through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. To truly bring the living Word to contemporary congregations, our sermons should be text-oriented, preacher-oriented and congregation-oriented in a collaborative relationship with the Holy Spirit.

1.4 Methodology

For a critical evaluation of contemporary AOP theories, this thesis will use the post-liberal homiletic approach (Campbell 1997; Frei 1974; Lindbeck 1984; Thiemann 1985). They presuppose that the life of Christians is shaped out of the vision of reality narrated in the biblical story of God's relationship to the world as it is focused and given content in and through Jesus Christ (Placher 1987:35-52). Based on this assumption, the post-liberal homiletical approach considers the primary purpose of proclamation as building up the Christian community through appropriating and internalizing Christian beliefs and practices formed from the unique and particular identity of Jesus.

This study will draw extensively on the methodology of C.L. Campbell, a post-liberalist. The reason I have chosen his post-liberal homiletic approach is that his Christological-Ecclesial work is one of the most valuable contributions to the advance of the homiletic movement – more particularly, his critique of AOP theories.

However, since the aim of this paper is not only to reflect theologically and critically on contemporary hearer-driven preaching methods, but also to suggest an alternative congregation-oriented preaching theory in the sense that God's word should become a living word for Christians today, I find Campbell's method valuable but insufficient.

The limitation and narrowness of his method can be located in two areas. First, his view presents the danger of weakening the incarnational theology of preaching through deprecating the created and temporal world in which we live. (Lose 1998:7-9; Hogan

1999:10-11) As Lose (1998:9) indicates, "Campbell's assertion that the storied world rendered by the biblical narrative is the one, true world, suggests an insidious denigration of created reality, a disposition clearly at odds with the incarnation." Such a trend may result in narrowly choosing one direction without considering any other.

Second, though he aptly points out that contemporary preaching has put too much emphasis on skill rather than God, Campbell does not consider seriously the function and power of the Holy Spirit that ultimately makes preaching a living word for today's audiences. (Wilson 1999: 19; cf N. Koopman 2001:1-8¹) Campbell does not sufficiently consider the significance and work of the Holy Spirit, without which Christ-oriented and community-oriented preaching cannot be fulfilled. Indeed, Campbell's silence on the power and role of the Holy Spirit is a weakness that needs to be addressed.

Thus, in suggesting an alternative way beyond AOP theories, I will adapt "a dialogical process through the guidance of the Holy Spirit" as a methodology to supplement Campbell's arguments. (B.A Muller 1961; 1991:132-133) Within this ongoing conversational approach (Lucy Rose 1995; 1997; Hogan 1999), "the textual meaning is re-played in confrontation with the present context" (B.A Muller 1991:133) and the preacher and congregation meet each other interactively, assuming the text as the center of the preaching process.

In this process, preaching becomes collaborative preaching (McClure 1995:48-58) in which the Holy Spirit (not saints) guides the text, the preacher and the congregation (Muller 1961). Only in this way can Biblical and relevant community-oriented preaching truly be effected in our preaching ministry. Thus, a primary interest here is the complementary interaction between two methods that exist not as diametrically opposed enemies, but as aids to one another in a relationship of mutual support and dependency.

¹ In his presentation to the Theological Society of South Africa's 2001 annual meeting at the University of the Western Cape, Nico Koopman argues that Hauerwas, an ardent proponent of post-liberal theology, succeeds in emphasizing the Christological-ecclesial approach in his theology and ethic while he "does not attend adequately to the theme of pneumatology" in his theology and ethic. (2001:3) This same absence with regard to pneumatology can be found in Campbell's post-liberal homiletics.

Thus it is that I find efficacious the post-liberal homiletic method of Campbell. But to compensate for the limitations of his theory, I also use a dialogical-collaborate preaching methodology dependant on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. And here I adapt Bohren's pneumatological approach as the most important method for building the community of God's people.

1.5 Plan of this study

In order to investigate the concept of AOP, evaluate the positive and negative contributions of AOP, and proceed from hearer-oriented preaching to congregation-oriented preaching, this proposed research will be developed as follows:

Chapter Two as a preliminary study examines the relation between the text and the listener in contemporary homiletic and theology. Here, the main focus will be issues of contextualization and rhetoric.

Chapter Three examines closely the hearer-oriented preaching theories of Craddock and Lowry. In order to examine their sermonic theories concretely, this chapter looks first at the history of their theories, and here we examine the theoretical presuppositions of hearer-oriented preaching. After this, the primary content of their homiletic theories is explained. This is followed by a textual analysis, in which we investigate how Craddock and Lowry's theories shape their sermons.

Chapter Four presents the positive contribution of their homiletical methodologies to contemporary preaching.

Chapter Five indicates the problems of their theories and sermons in the Christological-eccelesial sphere, in the light of Campbell's seminal post-liberal homiletical theory and his critique of AOP.

Chapter Six suggests an alternative way beyond AOP methods. Based on an ongoing dialogical-collaborative process, I investigate the collaboration of the preacher, the text, and the congregation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In this dialogical-collaborative view on preaching, my contention is that our preaching can and must be a living word to the contemporary congregation. To conclude this chapter, I discuss four characteristics of transformative preaching as the goal of collaborative preaching.

In the final conclusion I attempt to draw together the arguments in preceding chapters. Here I propose a way to proceed from audience-centered preaching based on individualism, to truly congregation-oriented preaching.

1.6 Delimitation of area of research

Though many homiletic scholars and preachers articulate and support the AOP movement, I will limit my research to only those homiletic methods espoused by Fred Craddock and Eugene Lowry. This is because I regard Craddock and Lowry as the most fervent and influential theorists in the modern AOP movement. However, where necessary, I consider as well the arguments of other theorists and practitioners in this field.

CHAPTER II

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS: THE RELATION BETWEEN THE TEXT AND THE LISTENER IN MODERN PREACHING

Before a proper theological investigation and critique of AOP methods can be done, some preliminary issues need to be addressed. In my consideration of contextualization and rhetoric, I will examine the relation between text and listener (context) in contemporary homiletics. The first purpose of this chapter is to sketch theological and homiletic developments and trends in a broader perspective. Doing this enables us, to an extent, to perceive how and with what kind of influence hearer-driven theorists move from a text-oriented focus to a hearer-oriented focus. So these preliminary considerations give some clues as to how we should understand and evaluate AOP.

The second purpose of this chapter is to plot a rough map for an alternative way to overcome the limitations of AOP, as well as the limitations of both extreme positions.

2.1 Contextual issues in considering the relation between text and reader (context)

The purpose of contextualizing relevant issues in contemporary homiletics is to make us to see the text and reader (context) within a totally new theoretical perspective. (Combrink 1986: 14) With renewed interest in matters of the context and listener, there is a growing awareness that AOP should be studied seriously. One of the concerns of my study is the implementation of AOP without serious theological consideration. I am concerned with how we can make a biblical sermon sensitive to contemporary contexts and hearers without losing the priority of the text.

2.1.1 The traditional evangelical position: The reluctance of contemporizing the biblical message

According to Millard Erickson (1993:56), "the issue of contemporizing the biblical message is probably the single most important issue facing evangelical hermeneutics today." Needless to say, God's word should be heard alive in the new context, for God is calling his people of every generation to grow as the hearers of the word of God. Hermeneutics and homiletics have a responsibility to make God's word relevant in relation to today's context and society. In this contemporizing process, Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life for today (John 14:6). In spite of the importance of the contextualization of relevance, however, most traditional evangelicals have been critical of this, and they have misrepresented this issue. This is not a strange thing "for evangelicals have a certain fear of new interpretations owing to the trauma of the experience with liberal theology" (Pinnock 2000:71). According to Pinnock, the reluctance of evangelicals comes out of certain presuppositions concerning of text as well as context.

2.1.1.1 Relation of text to context

Most evangelical positions, defined as models of sovereign preaching² and hermeneutics, emphasize the Biblical text. The theological and hermeneutical priority of this sovereign approach is that "the Bible is the revealed word of God. It is God's message, historically given, divinely inspired and superintended, and still God's word to man today" (Hillis 1989:75). But, a crucial error of these hermeneutics is not their attitude about the understanding of revelation, but their one-sided emphasis on text, which loses the proper consideration of context and hearers. More specifically, the fundamental problem of evangelical theology is related to the retrieval of past revelation based on the rationalist/prepositional method (Pinnock 1998:13).

The Bible includes authoritative and cognitive factors at its core (Chapell, 1996: 15), but this does not mean that the rationalist/ presuppositional method is the sole and exclusive means in finding past revelation. As Pinnock indicates, a crisis of evangelical

theology is its adherence to past meaning through the rational/presuppositional method without recognizing the primacy of narrative in Scripture:

Some readers seem content to be antiquarian with regard to Scripture. Once they have established the past meaning, they think the job is finished. (2000: 71)

However, the rational/prepositional method does not foster a sound retrieval of past revelation. With respect to Scripture, this method reduces the Bible's richness by privileging the prepositional dimension...Owing to the rationalist orientation, there is a tendency to downplay the historical situatedness of both text and reader. Respect for the Bible as the inspired medium of divine revelation is no guarantee of fruitful hermeneutical retrieval if we use the Bible as a treasure of doctrinal and ethical statement to bolster positions we already hold. Even our confessions of faith are frequently proof-texted with a patchwork of biblical citation. (1998:14)

A unique vehicle of truth, it is neglected by the rational-propositional method because it is too open-ended. God is not self-revealed in history by means of timeless propositions. To miss this fact threatens dimensions of richness and mystery. Recovering narrative does not mean giving up on doctrinal passages, but attending to the story on which the doctrinal texts are reflecting. (quoted from Alister McGrath 1996: 105-6)

Pinnock's criticism of traditional evangelical theology is extreme in its judgement that evangelical theology cannot render the text meaningful or relevant. Nevertheless, his evaluation warns against the danger of a misplaced zeal of finding the biblical meaning of the original text, whilst sealing the Bible off from contemporary relevance. In this respect, many homilectians (John Stott 1988: 137-144; Greidanus 1988: 157; Harold Freeman 1985: 32; Robinson 1980: 89-90) point out the inability of traditional preaching to hold together the biblical and the contemporary. The adherence of the propositional approach to the past meaning of texts causes evangelical theology to lose the balance between the text and the context.

According to Ian Pitt-Watson (1987:57), this position represents an imbalance. Though it focuses mainly on the "textual contexts," (Stackhouse 1988: 34-35), it has a fatal

² John S. McClure uses the term "authority preaching."

weakness in dealing with the contemporary social-political contexts of hearers; it ignores the audience and its contemporary context by not making clear relationships in the sermon between text, and the contextual situation of hearers. Propositional information transfer becomes an end in itself while the relevancy of the modern listener is missed (Hillis 1989:85). As already indicated, it is probably "due to the supposed objectivity of the method and the fact that liberal theology is active in areas of relevance" (Pinnock 1998: 17). Whatever the reasons may be, this trend fails to present the truth as a living reality for the present time. McClure (1995:34) clearly indicates the danger of this mode: "By failing to give hearers a role in the discernment of the preached message, sovereign preaching loses much of its ability to empower (*today's*) congregation...Sovereign preaching prevents members of the Christian community from being included in the sermon preparation process."

2.1.1.2 Structure of relevance: The dualistic two-step model

All preachers know the significance of relevance. This is true of traditional evangelists as well. In making the message of the text relevant, the traditional evangelical position adopts the dualistic two-step model as its most common theoretical format.

The dilemma of this model stems from the problem of the historical-cultural gap that makes application of the Bible difficult. As many homileticians and scholars indicate, the application or relevance of the message of the Biblical text is notoriously difficult because the message must bridge the historical-cultural gulf between the ancient Near East and the post-modern age. (Craddock 1981: 117; S. Greidanus 1998: 233; G.D Fee and D.Stuart 1993: 151; Grant R. Osborne 1991: 212).

According to S. Greidanus, in order to overcome the historical-cultural gap between the ancient text and modern audience, many preachers, especially in English Puritan and Dutch Reformed churches, used an objective-subjective dualism trend (Greidanus: 1970:86-96; 1999 Class lecture). J. Adams (1990: 16; quoted by S.Greidanus 1990) discusses this fact:

English Puritans re-introduced scholasticism in Protestant preaching. They minded the text for the doctrines it contained: exposition. Then they tacked on at the end of the sermon various and sundry 'uses,' or 'improvements on the text' by way of application. The application part could have as many as 14 uses.

In such a method, the duty of preachers is trying to make the irrelevant text relevant for contemporary audiences. It holds that, since the ancient text has objective truth that is irrelevant for our age, preachers should transform this from being an obstacle, into an advantage, i.e. subjective application for today's congregation. For them the model or ideal sermon is a combination of objective and subjective preaching, which results in a dualistic sermon: an objective explication of the truth or event and a subjective application to the hearers. (Greidanus 1999) Although it seems to be a plausible way in bridging ancient and modern, for Greidanus it is a serious problem to prevent a 'right' interpretation and application of the text. He says that preachers are not called to make a text relevant. To formulate the issue in terms of making the text relevant is "self-defeating from the start." If the preaching-text is not relevant, "no technique, however conscientiously and enthusiastically applied, will make it so..." If the text is relevant, however, the task of the preacher is not to make the text relevant but to show "the relevance already inherent in the passage..." The task of preachers, then, is to search "deeply enough into the text and its original situation and intentions to find its relevance." (Greidanus 1999, class lecture)

To sum up, then, on the one hand it is a dualistic model in that "it divides, to some extent, the meaning of text and its application in the development and delivery of a sermon." On the other hand, it is a two-step model in that "It first of all seeks to find the meaning of a passage. Then, on the basis of the meaning it looks for its implications for today" (C.H Kim 1999:146).³ Because of this trend, the structure of relevance in traditional evangelism acknowledges the importance of relevance or application theoretically; it does "not really apply (ing) its truths to the audience" in that it is overly mono-polar and relatively indifferent to issues of context (R. Hillis 1989:85; Pinnock 1998: 16).

³ In this respect, though Greidanus criticizes the "dualistic text-application model," he also fails to overcome the limitations of the two-way model.

2.1.2 Reader-response criticism: The centrality of the reader (relevance)

The rational/presupposition method mentioned above has faced a new challenge in its adaptation to issues of relevance, and the growing awareness about the sociological, cultural and political situation of the readers.

Generally, in contemporary hermeneutics, "there are three different groups of theories regarding the locus and actualization of meaning: Author-centered (with attention directed to the world behind the text), text-centered (with the focus on the world within the text, or the textual world), and reader-centered (where the spotlight is trained upon the world in front of the text, or the reader's world)" (Randolph Tate 1991: xvi).

In classical hermeneutics the goal of interpretation has always been to find the author's intended meaning behind the text. However, this author-centered approach has shifted its concern from the author to the text and, in recent years, in post-modern theory, from the text to the reader. The pendulum of interpretative emphasis has swung in the direction of the reader's role in the construction of meaning (Lategan, 1994: 17, Osborne, 1993:388). And the core of this change lies in the awareness of the significance of contextualization and relevance in Bible interpretation.

2.1.2.1 Reader-response theory

Reader-response theory has been influenced by J.Derrida, "the father of deconstruction." This provides the greatest challenge yet to traditional hermeneutics. Derrida "attacked the very foundations of Western thought by demanding a rhetorical rather than a philosophical approach to communication." According to Derrida, "there are no fixed norms or dogmas, only metaphorical ones. Metaphor is a 'decentering' process involving an infinite number of sign substitutions." (Osborne 1993: 389) In this theory, the reader can never reach a "final" meaning. Rather, interpretation is an endless, ever-changing process between text and context. "Interpretation is an infinite process of creation. All meaning is bound by cultural context, but the context becomes boundless." (Tate 1991: 204)

Reader-response theory is very similar to deconstruction in that it has called into question the rational/presupposition method of textual autonomy and emphasized the reader's role. Edgar V. McKnight (1993: 197) clearly explains this fact:

Reader-response criticism approaches biblical literature in terms of the values, attitudes, and responses of readers. The reader, therefore, plays a role in the "production" or "creation" of meaning and significance. This attitude toward the role of the reader relativizes the conventional view that the meaning of a text is like the content of a nut, simply awaiting its extraction by a reader. Radical reader-response approaches also challenge conventional ways concerning the autonomy of the critic and the scientific and objective nature of the process of reading and criticism.

A more advanced aspect of reader-response theory, in contrast with deconstruction is its central focus on the reading strategy the reader employs. A radical move is represented by Stanley Fish who believes that "interpretative communities" dominate the text (Fish 1980:67; quoted by Long 1989: 50). As the text is read, the reading strategy drawn from the interpretative communities determines the meaning of the text. Fish qualifies the subjectivism in the process of reading. (McKnight 1993:197) Moreover, in line with the switch to subjectivism, the reader-response approach is developed and finds voice in liberation, feminist, and black theologies. "All seek to recreate biblical theology in the light of the present community" (Osborne 1997: 473).

2.1.2.2. The relationship of the text and the context

The most striking feature of the reader-response approach in the field of contextualization is that the relationship of the text to the context moves in a different direction from that of the traditional view. Whereas in the traditional rational-proposition approach, the text has an exclusive authority in determining the meaning, in the reader-response approach, says Botha (1994: 296), "text as structure of potential meanings needs to be differentiated from the literary work, which exists only as a result of a transaction between a text and a reader. The text is seen as a pattern which the reader must to some extent create even when he/she is guided by it." To those who have

supported radical reader-response methods, "the text has no power to communicate meaning without the presence of a reader" (Tate 1991:205). Now "interpretation is neither the attempt to dig behind the text nor even to dig in the text, but to talk with the text and see what emerges as the conversation" (D.L Bartlett 1999:140).

This new understanding of the text is closely interrelated with that of the context or reader. In the traditional picture of interpretation, "the reader is a detached observer of authorial intention of verbal sense." However, recent literary theory calls into question "the alleged impartiality of the reader as well as the objectivity of his or her observation" (Vanhoozer 1998:149). Reader-response criticism, representative of post-modern literary theory, attacks the myth of the objective reader. In this criticism, meaning "is the reader's projection, interpretation a means not of reproducing but of producing meaning...Whether there is meaning in texts now turns into the question of who controls interpretative procedures. When it comes to making meaning, who is in charge?" (Vanhoozer 1998:149) Vanhoozer thus claims that interpretation is a matter of what the reader does with the text, or rather, of who the reader is rather than of what a text says (1998:149). In prioritizing the reader, it is acknowledged that the reader is the one who makes meaning. In this respect, the model for contextualization of recent post-modern literary criticism is a praxis-oriented approach based on the ideology of interpretative communities. In other words, this model means that application determines explication.

2.1.2.3 Structure of relevance: The circle model

Since, in this model, meaning is incomplete until communication reaches its 'destination' – what Ricoeur calls "the culmination of reading in a concrete reader,"- they reject the "text/context" binary opposition (Bartlett 1999:58). Rather, to overcome the dualism of interpretation and application, this model "suggests that the interpretation of a text includes its application or that it is unfinished until it brings forth its implication or proclamative message; in other words, that homiletics becomes an extension of the hermeneutical process." (C.H. Kim 1999: 146; cf. Gadamer 1975; Ricoeur 1976) As Padilla (1981: 22) puts it, the interpretative process is not simply one-way from text to reader. Readers have their own contexts, their own perspectives. Thus

there is a "dynamic interplay among the elements of this hermeneutical circle." This model "leads to a better theology for facing the issues of contemporary times"(D.K. McKim 1986: 89).

However, my concern regarding the praxis-theory-praxis circle model is that since it ponders the contemporary situation and then find the Bible's message for this situation, ideology might govern the text and prejudice a theological perspective.

It is my contention that neither the traditional model nor the post-modern model is sufficient for true contextual interpretation. The traditional position tends to separate the original, objective meaning of the text from its interpretative relevance in contemporary society. This dualistic dynamic between text and context has experienced a new paradigm shift in the advent of New Criticism in which the locus of meaning moves from the author's intention, to the meaning of the text itself, and the context. Furthermore, as I have already shown, reader-response methods put their emphasis on the readers as the focus of Biblical interpretation. The danger does not lie in taking into account readers or context, but in the neglect of failing to consider the intention of the author.⁴

Seung (1982:3) clearly indicates two extreme directions. Whereas a rational-propositional model "locates the text emphatically beyond all possible reaches of his subjective consciousness, reader-response criticism admits the existence of the text only within the subjective consciousness of the reader."

In order to harmonize the extreme position of these two methods, the next section will investigate an integrated approach for a true contextual interpretation.

2.1.3. An integrated approach for contextualization

⁴ It does not mean that reader-response criticism absolutely ignores the author or the intention of the author, but "the construction of author and author's intention is taken to be only a penultimate strategy in reader-response criticism." (E.V. McKnight 1993:214)

Tate (1991:1-15) suggests an integrated approach to finding meaning. According to Tate, "in written discourse, an author intends to convey meaning through the text to a reader... Consequently, three realities converge: author's, text's and reader's...the locus of meaning is not to be found exclusively...but in the interplay between all three worlds." In an integrated approach, the researcher examines three things: the centrality of the text, intentional approaches by scholars such as Vanhoozer, and a creative approach to contextualization as exemplified by Lategan and J.A Smit. Important here is a consideration of the interactional-dialogical model of interpretation as the structure of relevance.

2.1.3.1 The centrality of the text

Using an integrated approach, Bartlett (1999:152) suggests the holding fast of the centrality of the text. Though it is a fact that there is no meaning without conversation between the text and reader or context, the centrality of the text should be preserved before attempting to contextualize the text. In a text-based strategy, the unique biblical story from the text itself formulates the identity of Christianity in such a way that it transcends other stories in the public sphere (Combrink & Muller 1991: 44-45). For, it is "the Bible (*text*) that shapes the church, makes us church" (Bartlett 1999:152).

2.1.3.2 Intentional approaches

A growing number of scholars emphasize some type of intentional method, that is, a return to author and text as generating meaning. (Vanhoozer 1986: 91-92; 1998: 197-452; Osborne 1991: 411-15; Thiselton 1992: 597-619; Bartlett 1999:138-164). Using intentional methods, Vanhoozer (1998:335) tries to propose a middle way between absolute and anarchic interpretation. He acknowledges the plurality of meaning in interpretation because the interpretative situation is varied and complex. But at the same time, he points out that the reader is ethically bound by the text to discover its author's intended meaning (1998: 179). "The interpreter has an ethical responsibility to allow the communicative aim of the text to guide the reader to its intended meaning" (Osborne 1997:474). And to find the intended meaning of text is the only safeguard against interpretative relativism.

2.1.3.3 The creative-metaphoric approach to contextualization

Another way to truly contextualize the text is by employing a creative or metaphoric approach. As with Vanhoozer's approach, this approach holds that while multiple meanings of a text are inevitable due to the context of interpretative communities (Jonker 1999: 79; Combrink 1984: 35), a text should be stressed as exercising "certain constraints" on the interpretative process. (Combrink 1984:26; 1988: 200; Combrink & Muller 1991:43; Lategan 1984; J.A. Smit 1991a & 1991b)

But, if our interpretation is inevitably context-bound, how can we contextualize a text that is alive within a contemporary context? In his introductory article, *Current Issues in the Hermeneutical Debate* (1984), Lategan suggests one possible approach to the creative use of text:

Theological hermeneutics does have the ability to deal with the creative dimension of understanding. When the text is neither understood as an *imitatio* of reality, nor as a fossilization of the original situation, its instructions, its Leserangebot can be seen as a re-description of reality, which opens up new possibilities of understanding for the reader. In this way, the text serves both as constraint and as stimulus, providing both continuation and innovation. There can be no doubt, on the basis of textual analysis, that Galatians does not allow of a 'plus' to be added to faith as the sole basis for belonging to the community of believers and, that in the situation of the first readers, this 'plus' referred to the observance of the law. However, in a modern setting, it could find a completely different referent. Creative interpretation, in the best sense of the word, should not be a problem for theological hermeneutics, but its ultimate aim (1984: 14).

According to J.A Smit (1991b : 25), creative interpretation means metaphoric activity to bridge the gap between a text and its context. J.A. Smit defines metaphor as a word in counter-determining context and under the contextualization of a text he understands that a text becomes a text in counter-determining context (Smit 1991b: 25; Combrink & Muller 1991: 44). J.A. Smit declares:

In the metaphoric interaction between text and context the activity of contextualisation functions as a contextual or situational filter which selects, emphasizes, suppresses and organizes features of the discourse of the reader, implying statements about it that normally apply to the text. (Smit 1991b: 25)

In a discussion of text counter-determining context, Smit continues:

The text is retroactively determined by the discourse which selects, emphasizes, suppresses and organizes features of the text, implying statements about it that normally apply to the discourse or context. (Smit 1991b:25)

Thus, in the metaphorical function, the text is "interactively de-contextualised in terms of its original context and re-contextualised in a new discourse" (Combrink & Muller 1991:44).⁵

2.1.3.4 The interactional-dialogical process

In order to overcome the limitations of the dualistic two-step model and the circle model, this paper suggests an interactional-dialogical model. (C.H. Kim 1999: 146-147; G.R Osborne 1991:6) In his book *Hermeneutical Spiral*, G.R Osborne calls the interactional-dialogic model a "spiral." This model requires above all that preachers should be conscious of finding "theological movement" which "is expressed in terms of structure (shape, genre) of a field of concern (focus), but also in terms of function (the theological intention) of the text." (Muller 1991:132) Even when interpreters start from the hearer's need, and contextual questions in relation to the Biblical text, a basic theological meaning in the text should be preserved in the sermonic preparation. Also, for the creative and innovative reconfiguration of meaning for contemporary audiences and context, this model needs an interactive and dynamic dialogical process between the text and the congregation to find a message for our generation. In an interactional-dialogical process, "the textual meaning is re-played in confrontation with the present

⁵ Metaphoric interaction is closely related to the rhetorical act, which will be examined in the next chapter. By metaphoric activity, the preached word becomes a living word addressed to hearers and transforms the listeners by means of fresh and persuasive communication.

context. Only in this way can the new-ness (i.e. the "news") of the text be brought to the fore." (B.A. Muller 1991:132-133)

2.2 Rhetoric and its influence in recent homiletics

Before dealing comprehensively with the listener-centered preaching of Craddock and Lowry, there is another preliminary topic to be considered – the issue of rhetoric in the homiletical approach. There is a growing sense, given the direction and trends in homiletics currently, that rhetoric plays a crucial role in understanding the relation between text and listener. A discussion of rhetoric recognizes that listener-centered preaching is influenced by hermeneutical presuppositions. Furthermore, it provides a helpful direction for the study of such topics as the character (ethos) of the preacher, the rhetorical identification of God's people (text's function and hearers), and the relation between God's role and that of the human being (the issue of the Holy Spirit).⁶

2.2.1 A swing of the pendulum between hearer-driven and message-driven

Dealing with person and message in theology and rhetoric in his fine work *Preacher and Cross*, Resner surveys "a swing of the pendulum between two dominant frames of reference, the rhetorical and the theological." (1999: 81) He uses the phrase "preacher-ethos" to explain the tension that exists between the theological and the rhetorical. To him, "preacher" is a theological category, referring to one who proclaims the gospel of Jesus Christ crucified and risen. "Ethos" is a rhetorical category, referring to the role that a speaker's character has in any given rhetorical situation. The polarization of ethos and preacher points to the two different directions of preaching throughout the history of homiletical theory. These two positions are represented, respectively, by hearer-driven (ethos) and message-driven perspectives (preacher).⁷

⁶ These topics will be considered in detail in the final chapter as alternatives beyond "listener-centered preaching." For the discussion of these, I will adapt Andre Resner's argument from his book *Preacher and Cross: person and message in theology and rhetoric* (1999).

⁷ This thesis stresses message or text-centered preaching as an alternative to the less desirable listener-driven theory. But the notion of message-driven theory is totally different with one-sided message-driven theory exclusively against the listener-driven theory. Rather, the researcher uses the phrase "the message-driven" in a sense that the text can formulate the identity of God's people, the church and in a sense that

Those who start with "ethos" often begin from the standpoint of the hearer and from the nature of the rhetorical situation. Rhetorically oriented homiletics are predominately hearer-driven. Those who begin with "preacher" often begin with the message he or she conveys in the theological conviction that the preaching event is prompted and empowered by God. Theologically oriented homiletics are in the main message-driven (Resner 1999: 40).

2.2.1.1 The hearer-driven position of classical rhetoric

During the period of Classical Rhetoric, the most important features in relation to the history of homiletic theory were the "ethos" understanding of Aristotle and the notion of Cicero, who adapted Aristotle's mantle on rhetorical proofs in persuasive discourse (Resner 1999: 2; 34). As the first person to provide comprehensive treatment of rhetoric, Aristotle understood rhetoric as "an art which has the function of seeing the available means of persuasion in any given situation" (Resner 1999:34). In his discussion on the means of persuasion, he mentioned the three fundamental entechnic proofs: logos (the matter itself), pathos (the way in which the listeners are affected in a speech), and ethos (the character of the speaker) (Resner 1999:34; C.W. Lee 2001:37). Among these three Aristotle gives priority to the role of ethos in a way the character of the speaker affected what the speaker said (Loscalzo 1995:409). Unlike his teacher Plato, Aristotle saw rhetoric as the counterpart of dialectic (logic): "it was not verbal ornamentation but a technique of argument. Rather than simply persuading, rhetoric was "a faculty of considering all the possible means of persuasion on every subject" (Aristotle quoted in C.W Lee 2001:37).

Cicero followed Aristotle's three proofs in his view on speech. Like Aristotle, Cicero emphasized ethos as the chief proof "in the winning of our hearers' favor," and "ethos in

we should recover the priority of the text that listener-centered theory has missed. Thus, it does not mean that the message-driven theory of an alternative persists to only the theological position without considering the importance of hearers (rhetoric, ethos) in our sermons. Rather, it means an integrated opinion to acknowledge the significance of listeners as well as the priority of text.

the rhetorical situation has primarily to do with the perception of the hearers." (Resner 1999:34)⁸

This period was concerned "more with the persuasion of its audience (function) than the production of set forms of speech (text)." (C.W Lee 2001:38; cf, Botha 1994:121-2).

2.2.1.2 The message-driven position of the Latin Fathers

Unlike the listener-driven trend in classical rhetoric, the Greek fathers generally ignore rhetorical considerations in their preaching ministry "due to the perception that classical rhetoric was tainted by extra-Christian use." (Resner 1999: 41) In their dualistic worldview between Christianity and anything outside the faith, using worldly arenas for preaching the revelation of God is antithetical to the Christian proclamation. By rejecting this worldly culture altogether, they emphasize exclusively the *logos* among the three areas. Resner (1999:42) argues that this trend is based on the opinion that Cyprian is representative of the Greek fathers:

It is apparent that, for Cyprian, the argumentation of the speech takes complete precedence over other aspects of the event. Cyprian thus relegates all spoken matters to *logos*, brushing aside the importance of *pathos* or *ethos* in Christian discourse (Resner 1999:42)

2.2.1.3 The neutrality of rhetoric and preaching in Augustine

There is a major discussion on the relation between rhetoric and preaching in Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine* Book IV. Under the influence of Cicero's works, Augustine wondered why Christians did not use rhetoric to explain the Christian faith. (C.A. Loscalzo 1995: 410) The following statement expresses Augustine's basic position on rhetoric as it relates to preaching:

⁸ Lascalzo explains that Cicero's rhetoric is more systematic than that of Aristotle: "Cicero outlined a method by which a speech should be said (invention); the speaker arranges the speech in a particular order based on purposeful intention (arrangement); the speaker clothes thoughts with language (style); the speaker secures the speech in memory; and the speaker effectively delivers the speech." (1995: 410)

Augustine uses the image of smuggled goods from Egypt to describe the act of smuggling rhetoric into the Christian camp. The task was to make such goods useful for God's people (Resner 1999:45).

The neutral position of Augustine lies in the fact that his main presupposition was to embrace both rhetoric and preaching. Rhetorical artistry and God's role, and the role of preacher's character in preaching are important considerations of this thesis.

2.2.1.3.1 Rhetorical artistry and God's role

To Augustine, rhetorical tools such as clarity of speech, styles of speaking, and the vocabulary that preachers use to persuade their hearers, are important so that "people do not misunderstand the message on account of mere mechanics" (Resner 1999: 49). That is, the rhetorical artistry ultimately exists as a means of persuading Christians (Loscalzo 1995: 411). Augustine accepts the classical aim and definition of rhetoric and applies it (Loscalzo 1995:411). Augustine says, "To teach is a necessity, to please is a sweetness, to persuade is a victory" (Resner 1999:50 ;quoted by Augustine 1958: 4.12.27). For Augustine, however, "Every style, as every aspect of the orator's duty (including teaching and delighting), is trained upon the one end of persuasion" (Resner 1999:51). This emphasis on style and oratory naturally leads us to the following question: What is God's role in proclamation? As I have already mentioned, it is my conviction that the way to approach this question is expressed in adopting an integrated position, in other words, a "both/and " argument:

Augustine's ideal Christian orator is dependant on God. God is the source of the preacher's ability to teach, delight, and persuade. He is a petitioner before he is a speaker (Resner 1999: 52).

Though Augustine does not explain in detail his view of the relation between God's role and the preacher's role, "he simply urges preachers to do their work and assures them that God will do God's" (Resner 1999:53).

2.2.1.3.2 The ethos of the preacher in preaching

Resner (1999:53) indicates that the role of the preacher's person in preaching borrowed the classical rhetorical understanding of ethos. To Augustine, "the life of the speaker has greater weight in determining whether he is obediently heard than grandness of eloquence" (Resner 1999:53; quoted by Augustine 1958: 4.27.59). This classical rhetorical notion of character is somewhat different from the traditional ethos argument in that "the Donatist error of making the efficacy of preaching dependent on the preacher" is avoided (Resner 1999:81). Despite Aristotle's positive contribution of the notion of ethos, the thing to be criticized, as Resner indicates (1999:55), is his assumption "that rhetoric is ideologically neutral and therefore needs no theological discrimination in its appropriation." For his theory, Augustine depends mainly on Paul's writings (1 Cor.1-4), "but always in terms of its stylistic arrangement and effect on the hearer, rather than in terms of its claim on the life of the preacher whose own life is claimed by the cross." (Resner 1999:56) In other words, Augustine misses the paradoxical nature of the role of the preacher, i.e. that the ethos of the preacher as a representative of God's people is formulated by Christ's role and ministry. (Elna Mouton 1997:121)⁹ So, we can say that Augustine's rhetoric has much in common with classical rhetorical assumptions, and that his position is not a neutral position at all. (Resner 1999:56)¹⁰

2.2.1.4 Barth's dilemma: The return of the message-driven position

With Barth's homiletics, the swing of the pendulum again moves from a hearer-driven position to a message-driven position. Since, to Barth, the starting point of homiletics and theology is God, he wants to leave no grounds "for an anthropological 'point of contact' where the divine and human can meet" (Tisdale 1992:183). According to Thomas Long's expression, "rhetoric suffers a 'Barth attack'" (Long 1993: 174). In his exclusive theological frame, "with reference to its God-empowered efficacy to save hearers – the rhetorically pragmatic claims for the person of the preacher were theologically blasphemous...idolatrous...the power of human personality and morality

⁹ Mouton (1994: 370) says that "it has become clear that the Ephesians perspective is in the first place Christologically oriented, and aimed at the reorientation of the reader's identity awareness and ethos. This brings us to its persuading function and rhetorical situation."

to make efficacious the preached word of God" (Resner 1999:3). However, this does not mean that he rejects the duty of man to preach the God's word. To Barth, the preacher as primarily a herald ought to speak of God (Jung 1995:184). What Barth rejects is for the preacher to be "the center of attention rather than the message to which he or she is to bear witness" (Resner 1999:59). In this respect, there is a paradoxical tension contained in the relation between God's role and human's role. The way to harmonize the paradoxical tension "is found in the concept of mysterious union of divinity and humanity by the work of the Holy Spirit in preaching." (Jung 1995:184; cf. Byrd 1990:25,26)¹¹

However, as Jung indicates, despite the emphasis concerning Barth's concept of mysterious union, "his primary emphasis remains upon the divine activity which dismisses the human activity of the preacher" (C.K. Jung 1995:186). Though Barth contributes to this trend in considering God as the subject and primary actor in the preaching process, he forgets that "God (in the person of the Holy Spirit) works through and with the human instrument" (Jung 1995: 186). As a result, Barth's radical position "eliminates talk about the human person in the pulpit...fails to address the nature of the preacher's character" (Resner 1999:81).

2.2.1.5 The rebirth of the hearer-driven model in contemporary homiletics

From a rhetorical frame of reference, many contemporary homileticians, including Fred. Craddock and Eugene Lowry (Resner 1999: 65-82; Campbell 1997)¹² reconsider "the rhetorical approach to homiletics chiefly because each treats the topic of the preacher in an extended way and as a central aspect of their homiletic" (Resner 1999:65). As Thomas Long (1993: 178) indicates, no preacher can avoid rhetorical considerations. Despite the importance of this matter, however, there has been too little careful discussion about the theological presupposition and its use of rhetoric. We do, however,

¹⁰ Resner clearly insists that "Without an awareness of rhetoric's own powerful presuppositions and assumptions about discourse, situations, and outcomes, and without appropriate theological discretion, rhetoric can mean the subversion of the message itself." (1999: 56)

¹¹ The theme of Holy Spirit is treated in the last chapter as an alternative to overcome the limit of the listener-centered preaching.

¹² Whereas Resner calls Baumann, Fant and Meyers as the proponents of the hearer-driven model, Campbell chooses Rice, Craddock, Steimle, and Lowry as representatives.

see a clear discussion of this matter in Resner's book. Resner (1999: 71) criticizes the proponents of contemporary hearer-driven homiletics as being based on the Aristotelian-inspired rhetoric which "is a phenomenological pursuit of all the factors in a rhetorical situation that aid the speaker's goal to win the hearer to his or her position." Though they stand in a neutral position like Augustine in recognizing both the Word of God and the audience, and sometimes emphasize the priority of the word of God, they are ultimately Aristotelian in pointing to the priority of the situation of hearers (Campbell 1997: 157; cf Craddock 1979). Resner (1999:81-2) clearly expresses this dilemma in hearer-driven homiletics:

These new homiletical approaches represent a return to Augustine and the belief that rhetoric is neutral...Nevertheless, these theorists fail to see the ideologically freighted character of rhetoric, that it shapes what one sees and how one proceeds. Under its influence "efficacy" is reduced to persuasion or influence and becomes a matter of human manipulation. In addition, issues of "real" character often become obscured by the essential veil...finally, from a rhetorical frame of reference, matters of credibility become primarily an issue of audience analysis, in the search for those standards of credibility which the audience holds.

2.2.2 Paul's alternative approach

Now, in Paul's message, especially 1 Cor 1-4, we discover an alternative arbitration beyond the present impasse. There will be a more detailed discussion of this in the next chapter. Paul's alternative approach is expressed in the notion of a reverse-ethos based on the cross-event-proclaimed. In his argumentation, we find an approach "that can reorient homiletical theory to the primacy of the Gospel, without rejecting the role which rhetoric and ethos always play" (Resner 1999:82).

2.2.2.1 The cross-event-proclaimed

Resner (1999:4-7; 83-185) makes an interesting suggestion regarding Paul's ethos argument from 1 Corinthians 1-4. According to him, Paul, on the one hand, criticizes the Corinthian church's criteria of orator evaluation thoroughly enmeshed in classical rhetorical ideals, and assumptions drawn from culturally conditioned prejudices. Paul, on the other hand, reframes "a notion of ministerial ethos within the context of the Christian community which has been created and sustained by the apocalyptic word of the cross" (1999: 4). In this respect, Paul's homiletic is message-driven rather than hearer-driven. However, it does not discard rhetorical concerns but "subordinates such concerns in view of the claims of the cross-event-proclaimed" (Resner 1999:142).

In Paul's rhetorical strategies, this cross-event-proclaimed functions as new epistemic values for the community as well as Paul's reframing of his own self (Moulton 1997: 131). For in the cross-event-proclaimed, and the delivery of the word of the cross, "God creates and sustains a new community – the cruciform community" (Resner 1999:129). As Resner (1999:130) stresses again and again:

For Paul, true ethos is derivative not of a social and cultural expectation but of an expectation...that arises from the nature of the gospel and the community of faith that is formed and sustained by the God-given and empowered logos (the cross-event-proclaimed).

Thus, what Paul rejects at the cross is not rhetorical strategies for defending the Gospel "but its *kata sarka* ('according to the flesh') enslavement. Without the theological insight that comes *kata stauron* ('according to the cross'), rhetoric cannot be used faithfully, i.e., in a way that accords with the nature of the message of preaching" (1999:140).

2.2.2.2 Reverse-ethos

By investigating the cross-event-proclaimed, we discover that Paul uses rhetorical strategies in a totally different manner from the adherents of the hearer-oriented approach. Resner calls it "reverse-ethos." In Resner's argument, it is "reverse" or "ironic" ethos in a sense that "differentiates it from an Aristotelian notion of ethos

which derives its meaning and function primarily from paying attention to audience expectation for how a speaker is to be deemed credible" (Resner 1999: 4). In the midst of a culture thoroughly formed in Aristotelian notions of ethos, Paul intentionally sought to reverse their criteria "by grounding them in the new way of knowing (epistemological reframing) that the cross-event-proclaimed provides them" (Resner 1999:131). Unlike an Aristotelian rhetorical approach, reverse ethos focuses first on the message of Christian proclamation and then considers the Christian rhetorical situation by which Paul reorients his audience under the light of reverse-logos (cross-event-proclaimed). Since "this reverse-logos not only legitimizes, but even necessitates a reverse-ethos," Paul pursues his ethos given the new epistemology of the cross, rather than negating or ignoring the ethos of the preacher as unimportant (Resner 1999:130).

Such an epistemic identity through the message of the cross has implications for both the "real" preacher (who is known ultimately to God) and the "perceived" preacher (a social construct that is based on information available to hearers about the preacher).

The "real" person of the preacher is called to a life of discipleship, just as all disciples are called. This call may entail following a path which renders contemporary marks of Christ's stigmata, marks which attend to faithful following....

The "perceived" ethos of the preacher refers to that set of "character masks"...The preacher concedes the role of "perceived" ethos from a rhetorical point of view...the preacher's role here is to appreciate rhetoric's insight into the power of "perceived" ethos in the rhetorical situation of Christian proclamation and bring to bear on it the theological discrimination that the cross-event-proclaimed affords. Such discretion will entail the continuing orientation and reorientation of both the preacher and hearers alike to the fundamental epistemic values of the faith community as these are shaped by the apocalyptic message of the cross (Resner 1999:176-177).

From Paul's alternative suggestion, we can draw some conclusions:

- 1) Paul's rhetorical strategy is message-driven rather than hearer-driven in the sense that the reverse-logos controls the reverse-ethos.

2) Paul's rhetorical approach forms the identity of God's people both in respect to the preacher and to the church oriented and reoriented by the message of the cross. In this respect, the message of the cross functions as the epistemological consciousness. Thus, we can summarise and say that "for Paul, the minister's identity proceeds from ecclesiology and ecclesiology flows out of Christology" (Resner 1999:7).

2.3 Conclusion

In this preliminary chapter, I have examined contextual issues and rhetorical issues in contemporary homiletics, in a consideration of the relation between text and reader. Whichever way one looks at the hearer-oriented theories of Eugene Lowry and Fred Craddock, they can be said to endeavour toward a radical contextualization (relevance), and a rhetorical strategy based on the Aristotelian rhetorical premise in contemporary homiletics. So, it is not strange to say that Osborne (1991:411-415) defines the modern narrative preaching movement as the by-product of reader-response hermeneutics and hearer-driven rhetoric (Long 1993:187).

Today, some have considered the hearer-driven preaching theories of Craddock and Lowry as an alternative means of overcoming boringly irrelevant preaching, for they believe that hearer-oriented theories offer preachers new methods which would enable the listener to truly hear the gospel. Rather than preaching as preachers seemingly always have, they should consider the hearer first. If preachers learn from traditional preaching as well as from these lessons, they could be confident that once again contemporary audiences will listen to God's living word.

But some have argued in contradiction of hearer-driven theories, that ministers should never use applicatory language techniques or rhetorical strategies for persuading the minds of contemporary listeners, for the text of truth has already been sacrificed on the altar of listener-driven theories (Willimon 1992: 56, 65; MacArthur 1992: 300; cf. J. Adams 1990: 19-20). One example is the view of MacArthur: "the expositor depends on the power of the text itself...and is assured that application of the truth in a personal and individual way is ultimately the responsibility of the listener" (1992:300).

But, such a claim fails to recognize the fact that God's word should be the living message in a concrete situation, and also the fact that this is the preacher's role as well as God's role. Thus, the issue of my thesis is not whether hearer-oriented theories should be used, but how, and with what kind of theological discretion they are used (Resner 1999: 177). In this regard, our significant question for further study is how Lowry and Craddock use AOP methods and with what kinds of theological discretion they suggest their theories. Craddock and Lowry's AOP deserves a hearing, but their theories must be treated with caution and circumspection.

In the next chapter, I examine Lowry and Craddock's theories of hearer-oriented preaching in detail.

CHAPTER III

AUDIENCE-ORIENTED PREACHING (AOP) THEORIES OF CRADDOCK AND LOWRY

This chapter will discuss the AOP theories and techniques of Craddock and Lowry. For this, I will first investigate the background of their theories. After that, I will fully examine Craddock's homiletical theories and sermon analysis. Finally I will discuss Lowry's homiletical theories and sermon analysis.

3.1 Background of AOP

The AOP by Craddock and Lowry did not take place in a vacuum. These types of preaching, first of all, grew out of the twentieth-century paradigm shift in theology and hermeneutic that preceded the new homiletical theories (Buttrick 1994: 5; Eslinger 1994:65; Zink-Sawer 1997:350). Secondly, since Craddock's book, *As One Without Authority*, which will be a starting point of this thesis, was published in 1971, AOP also grew out of the changes in church situation and preaching concepts that took place during the 1960's and the 1970's. These causative factors behind the development of the AOP should be considered as crucial content for the background of AOP theories (Bailey, 1988:54-55).

3.1.1 The Changes in hermeneutic and theology

In the hermeneutical and theological perspectives, AOP theories that are a part of creative preaching models, have two roots. According to Elizabeth Achtemeier (1981:27-28), one is "the new hermeneutic by Ebeling and Fuchs and the other is the resurgence of literary criticism." These new movements are the attempts to overcome the obvious weakness of historical criticism.

3.1.1.1 The Decline of historical-critical method

Prior to the emergence of New Criticism of Fuchs and Ebeling, the classical hermeneutical mode for understanding the biblical text was the historical-critical criticism in which "textual meaning is the creation of an author" (Vanhoozer 1999: 43). According to Tate (1991:xvi), "meaning was assumed to lie in the author's intention, which was formulated in terms of the social, political, cultural, and ideological matrix of the author." So, in this traditional method, the interpreter's primary task is to recover the author's intention, for "the author's intention is the only practical norm, the sole criterion for genuine consensus, the sole guarantor of the objectivity of meaning" (Vanhoozer 1999: 47). To them, an author determines textual meaning.

Though no one can deny the importance of the author in determining the intended meaning of a text¹³ (Brueggemann 1995:313-314; Vanhoozer 1999:249), many scholars have indicated crucial drawbacks of this mode in that it has failed to consider the context and application of the biblical message and, at the same time, has failed to do justice to the function and meaning of the text itself (Ebeling 1967:32; Wink 1973: 4; E.S-B.Shim 1994: 4-7). To overcome such obvious weaknesses critical scholars seriously consider new methodological discussions in which "there is a growing tension in old-line historical criticism" (Brueggemann 1995: 314). In relation to our studies, the new criticism and literary criticism are the most important methodological moves which had an impact in formulating AOP.

3.1.1.2 The Influence of the New Hermeneutic

3.1.1.2.1 The pivotal emphasis

Against historical criticism, the beginning of a reversal in the way the interpreter approaches the text occurred in the New Hermeneutic movement inaugurated by Ernst Fuchs and Gerhard Ebeling. Many scholars understand 'the new hermeneutic' as

¹³ Brueggemann does not object to the necessity of historical criticism. Rather, his concern lies in its inadequacy, "for historical criticism has become, in Scripture study, a version of modes of absolutism among the elitely educated. It is increasingly clear that historical criticism has become a handmaiden of certain kinds of power." (p.314). Vanhoozer also recognizes the importance of the author in that "the author is the condition for the possibility of determinate meaning" (p.240), for "the author is not only the cause of the text, but also the agent who determines what the text counts as" (p.228). Thus, it is really true that "The author's intention is a necessary condition of the text taken as a unified and completed act" (p.249).

theological enterprise related to language (Thiselton 1986:78; Kirkland 1987: 59-61). Quoting Kysar's writing, Kirkland (1987:59-61) describes the new hermeneutic as "a movement to understand all of theology and indeed all of human life, in terms of language and interpretation." By a new appreciation of the creative power of language, what this hermeneutical movement teaches anew for a new mode of preaching is that language creates reality (Achtemeier 1981: 27). In the new hermeneutic, "the language does much more than simply impart information. It actually conveys reality; it is grounded in 'being' and not just in thought" (McDonald 1990:492). Thus, we succinctly define that the pivotal concept for Fuchs and Ebleling was the event-character of language (Pieterse, 1984: 6; Kirkland 1987:122). Their main interest is primarily in the word-event in the biblical text "to lead the hearer or the interpreter onward beyond his own existing horizons, so that the text addresses and judges him anew" (Thiselton 1986:82).

3.1.1.2.2 Stimulus for rediscovery

This methodological shift was developed on the basis of Bultmann's existential understanding of biblical language (Johnson 1965: 66). Bultmann's perspective of biblical interpretation is closely connected with his understanding of existential biblical language (Kirkland 1987:61). Since "all mythological language objectified God's acts by projecting them upon the plane of nature and history," the Biblical language was to be "deobjectified or existentialized in order to make its intent clear" (Kirkland 1987: 61; Originally from Funk's 1966:21-22). Bultmann "transposed his negative evaluation of the objectifying mythological language of the New Testament to his positive evaluation of history in order to emphasize the event-character of God's activity" (Kirkland 1987:122). In this process, the ancient biblical texts will not be relevant for modern man seriously considering the question of human existence. When we look to the New Testament with the existent questions, the New Testament will answer these questions and in this way come alive for contemporary age (Johnson 1965:63). So, what is important for Bultmann is salvation event rather than salvation history.

On the basis of this existential context, Fuchs and Ebeling rediscover the notion of language-event in terms of concept of the event-character of language.

They maintained that the essence of language was act rather than speech or content... The language of the text was not in need of being interpreted--it was interpretation... Fuchs and Ebeling shifted the goal of hermeneutics from the traditional understanding of the text to an understanding of human existence through the text (Kirkland 1987: 123).

The new movement by Fuchs and Ebeling, however, has gone one step beyond Bultmann's theories. On the whole, Bultmann's interest is to understand the New Testament text by the process of existential interpretation and the hermeneutical circle is merely a means to that end. In contrast to this, the goal of the hermeneutic of Fuchs and Ebeling "is not simply a more adequate understanding of the text, with the help of the involvement of one's self-understanding as a pre-understanding, but rather the goal is the statement of the text's meaning in the language of my existence, so that what is ultimately interpreted is myself" (Johnson 1965: 66-67). McKnight compared Bultmann's and Fuchs' standpoint as follows: "Bultmann desires to interpret the text of the New Testament scientifically, and chooses the existential level of questioning. For Fuchs, however, the text wishes to interpret man" (McKnight 1978:77). In this respect, the scholars of the new hermeneutic chose Heidegger's later thought on language beyond Bultmann as their methodology.¹⁴

3.1.1.2.3 Preaching and language

With the challenge of the new hermeneutic, the use of language in preaching has been considered an important factor in such a way that preaching is a creative action beyond the staid formulas for conveying a great idea (R. Bailey 1993:355).

¹⁴ Osborne (1997: 472) summaries Heidegger's later thought as follows: "In his later works Heidegger developed the linguistic underpinning for his ontological approach to existentialism, relating the problem of language to the issue of Being. For him language is not a tool for imparting knowledge but an event that leads to the possibility of human existence. Language is grounded in being and not just in the thought life. It expresses Being by uniting both the subject and object into itself." (cf, see Thiselton 1980: 335-6).

The word-event theology of the new hermeneutic decisively affected the formulating of AOP. Especially in 1971 F. Craddock (1971:6; 10; 27-8; 44-5), who used an inductive and indirect Kierkegaardian method, indicated that the new emphasis concerning the power of language could suggest an alternative way for the future of preaching which was in a language crisis. Like Fuchs and Ebeling, Craddock firmly believed that "genuine preaching was an execution of the language of the text and not an exposition of it" (Kirkland 1987:123).

Through the rediscovery of the oral character of preaching, Craddock tried to make a radical reversal in the direction of traditional preaching modes so that the hearer experiences the word of the Gospel. Lowry, another advocator of AOP, is indebted to Fred Craddock in his understanding that an emphasis on the importance and power of language is one of the most crucial factors that determine whether or not a sermon is heard by the listener. Through the use of aesthetic, poetic and imaginative language, the preacher can incite and evoke the experience of the listener.

3.1.1.3 The Influence of the new literary criticism

3.1.1.3.1 General trend of literary criticism

Another new approach to be considered for the background of AOP is that hermeneutical movement known as "the new literary criticism, especially narrative criticism."¹⁵ To many scholars, any uniform definition of literary criticism is not an easy one, for it means different things to different people (Longman III 1987: 7-10; Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard 1993: 428; Greidanus 1993:510; Campbell 1995: 307; Ryken and Longman III 1993: 15-23). In spite of variety, however, one general trend is that the literary criticism has moved beyond the methods of historical criticism in which the author is considered the most important factor in finding the meaning of the text (Achte-meier 1981:37). Campbell (1995:307) indicates that through literary criticism,

In result, through the Heidegger's later emphases on language, he tried to overcome the traditional subjective-objective split (Kirkland 1987: 29).

¹⁵ Since it is not our purpose to deal with all contents of literary criticism, I will focus on the influence of the literary criticism in formulating listener-centered preaching theories. As the new criticism makes us realize the significance and power of the language in preaching to Craddock and Lowry, so the new literary criticism also makes us realize the importance and power of story in preaching to them.

the interest of hermeneutics "has shifted from an author-centered approach...to a text-centered approach...to, most recently, a reader-centered approach."¹⁶

3.1.1.3.2 The emphasis of the New Literary Criticism and Narrative Form

This shift of the new literary criticism provides new ways of interpreting Scripture for biblical scholars and preachers. The AOP theories are largely indebted to the new literary criticism and especially narrative criticism. In relation to our studies, the new literary criticism has stressed the important developments beyond historical criticism, many of which have already reached an impasse (Greidanus 1993; 510-518; Campbell 1995:307-309).

In contrast to historical criticism, the new literary approach is a focus on the text in its present form (Ryken and Longman III 1993: 19). The move, from going "behind" to the historical questions to considering the final form of the text, makes one study the text itself once again as an imaginative and creative source for biblical interpretations (Campbell 1995:307). At the same time, the return to the final text is closely related to the unity of the biblical text (Ryken and T. Longman III 1993:19). Instead of breaking the biblical text into its smallest component parts, a method characteristic of historical criticism, "textual literary critics have explored larger blocks of biblical material, stressing the connections and creative tensions among various parts of the biblical text" (Campbell 1995: 307).

With new emphases on the final form and the unity of the biblical text, one more thing to be considered is the significance of the form of the text (Ryken and T. Longman III 1993:17; Craddock 1981:45; T. Long 1989:12; H.J.C. Pieterse 1981:11). Under the traditional tendencies of the historical criticism, the Bible was treated as a source for propositional statements or single themes, regardless of the forms of the text. Conversely, in the new literary criticism, scholars understand that the form of the text is not separated from the content of the text. Form is an essential part of the content of the

¹⁶ So literary criticism covers a diverse field such as the new criticism, structuralism, narrative criticism, post-structuralism, and reader-response criticism. (For more detailed explanations, see W.R. Tate's *Biblical Interpretation* 1991:27-208).

Bible for "with a literary text, form is meaning" (Ryken & Longman III 1993:17). To Ryken & Longman, it means that "we cannot grasp the truth of a story or poem, for example, without first interacting with the story qualities or poetic images" (1993:17).

In the area of biblical hermeneutic, these emphases of literary criticism naturally have led to a new awareness of the biblical narrative (story) theology as a branch of modern literary criticism. The new resurgence of narrative criticism in Biblical interpretation and preaching is not surprising, "since much of the Bible is written in the narrative form" (Greidanus 1995:516).

According to the definition of Powell (1995: 239), "Narrative criticism focuses on stories in biblical literature and attempts to read these with insights drawn from the secular field of modern literary criticism. The goal is to determine the effects that the stories are expected to have on their audience." Such a new emphasis on the importance and power of stories is the central focus of narrative criticism. To narrative critics, the Bible as story has a power to shape the life of the audience. And this power of story is conveyed in moving and memorable use of the language (McKim 1985: 126). In this aspect, "story theologians drew on linguistic insights that show that narratives invite response and are thus highly participatory forms." (McKim 1985:130).

The aim of narrative criticism is not merely to emphasize story itself, but to read the story of the Bible with literary devices such as plot, character, setting, and point of view so that many preachers can approach narrative texts in a new way. Especially, more fully explored to date has been the consideration of plot or story line:

Stories have their beginning, end, and "in-between time" featuring characters interacting through critical and dramatic moments through relationship that progressively unfold. All elements of the story advance this story line. When the themes of the stories have run their course, the story ends either happily or unhappily" (McKim 1985: 127).

The understanding of the Biblical story through the plot has had a great impact on the hearer-oriented preaching theories by Craddock and Lowry.

3.1.1.3.3 Preaching and story /story-line

If the new criticism reminds Craddock and Lowry of the importance of a language-event in preaching, the literary criticism, especially narrative criticism makes them consider the significance of story and story line (plot) for AOP. Under the influence of narrative theology, inductive form and narrative form are posed as an alternative way for traditional deductive and prepositional forms. They, above all, affirm that these new forms allow the hearers to be involved in preaching and to experience the story world of the Bible (Greidanus 1995: 517).

In summary, when seeing these hermeneutical perspectives, AOP blossomed in the atmosphere of the decline of the historical-critical approach and with the rise of the new hermeneutic and literary criticism, especially, narrative criticism (Eslinger 1994: 65).

3.1.2 The changes in the context of the Church during 1960-1970

The AOP, on the one hand, blossomed from the theological movement and it, on the other hand, grew out of the social changing situations during 1960-70. For the emergence of the new homiletical direction was shaped by a specific historical and cultural context. It was the decade of the 1960s in America that experienced profound change. About this change, T. Bailey (1988:55) says,

The whole country was caught up in a whirlwind and did not settle down until several years later. Many foundational beliefs and ideas were discarded and a search for new answers began. A time of change most often brings about new ideas and new ways of expression. Churches all across America experienced significant change during this period (Bailey 1988:55).

Also, in his book "*Future Shock*," Alvin Toffler (1970:3) testified that the people of his age were "overwhelmed by change." The following section is given to these overwhelming changes in relation to the beginning of the AOP.

3.1.2.1 The ecclesial circumstances

In his thesis *"An Analysis of the Development of Innovative Preaching in America, 1960-1980,"* T. Bailey (1988:55-57) explains the situation of the American church in the 1960s as the period in which it stopped growing in numbers. This trend is totally different from that of the previous decade that experienced much growth with the population increase and economic growth of America. D. Kelley testified that America's church for the first time experienced a decline in membership (Kelley 1972: 1; Bailey 1988:55-6). The decrease in numerical growth caused the average church believers to be indifferent towards participating in the local churches actively and enthusiastically.¹⁷ For recovering the growth and vitality of churches from these problems, ministers tried to seek new and better ways to communicate the Gospel to their hearers (Bailey 1988:57).

3.1.2.2 The growth of media

Another characteristic in the 1960s to be considered is the growth of the electronic media. In this period, "many new forms of media came into being and into increased usage" (Bailey 1988:58). The development of media in the 1960s presented serious challenges for preaching, threatening traditional ways of oral communication (Ong 1967:1; 6; Hall 1971:3;7). Ong (1967:292) predicted that the effect of the electronic media would renew the appreciation of the oral quality of language. The growth of Media had cultivated a shorter attention span. Audiences then were visually and electronically stimulated by the media explosion (Bailey 1993: 351). Many listeners felt boredom more easily than in the previous period and they wanted to be entertained. The result of this phenomenon caused the preacher to experience difficulty in communicating the Gospel to the hearers who were by now accustomed to the media. In this aspect, the growth of Media made the preacher reconsider the effectiveness of traditional preaching and, at the same time, envisage a move from the concern of the word spoken to the concern of the word heard.

¹⁷ Bailey indicates an example of lower participation as the decrease in contribution: "Contribution received by major denominations steadily declined throughout the 1960s. The number of missionaries sent abroad by six major denominations also diminished during the 1960s. A Gallup report released on May 26, 1968, showed that the percentage of people who believed that religion was losing its influence

3.1.2.3 The challenge of traditional authority

The crisis in authority is another factor that played a significant role in formulating the AOP. Traditionally, the authority of preaching and preachers has been sustained firmly in the Christian churches. In the 1960s, however, the issue of authority was more seriously questioned than in the previous period. Bailey (1988:59) indicates this: "At one point preaching... went unquestioned, but during this time (1960s) of change the people were unwilling to accept the authority behind preaching."

Thus, it is not surprising that Craddock in 1971 entitled his book, *As One Without Authority*. The reference to authority strongly presents his intention. Considering the change of social structure in 1960s in relation to the matter of authority, Craddock says "No longer can the preacher presuppose the general recognition of his authority as a clergyman, or the authority of his institution, or the authority of Scripture" (Craddock 1971:14). It is not the intention of this chapter to debate whether his argument is right or wrong; this will be mentioned later. Rather, my aim here is to prove that the changing understanding concerning the matter of authoritarian society greatly influenced their view of the AOP.

3.1.2.4 The crisis in traditional preaching¹⁸

The decline of church growth, the technology explosion, and collapse of the traditional authority required a paradigm shift in traditional pulpit proclamation (Howe 1963; 1967; Reid 1967; Thielicke 1965:2; Randolph 1969). This was a threat to those who supported traditional preaching methods.

According to many scholars, traditional preaching means "sovereign preaching," (McClure 1995:30-31) "rhetoric of authority," (Loscalzo 1992: 17) and "preacher-based preaching" (R. Hill 1989:62-64). The aim of this mode is to persuade the audience with one-sided communication by the preacher. The method of persuasion is deductive theory grounded in homiletic rhetoric by Augustine. The primary concerns of the

rose from 14 percent in 1957 to 67 percent in 1968." (1988:57; quoted by Holly L. Green, *Why Churches Die: A Guide to Basic Evangelism and Church Growth* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1972), p. 10.

¹⁸ H. Thielicke (1965:2) indicates the crisis of preaching in the 1960s i.e. that "Actually preaching itself has decayed and disintegrated to the point where it is close to the stage of dying."

preaching are for the preacher rather than for the audience (Hill 1989:63). So, the preacher, in this mode, is placed in an authoritative stance, whereas the audiences are placed in a position of secondary concerns or submission (McClure 1995: 32). As a result, "this stance will be displayed through an arrogant tone, judgement attitude, or monologic presentation of the sermon" (Hill 1989:63). Against this trend, scholars, such as Howe, Reid, and Randolph, reflected on the traditional preaching based on the rhetoric of authority.¹⁹ The core of their criticism is that traditional sermon content and form failed to consider the changing concrete situation of the hearer (Howe 1967:11-19; Randolph 1969:1-7; Bass 184-5). To overcome the weakness of sovereign preaching, they "suggested the need for alternative homiletical models which would demonstrate that the thoughts and experience of the hearer had been consulted prior to preaching" (McClure 1995:39).

3.1.2.5 Preaching and hearers

As already implied, the investigation of the changes in the context of churches during 1960-1970 suggests an innovative paradigm reversal in which preaching should move from preacher-based preaching to hearer-based preaching. Preaching should not be one-way communication, but two-way communication in which listeners participate actively. For this, preaching should be intentionally designed to be heard by the congregation. As McClure says, hearer-oriented preaching by Craddock and Lowry was not the first effort for two-way communication, but has been systematized by them in the most developed forms. Though in the 1960s, a dialogical preaching movement considering hearers as primary concern appeared on the stage of homiletical theories, it, according to McClure (1995:40), "failed to gain a significant foothold in the churches" because of the lack of understanding of the dialogical sermon. McClure, rather, argues (1995: 40-42) that the AOP in a real sense has blossomed with the inductive method championed by Craddock and the narrative method by Lowry, a strong supporter of Craddock. The following section is given to the detailed studies of their theories.

¹⁹ In his book "The Empty Pulpit (1967)," Reid (1967:25-33) indicated some problems of preaching in 1960s: 1) sermons use too much theological lore and language; 2) most sermons are boring, dull, and uninteresting; 3) most sermons are not relevant; 4) a sermon today is not courageous; 5) the sermon is not communicated well; 6) sermon does not lead to change in a person; 7) the sermon has been

3.2 The detailed theories of AOP

On the basis of their theological and historical backgrounds, Craddock and Lowry have developed their AOP theories. In the following section, their methodologies will be fully examined. Also, I will analyze one sermon each of Craddock and Lowry by the method of sermon analysis by J. Cilliers (cf. 1992:389).

3.2.1 Theory of inductive preaching by Fred Craddock

As Long indicates (1989: 80-82), Craddock is a central figure in advancing the inductive theory of preaching. Inductive movement is the reasoning process that moves from the particulars of human experience to a general truth or conclusion. This specific theory has been argued clearly in his work *As One Without Authority* (1971). The chief goal for Craddock, as preacher "was to effect a new hearing of the gospel" in which listeners participate actively in the whole sermon process (Campbell 1995:94). Craddock has indicated that the crucial failure of the old sermon form or deductive method is the lack of considering audiences in an appropriate fashion. Thus, Craddock's discussion of preaching is primarily intended as an alternative movement to deduction by suggesting that the chief aim of an inductive method is to involve the listeners in the process of determining the message of a biblical text (James 1989:125).

3.2.1.1 Starting points: The diagnosis of problems

Before suggesting his innovative preaching method, Craddock has indicated two problems that the preacher communicating the gospel faces. The diagnosis of two problems becomes the basis for an alternative solution beyond them. As already mentioned above, under the influence of Fuchs and Ebeling, Craddock starts with the problem of language, while emphasizing the linguistic dimensions of the sermon (Eslinger 1987: 97). In Christian preaching, according to Craddock (1971: 35; 44), word, especially spoken word, possesses creative power in which it becomes an event, a

overemphasized. In similar contexts, Reul Howe also criticized the sermons of his age. (See, R. Howe, 1967: 26-32)

happening in history. The language problem he diagnoses lies in viewing words as a lifeless record, instead of regarding words as oral speech which has creative and performative power toward the contemporary listeners (Craddock 1971: 44-45). When this problem is not considered seriously, the homiletical discussions, such as structure, unity, movement, use of text, can be useless, for the renewal of preaching is closely related to "the consideration of what words are and what they do" (Craddock 1971: 6). In this regard, Craddock has indicated the loss of power and meaning in words as a crisis in preaching (1971:6-7).

Another problem Craddock diagnoses is the matter of authority. Campbell (1995: 271) states that behind the inductive method, which has been considered the major core of his theories, lies an issue of authority. In other words, his sermon theory comes out of plain reaction against the notion of the traditional authority. The traditional authority of the Christian pulpit was the authority of the preacher in which the listener was relatively ignored. This authority of the preacher, according to Craddock, was being seriously challenged by a change of social structure in America (Campbell 1995:271). Craddock explains the challenge (1971:14):

The collapse of Christendom means the church's loss of scaffolding of a supporting culture. No longer can the preacher presuppose the general recognition of his authority as a clergyman, or the authority of his institution, or the authority of Scripture.

Rather, authority in Craddock's opinion "is located in the interaction between the congregation and the biblical text" (Campbell 1995:271). For this, the preacher should stand as one without authority in front of his congregation using an inductive method, a new way though it is not totally new in homiletical practice and rhetoric areas. When the emphasis of authority has been moved from preacher-based rhetoric and logic to hearer-based rhetoric and logic, preaching will regain its authority in the post-Christendom era.

Thus, the problem of preaching that Craddock has indicated, in relation to the matter of authority, is that many preachers have been pursuing authority by the traditional sermon method, which is deductive logic and rhetoric. It fails to evoke the hearer's interest and involvement by considering the congregation as a significant partner of preaching.

The most serious problem, which happens when the problems of language and authority are not corrected appropriately, is that listeners become bored with the preaching. Boredom in preaching is "a form of evil... the root of all evil," for it "works against the faith by provoking contrary thoughts or lulling to sleep or draping the whole occasion with a pall of indifference and unimportance" (Craddock 1978: 12; 13). He suggests that to find the solution to boredom is the main task of his homiletical theories. Thus, it is not strange that, from its starting point, Craddock's basic concern remains focused on the reconsideration of the individual hearer and then, for beyond boredom, his sermonistic theories have been growing toward the necessity of a new homiletical direction, which is mainly called the "inductive method." For his solution to these problems, the general preaching theories of Craddock should be considered in more detail.

3.2.1.2 General preaching theology of Craddock

Though the homiletical paradigm of Craddock can commonly be summarized as inductive movement, it includes several principles as an alternative for overcoming the crisis produced by the traditional homiletical method. Before scrutinizing his preaching techniques in detail, his general preaching theology will be studied under the titles of indirect method, overhearing, inductive movement, and imagination.

3.2.1.3 Indirect method by Soren Kierkegaard

A clue for unraveling the crisis in preaching is found in the indirect modes of communication by Soren Kierkegaard (SK) who becomes a major contributor in developing Craddock's model of preaching. In fact, Craddock's second book, *Overhearing the Gospel* (1978) is entirely indebted to the communicative method of SK (Craddock 1978: 79). When Craddock has said that the preaching should be a new hearing of the gospel, he means that "the gospel is to be heard ever anew" by the indirect method of SK in which 'hearing' is "to focus attention where it belongs, on the listener's experience" (Craddock 1978:79; 80).

SK's indirect method, which was influenced by Socrates, was developed on the assumption that preaching is teaching faith to those who have already heard (James 1989:128). In fact, the premise for Craddock's book, *Overhearing the Gospel*, came out of accepting SK's presupposition that "There is no lack of information in a Christian land; something else is lacking, and this is something which the one man cannot directly communicate to the other" (Craddock 1978: 79). In this aspect, SK's indirect mode is different from the direct mode of communication. Unlike the direct mode, which serves "only to add more information to that which already lays listless and useless on the minds of the hearers," the indirect mode is the method "for eliciting capability and action from within the listener, a transaction that does not occur by giving the hearer some information" (Craddock 1978: 82). For SK, the effective result of preaching depends on the "how" as well as the "what": "How experiences are communicated is a major factor in defining what those experiences are" (Craddock 1978: 17). Never should "how a preacher does" be subordinated to the dimension of what they do. Rather, "How they do is what they do, and what they do is how they do" (Craddock 1978:16). So the ignorance of how in preaching is as serious as ignorance of what. SK insisted, "much of the difficulty we face in effecting a new hearing of the word lies in the methods we have used. This is true in some cases simply because the methods are not appropriate to the subject matter" (Craddock 1978: 64).

For, ultimately the purpose of preaching and teaching by the indirect method is not to give knowledge about something, but to help the hearers stand alone with the help of another. For this, preacher works as "a midwife" (Kim 1999: 147-148).

3.2.1.3.1 Overhearing of the gospel

Though Craddock accepts SK's indirect method, it is not a blind consent or duplication of his idea. Rather, through using SK's communicative mode, the concern of Craddock "seeks to form an entirely different homiletic paradigm from the traditional pattern, one that breaks the imperialism, with the listener experiencing in every corner of the mind and heart" (BY. Kim 1999: 148). For this paradigm shift, Craddock suggests that SK's method should be used critically and adaptively in contemporary homiletical settings:

SK could not be uncritically transported and reduplicated on our occasions of teaching and preaching. The reasons do not all lie in the many kinds of distance between us and mid-nineteen-century Copenhagen. A major reason is that SK's method of discourse was designed for writing, not for speaking....SK was primarily a writer, and the relationship between writer and reader is quite different from that of speaker and hearer, even if a writer uses an oral style in his work (Craddock 1978:102).

Considering the situation of the hearer rather than the reader, Craddock reinterprets and expands Kierkegaard's concept of inductive communication as an expression of "overhearing" in his own word (Craddock 1978: 105).²⁰ According to Craddock, the posture of overhearing is crucial in both speaker and hearer. For the preachers, overhearing requires that first they listen before they speak, "because until the preacher has heard something, the preacher has nothing to say" (R. Meyers 1993: 38; cf. Craddock 1972: 80). For the listeners, too, overhearing plays a crucial role in creating effective communication (1978:120). In his article, *Recent New Testament Interpretation and Preaching*, Craddock (1972: 82) explains the advantages of overhearing in more detail. First, "overhearing has the same advantages of attending a play: the listener is permitted to hear the responsibilities for his own participation. Second, "overhearing is non-threatening." Within the mood of non-threatening, the hearer is set free to think, to feel, to resolve. Third, "overhearing the text can be a more honest handling of the Scripture." Finally, overhearing can be very persuasive and powerful for the hearer. Because of these benefits, overhearing of the Gospel becomes strong hearing. In order for overhearing to be a powerful and appropriate tool for the listener, two essential ingredients should be distance (history) and participation (contemporary) (Craddock 1978: 123; Robin R. Meyers 1993:39). Distance is very important, for the preparation of the preaching begins with "a keen sense of the distance between the biblical text and congregation to be addressed on Sunday" (Craddock 1990:158). For Craddock, the distance must be maintained from the text appropriately. When the distance is sustained well, it "conveys the sense of the substantive nature and

²⁰ To Craddock, "overhearing" is the most apt word to explain the way or method Kierkegaard used: "This is not SK's word for it, but it is not difficult to demonstrate that overhearing characterized very important and sometimes decisive periods in his own life and therefore characterized what he hoped would occur in his readers" (1978:105).

independence of the message, qualities that add to rather than detract from the persuasive and attention-drawing power of the message" (Craddock 1978: 123).

A second element in the experience of overhearing is participation, or intimacy. Using an effective distance allows free participation and identification by the listener (J. A Kisner 1989: 223). Participation is formed not by force and coercive persuasion, but by spontaneous decision and identification of someone who is overhearing. Let's listen to the explanation of Craddock (1978:123):

Participation means the listener overcomes the distance, not because the speaker "applied" everything, but because the listener identified with experiences and thoughts related in the message that were analogous to his own. The fundamental presupposition operative here is the general similarity of human experience.

In this process, preaching is no longer shared information or prepositional and moralistic lessons based on a deductive mode. Rather, preaching requires inductive and narrative methods through the active participation of listeners in which, rather than proceeding from text to listener, the preachers move from listener to text. In order for overhearing to be a powerful and appropriate tool for preaching, what is important is adequate sensitivity to the tension between distance and participation. It requires that preachers have a skill both that sustains distance without the risk of losing intimacy and that maintains intimacy without eliminating distance so quickly (Meyers 1993: 38-39). In similar context, Swear (2000: 49), who was influenced by Craddock's theory, says in his latest book, *Preaching to Head and Heart* as follows:

Authentic communication from the pulpit always exists in the tension between disclosure and distance... Preachers who disregard proper distance will meet appropriate resistance, even resistance, even rejection, from their listener.

3.2.1.3.2 Inductive theory and movement

Overhearing demands a concrete to become a new hearing of the gospel for contemporary listeners. For Craddock, the matter of method is as important as the

matter of content itself. They are not separated, but complemented for effective communication, especially preaching: "The method is the message. So is it with all preaching: *how* one preaches is to a large extent *what* one preaches" (1971: 52).

What Craddock suggested as an alternative to the traditional method was an inductive theory. As already indicated above, unlike the deductive method moving from a general truth to a particular application or experience, the inductive method moves in the opposite direction, from the particulars of experience to general truths and conclusions (Craddock 1978: 82-100; 117). Adapting Bruno Dreher's concept of homiletical induction, Craddock described the inductive method as "beginning with an interpretation of human existence today and then moving to the text" (Craddock 1971: 55). From Craddock's statement, we can understand that an inductive method mainly "highlights a specific kind of movement in the sermon"- movement from beginning to end and that movement proceeds from particular observations to the establishment of a conclusion (Campbell 1995: 270-71). That is, it can be called a revolutionary reverse against Aristotle's deductive rhetoric and logic that have for centuries governed the traditional sermonic movement. And the centrality of this innovative movement shift lies in the issue of the listeners. In Craddock's judgment, traditional deductive sermonic movement has a weakness in that it does not invite listener participation, for in this movement, the audience can be simply a passive receiver "who accepts the right or authority of the speaker to state conclusions" (Craddock 1971:54). In this relationship between preacher and the hearer, "there is no democracy here, no dialogue, no listening by the speaker, no contributing by the hearer. If the congregation is on the team, it is as javelin catcher" (Craddock 1971: 55). Unlike deductive movement that ignores the hearer participation, inductive movement demands "involvement" of the listeners. In this movement, the preacher does not force conclusions on the listeners' mind but leads the hearers to arrive properly at their own conclusions at the end of the sermon (Byrd 1990: 149). Inductive movement, says Campbell (1995: 270), helps the congregation to draw the conclusion for their lives and find their own decisions so that "they will have ownership of the message." The preachers provide the listener with the freedom to complete the sermon (Craddock 1971:64). No longer is the preacher a dictator but a sharer of the Gospel. In this inductive movement, the major image of preaching is "that

of a trip on which preacher and congregation travel together toward an eagerly anticipated destination" (Campbell 1995: 271). According to Craddock, this inductive movement method is fundamental to American culture and in this postmodern age will be the most effective way for audiences to experience the Gospel (1971: 55-58).

3.2.1.3.3 Inductive theory and imagination

The inductive method and the use of imagination are closely connected with each other for new hearing audiences. Craddock recognizes that an inductive preaching requires metaphor or imagination. Since, to Craddock, the aim of preaching is to create an experience that is transforming for the listeners (Reid 1998: 170; Rose 1997:58-62), inductive preaching cannot be reduced to mere conveyance of ideas and moral applications. Rather, the major concern of inductive preaching is to evoke images through using poetic and metaphoric language (Craddock 1971: 77). The human mind operates in images or metaphors, not abstract concepts or arguments. Quoting Eugene Peterson, Swear claims that Craddock, like poets and creative writers, is "interested not in saying things as accurately as possible but in touching the human heart and in letting the human imagination work in creative, analogical ways" (Swear 2000:107). Craddock (1971:59) firmly believes that "images are replaced not by concepts but by other images" in which the listener becomes a changed man, though it requires a lot of time, for "the longest trip a person takes is that from the head to heart." Also, for Craddock, this change by images starts with the preacher and then proceeds to the congregation:

The place to begin discussing the function of imagination in preaching is not at the point of using imaginative words or phrases, but at the necessary prior point of receiving images. As it is the person who hears who has something to say, so preaching begins not with expression, but with impression. This calls for a sensitivity to the sights, sounds, and flavors of life about him that is not easily maintained by the minister, or by anyone else (Craddock 1971:59).

Accordingly, since the preacher and listener are closely mingled into images of the Gospel, it is a most crucial mistake that often images are considered as mere illustrations serving an ornamental function (Craddock 1971:80; Kim 1999:141; Byrd

1990: 151). Rather, the preacher has sensitivity to cultivate a creative imagination with insights drawn from the experiences and relationships of life and through the sermon the congregation participates in the preacher's empathetic imagination. In this process, the congregation experiences the Word as a transforming event (Rose 1997:62). For more detailed explanations, Craddock (1971: 92-97) suggests several guiding principles for the use of images in sermonic communication:

First, let the selection of images to be shared be drawn from the world of experience known to the hearers and let these images be cast in forms recognizable as real and possible.

Secondly, as far as is possible, let the preacher use words and phrases that image specific and concrete relationships and responses.

Thirdly, the principle of economy in the use of words, especially adjectives and adverbs, is invariably a sound one.

A fourth guiding principle for conveying to others images received is to avoid all self-conscious interruptions in narration and description.

A fifth and final principle... the language used is to be one's own.

3.2.1.3.4 Inductive theory and unity

Another thing to be considered for an effective inductive sermon is the matter of unity in the sermon. Effective preaching comes from careful preparation and "one of the clearest evidences of that preparation is the unity of his message" (Craddock 1971: 99). For Craddock, a good sermon is not to explain many theological concepts, illustrative materials, and corroborative facts hastily under one title, without having a single theme. Rather, an effective sermon should have a unifying theme (unity in order to) which "glues the message together and makes its features stick in the listener's mind" (Chapell 1994:34; cf, Craddcok 1971: 100). Craddock also argues, concurring with many homileticians' advice, that "the desired unity has been gained when the preacher can state his central germinal idea in one simple affirmative sentence." Constructing a major theme that is summarized by one simple sentence is not easy work. However, when it is absent in a sermon, the sermon loses its movement and appropriate use of imagination, which are the crucial factors of Craddock's inductive preaching theories. Craddock

explains the relation between the unity and the movement and imagination of the sermon:

The primary characteristic of forceful and effective preaching is movement, then it should now be said that unity is essential to that movement. There can be no movement without unity, without singleness of theme (1971: 100).

The imagination is released by the restraint of one governing consideration (1971:100).

More specifically, Craddock explains the necessity for unity in the relation preachers and listeners (Craddock 1985: 156-157). In the unity of the sermon, a preacher can know "the destination of the trip that will be his sermon" (Craddock 1971: 100). They know where they are going. In the delivery of preaching, the limitation of the unity or single idea "may seem binding at first but it actually frees preachers from entrapment in the labyrinth of language and explanation possibilities" (Chapell 1994: 36; Craddock 1971:100). Especially, the single sermonic theme also is an absolute necessity for listeners. Sermons are not for readers, but for the listeners. Sermons for listeners are more difficult to communicate than in the environments for readers. If preachers are not aware of effective communication, the listeners easily feel bored. Chapell indicates this well;

Listeners simply have less inclination and opportunity to decipher a sermon than readers do a textbook or a commentary. If the parts of a sermon do not obviously relate to a clear theme that gives the message's pieces form and purpose, then listeners are unlikely to keep their attention on the contents for long (1994: 37).

Every effective communication requires a unifying theme. When the preacher provides a unifying theme for the message, listeners easily participate in the sermon with interest and meaning (Craddock 1971:117): "Listeners to sharply focused sermons have an amazing capacity to perceive that the sermon was prepared with them specifically in mind" (Craddock 1985: 156). For, listeners of a sermon more easily connect with messages that have been pulled together than messages that have lost a unifying concept.

3.2.1.3.5 Inductive theory and identification by analogy

Essential to the inductive method of Craddock is identification with the listener (1979: 59). As already mentioned, the traditional deductive sermon outline is structured on tight argumentation of proof in which listeners should respond to an authoritative rhetoric. To Craddock, the danger of this method is that the preacher can coerce or manipulate listeners. When persuasion becomes manipulation, the audience closes the door of their mind to the sermon, rather than identifying themselves with the sermon. By contrast, the focus of the inductive theory is to identify with the congregation's present situation in which the sermon is a mutual process between the preacher and the congregation (Loscalzo 1992:28; Craddock 1995: 95). For Craddock, a sermon is not completed until congregations arrive at their own conclusions through identification with the preaching. It is, thus, not an exaggeration to say that the power of the inductive method resides in effectively using identification in preaching by finding a point of contact (Loscalzo 1992:25). Craddock says, "the key to holding interest and making an impact upon an audience lies in the identification of the audience with characters and critical events portrayed" (Craddock 1985: 162).

In his recent book, *Preaching* (1985: 163-165), Craddock explains six things for effecting identification. First, for an effective identification, the human condition is presented with genuine insight to contemporary congregations. Every sermon has a spiritual lesson and appropriate value but not all sermons touch the mind of audiences and change their lives. Such a message only occurs "when human behavior or relationships are probed and revealed with such perception that hearers say, "Yes, this is really the way it is. I did not know anyone else really understood" (Craddock 1985: 163). At this time, the congregation's life is changed. Second, for an effective identification, a sermon should be focused on the specific and particular rather than the general. "Life is not experienced or known in general." Rather, when a sermon is targeted to the specific and particular, congregations "have identified with specific persons involved in concrete events in certain places at certain times" (Craddock 1985: 163). Third, for an effective identification, "sermon materials are realistic rather than contrived for homiletical purposes." A clear reason for Bible to be appropriate to us lies in the fact that the story of the Bible is realistic. If it is lost, the congregation cannot identify with the unreal, the

exaggerated, and the artificial (Craddock 1985: 164). Fourth, for an effective identification, narration and expression of a sermon is presented with emotional restraint and economy of the words (Craddock 1985: 164). Fifth, for an effective identification, "As much as possible, the sermon material is re-experienced as it is related" (Craddock 1985: 165). Though some of the content is information and historical reporting, even then, sensitive preachers use their imagination to develop empathy with their hearers (Loscalzo 1992:29). In this respect, Craddock emphasizes that preachers should learn empathetic imagination as one of the most important skills, for empathetic imagination is "the capacity to achieve a large measure of understanding of another person without having had the person's experience" (Craddock 1985:95).

3.2.1.4 From interpretation to sermon

While the above examines the general preaching theories of Craddock, this section will explain the way from interpretation to sermon.²¹ Following the main structure of the book *Preaching* (1985), this section considers the interpretation of the listeners and the text as something to say and then examines the shaping of the message into a sermon, which is the process of determining how to say (Craddock 1985: 84-136; 170-203). Through these steps, the sermon is progressing "from early vague and amorphous stirrings without text or subject to a clear statement of a theme which lies at the intersection of a text and the occasion for the sermon" (Craddock 1981: 60).

3.2.1.4.1 The interpretation of the listeners and the text

To make an effective sermon, Craddock binds tightly together the world of the listener and the world of the Bible (Craddock 1985: 85). Rejecting the traditional dualistic trend to move from "back then" to "us today," Craddock connects the text in the past with the listeners in the present. By doing so Craddock prevents the sermon from becoming unrelated to the lives of the people (Bugg 1992:68). Rather, the emphasis of the text and the listeners by Craddock is "to facilitate an experience of the gospel and transformation in the listener" (Kim 1999: 151).

²¹ Unlike the first two books of Craddock, the third book, *Preaching*, deals with a more practical aspect of inductive preaching. This section examines the center of the main content of the book, *Preaching*.

3.2.1.4.1.1 The interpretation of the listeners

For Craddock, listeners do something to the message just as the message does something to the listeners. The sermon is not completed until the listeners are brought into the presence of God. The sermon should begin with the hearer's experience, and finally should arrive at the audience's own particular conclusion individually in which listeners are active participators²². For fulfilling this goal, in contrast with the traditional sermon goal, the most crucial duty of preachers is to make a "delicate negotiation of distance and intimacy" (R. Meyers 1993:33). The understanding of the preacher's audience both as individual and as congregation involves a tension of distance and intimacy. In this tension, a sermon is presented with power and effectiveness to listeners (Craddock 1991:86-98). First of all, listeners should be considered "as audience in the attempt to understand them as strangers and hence, as persons, no more, no less," that is, the listeners are regarded as guests (Craddock 1985: 90). Craddock explains the reason why preachers should first see the listeners as an audience:

The value is this: to get enough distance to understand and accept the listeners in and of themselves, apart from their relationship to the minister...No one person's value is in any way dependent on another person's assessment. Ministers know that as well as or better than anyone, and yet these likes and dislikes and personal relationship do have an influence upon preaching. It is, therefore, important for the health of one's preaching to submit to the discipline of distancing every once in a while, to remind oneself that those who are to hear this sermon are who they are and have their worth as well as their needs intrinsically, whatever may be their attitude toward or their relation to the minister (Craddock 1985: 87).

²² According to Craddock, "To say that listeners are participants is to make at least three statements about the nature of preaching. First, the message is appropriate to the listeners. The second statement which listener participation makes about preaching is that sermons should proceed or move in such a way as to give the listener something to think, feel, decide and do during the preaching. The third and final statement about preaching, generated by the conviction that listeners are vital contributions, is that sermons should speak for as well as to the congregation" (Craddock, 1985: 25-6).

For effective preaching, to understand the listeners as just strangers is not enough. The listeners should also be considered as a congregation in which "the listeners are known as a pastor knows them" (Craddock 1985: 90). To see the listeners as congregation is to understand them in the relationship with one another and the minister. At this time, the preacher should function as a pastor. When the pastor-preacher preaches to the listeners as congregation, the most effective contact is made with the listeners. It is an effectiveness and appropriateness "unavailable to the guest speaker, whatever may be the skills, credentials, and reputation of that speaker" (Craddock 1985: 91).

The pastor-preacher engaged in the process of building a sermon should be reminded of three vital questions pertaining to the audience. The first question is, "who will hear the sermon?" Craddock suggests that a preacher close his/ her eyes and see the people in the pews while saying to himself/herself, "These are the persons to whom I will give the message" (Craddock 1985: 92). The second question is, "When will this sermon be heard?" According to different times and situations of worship service, the preacher should consider the context, special factors of context and the atmosphere in which the preacher will preach the sermon (Craddock 1985: 92-3). The third and final question is, "Where will this sermon be heard?" The first two questions affect this last question. When the place and atmosphere are set up, the preacher should consider such things as length, mood, weight, and the introduction of the sermon (Craddock 1985: 93).

Craddock continually sets forth three methods by which the pastor-preacher comes to know the listeners. First, Craddock suggests that the preacher should formally know his or her congregation by means of sociological studies, novels, movies, television, and membership history. For these studies, Craddock regards words like initiative and intentionality as essential.

The second method for getting to know the audience is the informal means through wedding, funerals, hospital visits, counseling session, and social, civic, and recreational events. The preacher attends to the above situations as a listener and observer. In these situations the preacher is expected "to be a resident, a citizen, a leader, and one who

shares the blame and the credit for the quality of life in that place. One preaches in and out of as well as to that community" (Craddock 1985: 95).

The third and final method for getting to know the audience is empathetic imagination. It is not given automatically, but is given by intentional efforts like listening, observing and reading. For Craddock, to keep the empathic imagination alive is "an effort of the imagination to bring to a specific human condition all that a person has heard, seen, read, felt, and experienced about that condition" (Craddock 1985:97). Through these above considerations listeners become an essential factor in sustaining the vitality and movement of the sermon from beginning to end (Swears 2000: 60).

3.2.1.4.1.2 The interpretation of the text

After the listener is interpreted Craddock studies the text, which is another important factor, before arriving at the point of preparing a sermon. Craddock suggests a seven-step procedure that involves serious grappling with the text. The first process is selecting the section of text. The preacher selects a text by himself or by following the lectionary (Craddock 1985: 101). The second process is to read the text several times in the most reliable translation of the original language and at least once aloud. This first spontaneous reading provides benefits for effective preaching:

Honest opening of the self and the text to each other, the beginning of ownership of the lesson or sermon to come later and identification with listeners who will have similar thoughts and feelings when the text is shared publicly (Craddock 1981: 20).

Also, this spontaneous engagement with the text becomes a basis for deliberate engagement later, without being overwhelmed by the secondary resources (Craddock 1985:106). The third process is establishing the text. For Craddock, "establishing the text means checking for any variant or alternative words or phrases in the text." This refers to differences among the manuscripts as well as in translation (Craddock 1985: 107). The fourth process is determining the parameters of the text. The biblical text to be selected should be a unit and a unit has a beginning and an ending. Also, the clues for beginning and end are thematic and literary. For Craddock to consider the parameter

with care allows the preacher to treat smaller units of material without violating the meaning of the biblical text (Craddock 1985:110-112).

The fifth process is setting the text in its several contexts: historical, literary, and theological. To set the text in a historical context is to consider the aspects of time, place, and circumstance to determine the origin of a text. The significant fact pointed out by Craddock is "not to allow an impatience for immediacy and relevance to collapse the distance between past and present. This very distance and strangeness can stir the imagination" (Craddock 1981:20; cf, Meyers 1993:37-40). When reconstructing the historical situations with patience, rather the identification between past and present will open up (Craddock 1985: 113).

To set the text in its literary context is to seek to examine the intention of the writer. Giving attention to the literary arrangement of the material in a text, Craddock posits that the arrangement of the materials is "an act of interpretation to which listeners and readers need to be alert" (Craddock 1985: 114).

Craddock also emphasizes the significance of theological interpretation of a biblical text. Each author of the Bible as a theologian has a theology that must be understood by the interpreter. For example, if one is going to preach Pauline texts, the texts should be treated in a way that is consistent with Paul's theology. When he/she fails to scrutinize the intention and theology of the author, the interpreter cannot avoid the danger of privatism and subjectivism (Craddock 1985:115-117).

The sixth process is being aware of one's point of contact with the text. Craddock asks two major questions to achieve awareness of one's relation to the text. One is, "At what level did I engage the text?" About level, Craddock says, "many passages of scripture contain materials that existed prior to their present use." The second question is, "At what point did I identify within the text?" This question enables one to distance oneself from the text and begin seeing oneself as the person who will share the meaning of the text with one's congregation. Craddock says, with a deliberate effort to answer this question, the preacher now moves away from the text and turns toward the sermon (Craddock 1985:120).

The seventh process is putting the text in one's own words. In this final stage, the world of the ancient text becomes the world of the contemporary congregation. This step

"compels the preacher to assume full responsibility for what has been heard in the text, therefore, what will be carried forward to the sermon." Craddock completes the task by asking and answering two questions: What is the biblical text saying? and, What is the text doing? The former is a question in relation to the theme or big idea of a text (Gibson 1998:165-166; Greidanus 1988: 131-136). As mentioned above, a theme, which is the central and dominating idea, should be summarized as one affirmative sentence in the sermon. Craddock says, "This theme is the content in digest; it is the "what" of the message. Of course, a sermon is more than a transfer of information; it seeks to enable the listeners to appropriate and experience the message" (Craddock 1981: 65).

The latter is a question in relation to the goal or purpose of the text or why the text was written. The biblical text is doing as well as saying. To Craddock, to ask this question is necessary for "this question is not only identifying the nature and function of the text but is also providing an early guideline for the sermon to come" (Craddock 1985: 123). In this respect, Greidanus' comment that setting a specific goal is halfway toward conceiving a relevant sermon is not an exaggeration (Greidanus 1988: 173).

3.2.1.4.2 Shaping the message into a sermon

After Craddock has studied something to say, he shapes the message into a sermon as the process of deciding how to say it. To Craddock, a matter of how shall I say it is not less important than a matter of what I will say. Rather, the major emphasis of his sermon theory and practice is put on the "how" rather than the "what of the biblical text." So Thompson says (2001:11), "Discussion of the form of the sermon dominates the new homiletic (*Inductive homiletic*)."

The crucial reason to emphasize sermon form in Craddock's sermon method is closely related to its effectiveness for the listeners. Craddock defines a good sermon as seeking the hearers' experience of the text and not simply their knowing what it says (Craddock 1981:66). When an appropriate form is used in a biblical sermon, it helps to gain and hold an audience's interest. Form shapes the listeners' experience of the sermon and shapes the faith. The sermon form determines audience participation (Craddock 1985:172-174).

When selecting a sermon form, what remains is that the sermon form should be congenial with the form of the text, and so sermon forms are various, as biblical genres are different. "No form is so good that it does not eventually become wearisome to both listener and speaker" (Craddock 1985:177). Another factor in deciding an appropriate sermon form is the pastor's sense of congregational need for "the form need not be simply a caress but one that does evoke amen " (Craddock 1985:181). In continual explanation concerning the form, Craddock encourages the preacher to create a sermon form rather than select one from a worn list of possibilities (J.D. Burns 1993:76). Creating a sermon form rather than selecting a sermon form "involves delaying that which is the concern of every preacher, acquiring a structure or outline for the sermon" (Craddock 1985:182). Creating a sermon form is a deliberate effort to make an anticipated response to listeners. Anticipated response is not a primary factor in choosing what to say, but is a primary factor in determining how the preacher will form that message to be heard in which the listeners experience their own message (Craddock 1985: 183).

The final process of how to say is putting the form on paper. A sermon is not written communication, but oral communication. The aim is to preach to a specific audience, and writing is the servant of oral communication. The difference between orality and writing is, "Oral presentations cluster ideas and images by association; written presentations arrange ideas and illustrative materials in a linear sequence like words on a page" (Craddock 1985:190). Thus, in considering the orality, the preacher should imagine how the text will affect the mind, the emotions, the memory, and the experience of the congregation.

3.2.2 Sermon analysis of Craddock

-Sermon Title: "Praying Through Clenched Teeth"

-Sermon Text: Galatians 1:11-24 (From, *How to Preach a Parable*, pp 142-8)

3.2.2.1 What makes an impression on us?

The initial impression of Craddock's sermon "Praying through Clenched Teeth" is that it looks like a series of episodes. This sermon moves like a good story and that gives me a

new feeling and entertainment to hear such a sermon like climbing a strange mountain that has not been experienced before. Just as the television drama begins each week with "something in the air" and goes on towards resolution, Craddock's sermon flows from the problem of a particular human being to an answer. The sermon starts by suggesting several examples of bitterness, which occupy two thirds of the whole sermon content and concludes with an inverted story and finally with an autobiographical incident as the answer to his turning point question "Then how do we respond?" It is a problem-solution format that Craddock uses as a favorite form (Craddock 1979:21; 126-7; Long 1989: 98). In this movement, I can, naturally, participate in the contemporary examples of bitterness without any rejection, especially finding my inner self in Paul's conflict and action. Through the conclusive two stories, this sermon makes me think of the sacrificial love and cross in a fresh way, not as a boring and trite proclamation. In a gentle whisper (1 King 19:12), the new-ness of the text touches my heart.

Another impression is that his sermon, unlike traditional sermons, is reluctant to speak with authority and make concrete demands. This sermon allows me to arrive at the message of the Bible, not coercing me to accept the message by the preacher's authority and authoritarian attitudes. There is no force, no commentary about the text, and no imperative commands. Instead of arriving at pre-determined truths, Craddock invites me to experience the Gospel's message, turning overhearing from a distance into hearing with intimacy. In summary, I feel that he does not try to force the authority of the sermon by making conclusive, authoritative pronouncements from the pulpit, rather he tries to convince by moving people's minds affectively through conversation and interaction between the biblical story and the contemporary audience (myself).

3.2.2.2 Where does the sermon come from?

3.2.2.2.1 What type of God steps forth from the sermon?

In this sermon, the problem of bitterness that Paul has is clearly contrasted with the good news from Christ, expressed in the autobiographical story. As mentioned above, the problem-solving structure is the real key to understanding his sermon. Long says (1989: 98), "the hearers are going to solve a specific problem, and then design the

sermon to give them all the necessary information, and in the proper order, to resolve that problem for themselves." In this sermon, just as Paul solves the problem of his inner bitterness through meeting Christ, today the key to solving our problem is also Christ. In this aspect, no one can deny that his sermon flows toward Christ as an ultimate answer. But what is important to us is what kind of God he portrays in his sermon. For the clue to this question, we should again remind ourselves of Long's evaluation concerning Craddock's sermon style: "For Craddock, the one problem to be solved was the problem of the text's contemporary meaning" (Long 1989: 98). This comment gives us light to understand the kind of Christ he suggests. Having been governed by the desire to make Christ meaningful to contemporary human beings, Craddock intentionally makes Christ the relevant solution for our inner problem, bitterness, rather than describing realistically the Christ of the text. Though Craddock succeeds in suggesting Christ in a creative and fresh perspective, Craddock's contemporary Christ, curing our bitterness, mainly comes out of this extraordinary existential and individual issue, not out of the pure concern to reveal the uniqueness and particularity of Jesus Christ. Owing to the excessive interest in making a sermon to solve the existential human problem, I think that Craddock distorts the Christ described in the text.

Rather, it seems to me that the present text testifies to Christ who called even Paul, the persecutor of the church, with the same Gospel and same grace for the grand purpose of proclaiming Christ among the Gentiles (see, Gal. 1:15-16). Thus, to introduce Christ as healer for Paul's inner bitterness is contemporary, but not biblical.

3.2.2.2.2 How does the preacher treat the text?

The preacher in the traditional homiletic approach understands the Bible as the universal or propositional truth. Achtemeier, however, indicates, "the Bible's message cannot be reduced to 'timeless truth'" (1980:55). In the traditional deductive formation, the text can often be utilized as illustrative material for the preacher's thesis or topic selected by arbitrary relationship to the text. As a result, this approach "discourages the text from being an active partner in shaping the form of the sermon" (U.Y Kim 1999: 138). Unlike this, Craddock points out that the word has a dynamic, creative power

toward contemporary situation. By exchanging one set of images for another, the word transforms human existence. The word is no longer a timeless truth, but a living truth that should be experienced actively. For this, Craddock emphasizes the text as the process of determining how to say as well as the process of arriving at something to say. In this sermon, the matter of "how to say" is found through delaying or anticipating meaning. With interest and tension, Craddock postpones giving the alternative message of the Gospel, expressed by his autobiographical story until the hearers emotionally participate in Paul's bitterness and choice, and also feel their own bitterness. Had Craddock reversed the order by first presenting the bitterness of Paul and the act of grace, and then some application and an alternative suggestion for contemporary bitterness, would this sermon have the same impact on the hearer? It is an interesting question, but an important question. It is not easy to give one definite answer, but what is sure is that losing the concern about "how is the text doing," in order to find "What is this text's message?" is to compromise the view of the Bible as a living message for the contemporary audience. Whether his method is accepted positively or negatively, "anticipating meaning" gives a challenge of negotiating the distance between the text and the contemporary situation (R.L Eslinger 1987:104). It makes the listener wait with eager anticipation to see how Craddock will finish his message.

In a similar and closely related context, Craddock does not separate the exegesis of the text and the application of the text. Today many preachers say, "Until now, I expounded the content of the text, so let's find the application for us." Craddock rejects this dualistic way in which the main thesis of the text is explained, and only later is suggested the thing that can be applied in a contemporary context. Rather, in this sermon, Craddock starts with five contemporary pictures or examples of bitterness, arrives at the description of Saul, and then again moves from the story of Saul to the contemporary invented story and finally to his autobiographical example. By correlating the text with the contemporary stories, the ancient story of the text, being distanced from us, is no longer an old story, but a living story in our mind. In this regard, his sermon is quite different from the propositional and moralistic sermons that change the gospel of the text into a cold, general truth.

3.2.2.2.3 What is the unique language of the preacher?

Since preaching is confession of God from the preacher's experience as well as the delivery of God's word itself, self-disclosing stories can be a powerful factor for an effective AOP, if used well. The issue is not "whether self-disclosing stories can be used, but "how they can be used." The unique reason that the preacher uses self-disclosing stories is for the purpose of explaining the text in a more vivid way. Resner (1999:179) says, "By using personal story as witness to God's redemptive activity...the preacher embodies the claim that God is still active in the world." In Craddock's sermon, the self-disclosing story is used in the ending of the sermon. Personally, the effectiveness of this story is based on the assumption that Craddock was and has had the same problem of bitterness as those who are described in his sermon. It shows the listener that he also needs the grace of Christ and by experiencing the grace of Christ, he can also walk in a new direction discarding his inner bitterness. It may often be a more powerful way to persuade the listener than by a forceful exhortation. In this respect, the self-disclosing story of Craddock helps to constitute an authoritative word.

3.2.2.2.4 How does the sermon reflect the situation of the congregation

The major interest of Craddock's sermon lies in the maximum participation of the audience in the sermon. Craddock rejects one-way communication, but rather adapts two-way communication, inviting the listener into the content of sermon. The flow of his sermon, beginning with the particulars of human experience, journeying with the listeners, and finally suggesting the surprising conclusions of the gospel, is to enable the sermon to be the shared activity of the preacher and the congregation. In this sermon, the sharing experience fulfills the process of identification from beginning to the end. For an effective identification, preaching starts with the contemporary story of the embittered farmer. The repeated questions, like "Do you see a face?," invite the hearer to his story. Also, repetitive use of the term "bitter" even in the closing line, "Such is the hand of love, extended to those who are bitter" lead the listener to think and feel the Gospel of the text freshly. In this movement forward from the problems to the answer, listeners find their problems solved and accept the hand of love of Christ. In other

words, the movement in sermon helps the hearer arrive at a conclusion in the sense that the text lives again in the congregation who participate in the sermon as partner.

Conversational dialogue ("I am going to say a word/ I want you to), vivid and descriptive language ("rearranging the dust), invented stories (the adopted son story and the kitten story) and autobiographical incident (the closing story of Craddock himself) incites active participation and makes the biblical message relevant.

3.2.2.3 Where is the sermon headed?

Craddock's problem-solving structure is intended to emphasize the human experience. The goal of the sermon is not just the transmission of knowledge or information, but the creation of human experience. So, for Craddock, the sermon should be an experiential event. On the basis of particular concrete experience, the listeners reach their conclusion and make decisions for a new transforming life. What is the experience that Craddock wants to create through this sermon? It is an individual experience formed by identifying and analogizing Paul's bitterness into our situation and experiencing the Gospel of Christ who has the answer for individual bitterness. Though this sermon effectively succeeds in counseling an individual problem, especially inner bitterness and in this process, the text becomes relevant for contemporary audiences, the Gospel is seen as just the solution to an individual, psychological problem. Since the experiential event in his sermon is limited to individual experience, it overlooks the ecclesial, and socio-political effects.

The future evolution of this kind of sermon is dangerous in that the function of the sermon is reduced to finding a quick-answer to individual problems, losing the function of forming the identity of the community. To me, Gal.1:11-24 has an important message for the community of faith. The text is to be sure autobiographical material in which Paul proves his apostleship to those who reject Paul's authority as apostle. What Paul was even more likely concerned with, however, is not the attestation of his apostleship, but the unity of the Church (C. Cousar 1973:26). Here, Paul's aim is clear. He tries to unite the whole church in the gospel of grace by emphasizing his apostleship. The issue

of the unity of God's people in the divided world should be considered as one of the central messages in our sermons.

3.2.3 Narrative preaching of Eugene Lowry

The hearer-oriented preaching systematically opened by Fred Craddock blossoms in the homiletical theory and practice of Eugene Lowry which takes a more developed form. While Craddock's methodology is called inductive preaching, Lowry's primary emphasis is on narrative preaching. Lowry's narrative preaching has in common with Craddock that his homiletic comes out of the dissatisfaction with the traditional deductive and propositional homiletic direction. Within a traditional paradigm, sermon organization evolves out of the logic of content in which the task of the preacher is to "shape the sermon's conceptual space" (Eslinger 1987:64). In his works, Lowry, like Craddock, chiefly proposes a new sermon theory and practice, which is expressed as a narrative art form more akin to a play or novel in shape than to a book. A more important agreement lies in the major reason concerning why Craddock and Lowry suggest a paradigmatic shift. Just as Craddock presented a new homiletic so that the congregation can actively participate in the sermon, so Lowry's major interest is also the experience of the congregation in the sermon. In this respect, both are ardent supporters of audience-oriented preaching. If there is a difference, it is that Lowry is suggesting a more practical map for effective audience-centered preaching than Craddock.²³ Through his works, Lowry presents helpful insights to keep the listeners in suspense during the whole sermon process by using the homiletical plot.

3.2.3.1 The definition of narrative preaching

Before specifically examining the theory and practice of Lowry's homiletics, our discussion should begin with how Lowry thinks of narrative preaching. Within his clear definition, we can distinguish the narrative method from other new homiletic theories like inductive and storytelling. As well, defining the narrative sermon provides a central

²³ Whereas Craddock's homiletic flows toward theoretical aspect, Eugene Lowry identified that a closer connection between his theory and practice of the preaching is necessary, as contrasted with that of

point in understanding the theories and techniques of Lowry's homiletic. It is not helpful to talk about narrative preaching without clarifying the meaning of narrative for Lowry, for it is used in different meanings by different people. In his article "*Narrative and Preaching: Sorting It All Out*," John S. McClure says that the field of narrative preaching involves four ways the word narrative is used in relation to preaching (McClure 1991: 25-27; Lowry 1993:96-7). These are narrative hermeneutics, narrative semantics, narrative enculturation and narrative world view. In narrative hermeneutics the word narrative is used in relation to biblical material in preaching. Narrative semantics is related to sermon shape. When the word narrative is used of culture and human experience, it is called narrative enculturation. The narrative world view is understood when the term narrative is linked with "the theological world view or faith-story" (McClure 1991:25-27). Lucy Rose also suggests another classification. She classifies the concerns into four areas:

The purpose of preaching (sensing a move from persuasion to transforming event), biblical hermeneutics (moving from central idea to saying and doing), the language of preaching (moving from clarity to engagement), and the arrangement of sermon material (moving from logical reasoning to plot) (Lowry 1993:97; quoted by Lucy Rose 1991:1-11).

The classification of Lowry is simpler than the above. He likes to classify them as three things: narrative homiletics, narrative hermeneutics and narrative theology (1995:342). To use these various categories means that narrative preaching does not stand alone, but recognizes the interconnectedness of the various foci. At the same time, it means that we should explain what Lowry's narrative means because of the great diversity of current voices and different emphases in the field of narrative preaching (Lowry 1993:95). To Eugene Lowry, narrative preaching is chiefly focused on the issue of sermon shape that, in the terminology of McClure, belongs to narrative semantics, though it includes serious hermeneutical and theological considerations. Lowry defines narrative preaching succinctly; "A narrative sermon is any sermon in which the arrangement of ideas takes the form of plot involving a strategic delay of the preacher's

Craddock. A goal for Lowry is that those who hear him preach and who read his books will be able to identify with his method (Unyong Kim 1999: 159).

meaning" (Lowry 1995: 342). Whether the form of plot exists or not is a criteria to distinguish narrative preaching from other innovative sermon styles, for example, inductive preaching and the story-sermon. To Lowry, "A plot is the moving suspense of story from disequilibrium to resolution" (Lowry 1985:52). Since in this process from disequilibrium to resolution, a sermon brings the reversal, or turning point, Rose says (1997: 76): "A plot's critical ingredients are the disequilibrium to resolution with the intervening turn toward resolution." When comparing inductive and narrative preaching in the light of that definition, the sermonic goal of both is the same in that a sermon is directed toward a sharing event, a journey not just a destination. Both delay the major truth or conclusion for shaping "an experience for the congregation by recreating the preacher's interaction with a text" (Rose 1997: 77) In spite of this agreement, narrative preaching is not exactly the same as inductive preaching.²⁴ Lowry maintains the difference:

Inductive reasoning is one way to complicate a narrative sermon plot, but not the only way. Likewise, the result of inductive logic often is complication of the plot, but not always...a narrative sermon may sometimes shift briefly into deductive movement once the decisive homiletical turn occurs (1989:14).

Also, unlike our assumption that narrative preaching may be exactly the same as story-sermons, for Lowry, narrative preaching is different from the story-sermon, or storytelling (1989:14). Narrative preaching can contain stories, but all story-sermons is not narrative preaching. Even though any sermon contains stories, it may not be narrative preaching when the sermon does not follow the form of a plot (Rose 1997:75; Lowry 1995:342). In this meaning, narrative preaching is more than mere storytelling or story-sermons. It is, rather, storytelling that contains a plot and attempts to analyze and resolve ambiguity, or conflict.

In summary, the narrative preaching that Lowry propagates is a sermon that has a homiletical plot, regardless of whether it uses inductive or deductive reasoning, or stories for an effective sermon. His major interest is how a sermon becomes "an event-in-time -

²⁴ Despite this difference, I will also include inductive preaching into narrative preaching in a sense that many aspects of narrative preaching by Lowry come out of inductive preaching by Craddock. This will be

existing in time, not space- a process and not a collection of parts" (Lowry 2000: 26). Through building a sermon so as to be an event-in-time, Lowry tries to reshape a sermon that incites and sustains the attention of the audience in the whole process of the sermon. In this aspect, like Craddock, Lowry's narrative preaching is AOP, excessively emphasizing the participation and experience of the congregation.

3.2.3.2 The homiletical theory of Lowry

Whereas for Craddock, preaching theory precedes preaching technique, for Lowry, the "how" of narrative preaching in his book *The Homiletical Plot* (1980) is prior to the "why" of it in *Doing Time in the Pulpit* (1985). Though his second book overlaps with the first book in the emphasis of sermonic plot and other sermonic considerations, the difference between the two books is that in the first book, he "attempts to take the reader through the entirety of the sermonic plot- step by step (actually five steps)." Meanwhile, the aim and focus of writing the second book is "on time and its impact upon a sermon shaped by its movement" (Lowry 1985:74). Concurring with Lowry's intention, this section will chiefly mention the importance of time in preaching and its impact (the evocation of the event).

For Lowry, a sermon is "an ordered form of moving time" (1985: 8). This new definition can be compared with the traditional one. Lowry describes two ways to form a sermon: to order ideas or to order experience. The traditional sermonic paradigm orders "ideas," while the new paradigm of Lowry orders "experience." The ordering of ideas is related to space, while Lowry's preaching theory is connected with time, in which a sermon should be "an event-in-time" (Lowry 1980: 12; 1985:8).

The task of ordering ideas is to organize the biblical text. Organizing a collection of ideas leads to a structural sermonic form in which the preacher tries to find a theme or "a unifying ideational thread" (Lowry 1985: 19). Conversely, to those who order experience, the duty of a sermon is to shape a text. According to Lowry, "those who order experience and whose task therefore is to shape will find their sermon form to be a process" and sermonic process conveys movement and transition (1985: 17). Those who

mentioned in the chapter 5.

stand in this position are focused on events rather than themes, even though the emphasis on events and themes is not contradictory. Through comparisons between the two models, Lowry asserts that the goal of the sermon does not arrive at just cognitive conceptualization, but "moves toward the goal of some sort of happening" (Eslinger 1987: 68). According to the sermon goal of Lowry, happening is based on time, not on space. Thus, this is Lowry's central argument: "the sermon is not a thing at all; it is an ordered form of moving time" and "a moving time is more like a trip that takes us from here to there through the medium of time- from now to then"(Lowry 1987: 8,15). The sermon moves from ambiguity or suspense to resolution. Through keeping this movement from tension and conflict to some form of resolution, a sermon can be "an event-in-time." Lowry believes that the fatal mistake of traditional preaching is to ignore the factor of time. Traditional preaching starts with the meaning of the sermon. This sermon design, however, turns the sermon upside-down. For Lowry, narrative preaching delays the central meaning of a text until the last moment of a sermon, making a sermon dependent on time-continuity.

If, as Lowry defines, the sermon is "an event-in-time," our question is, "what is time?" Lowry classifies time as outward time and inward time. While outward time is defined as "chronos", inward time is defined as the subjective time of our inner clock (Lowry 1985: 31). We live in the chronological time of the day but the outward time is not the last word. We also have an internal time with which we are living that mediates our experience of the external world of chronos (Lowry 1985: 32; Eslinger 1987: 69). Beyond the classifications of outer and inner time, however, there is *kairos*, "the right time." Lowry explains *kairos* clearly: "It is not so much a different kind of time as it is an event in time, which implores two or three other kinds of time." Such a *kairotic* event, says Lowry, "(1) involves an interaction among an exterior event, one's inner time, and chronological time (2) includes the sense of duration being temporarily suspended ...and (3) results in a type of profound impact" (Lowry 1985: 32-33).

For Lowry, the internal time (*kairos*), is most fully occasioned by story. Story is the most powerful vehicle "to prompt such intersection of God's time with our *chronos* and inner times that the *kairotic* event happens" (Lowry 1985:35). Especially, to Lowry, the

sermon is a form of narrative time, bringing the listeners with their inner time into synchronization in the narrative time of the sermon in which every sermon “moves from an itch to a scratch” (Lowry 1985: 65). In this process of time, preaching becomes the evocation of the event. Charles Campbell indicates that Lowry understands a sermon as an experiential event through his entire work: “The gospel... is finally not understood, but experienced; the goal of the sermon is to create a transforming, revelatory, experiential event for the hearers” (Campbell 1997: 139).

3.2.3.3 The homiletical techniques of Lowry

The strong point of Lowry's homiletics is to suggest a concrete "how" for sermon preparation by preachers. In particular, his book *'Homiletical Plot'* is concerned with giving answers about how to design narrative preaching or audience-oriented preaching. In the center of the "how," there is a homiletical plotted frame. So the homiletical technique of Lowry shows how to prepare a sermon through the sermonic plot and the narrative shape (Kim 1999: 171). The role of need and theme in the homiletical plot, the specific stage of the sermon plot, and the preparation of narrative sermon will now be our major consideration.

3.2.3.3.1 The role of need and theme in the homiletical plot

When Lowry's sermonic practice is considered as a plot-centered technique, it means there is harmony between need and theme. For Lowry, the separation of need and theme is the most fatal danger that preachers should be wary of. In the process from the wandering thoughtfulness stage to the stage of discovering a live sermonic idea, many preachers choose either a theme or a problem or felt need. Both kinds of emphases are correct, but, when it becomes a choice of either-or, something is missing (Lowry 1980: 17). Those who hold the theme as a major focus can concentrate on "the substance of the sermon, the central "message" to be preached," but this position tends to be a weakness in establishing contact with the congregation. Conversely, those who hold a problem or felt need in focus have relevance for the congregation, but this position tends to be weak in biblical content (Lowry 1980: 17). The extreme trend of the former is found in the opinion of the neo-orthodox preacher Paul Scherer, "who opposes the

inductive method and admonishes the preacher not to meet the listeners where they are because too often they are "in the wrong place." The extreme latter is found in the approach of Fosdick, "who spoke of 'the garnered wisdom of the ages' which can help meet the problems of human existence" (Campbell 1997:162; citing Lowry 1980: 65-66). In contrast to both these approaches, Lowry's plot is a "middle ground" to bridge the gap between need and theme, rejecting "an approach to sermon preparation from either a wholly conceptual or wholly inductive perspective" (Eslinger 1987:76). Lowry seeks a compromise that arrives at a point of intersection between need and theme. For Lowry, a plot-schemed sermon moves from a sensed need to a thematic answer. A narrative plot includes the problematic itch (the particularity of human predicament) and a solutional scratch (the particularity of the gospel). In this aspect, inductive method and deductive method coexist in the plot-oriented sermon of Lowry.

A plot begins with establishment of contact with congregation at the point of their human predicament and moves through stage two (analysis) inductively in good liberal tradition form. But rather than mobilize the resources of the gospel to fulfill human aspirations, it reveals such aspirations for the dead ends they are. By disclosing the clue to resolution, which typically involves some kind of reversal, it opens a new door, and prepares the context in which the word of God can be proclaimed- deductively ordered in good Barthian fashion (Lowry 1980: 61).

Such a plot-oriented sermon Lowry says, is more close to the television series plot than the movie plot. Whereas the movie plot begins with a felt tension and moves the to an unknown resolution, the television series plot begins with a sensed discrepancy but moves toward a known conclusion. A developed movement from sensed need to known gospel is the gist of a plot-oriented sermon. More detailed plot stages will be mentioned in the below section.

3.2.3.3.2 The specific stages of the homiletical plot

In order for a sermon to effectively move from the need (itch) to the answer of the Gospel (scratch), Lowry suggests five stages of homiletical plot in his book *The Homiletical Plot* (1980): (1) upsetting the equilibrium of the listeners; (2) analyzing the

discrepancy; (3) disclosing the clue to resolution; (4) experiencing the gospel; and 5) anticipating the consequence.²⁵

The first stage in the sermon is to upset the equilibrium of the listeners.²⁶ The preacher's responsibility in the opening step is to create the conflict, the tension and interest so that the audiences actively participate in the sermon. This first stage is analogous to the opening scene of a play or movie in which some kind of tension and conflict is presented. For Lowry, "A sermon introduction may upset the equilibrium of members of a congregation by means of an inconsequential ambiguity which serves simply to stimulate interest in the sermonic process" (Lowry 1980: 31). But it does not mean that this opening stage focuses on the listener's interest at the expense of the central theme. Rather, this must be done in such a way as to engage the listener in the central sermon theme. To engage the audience in the sermonic theme is the difficult but important responsibility of the preacher because the ongoing movement of the sermon is possible only when the congregation experience a sermonic itch in this opening stage. When in this stage the preacher poses the sermonic itch properly in a way that can be felt by the listeners, the task of the rest of the sermon is to move toward the resolution of that particular ambiguity.

The second stage in the sermonic process is to analyze the discrepancy. This stage is the lengthiest part of the sermon preparation. Diagnosis is central to Lowry's homiletical task in that it determines the entire shape of a sermon. For making effective diagnosis, the preacher "should dive into the fundamental discrepancy, asking: Why?" So, Lowry calls this second stage as "a time for "diagnostic wrestling- of theologizing" (Lowry 1980: 38).

²⁵ But, in his recent works, *The Sermon* (1997) and *The Homiletical Plot Expanded Edition* (2001), he revises his earlier homiletical plot by following four sequential stages: (1) conflict, (2) complication, (3) sudden shift, and (4) unfolding. The major change is that stage 3 and stage 4 can be the same sermon moment. "That is, the good news is precisely the evocation of reversal. In such a case, stages 3 and 4 are simultaneous" (Lowry 2001: 118). Since, despite of its revision, there is not a decisive difference, this thesis will follow the former homiletical plot, consisted of five stages.

²⁶ To Lowry, an ambiguity created by upsetting the equilibrium "is not known simply as an intellectual matter; it is a mental ambiguity which is existentially felt. It becomes a part of their existence at that moment in time, and hence when it is resolved and the gospel proclaimed, the good news is not just something one now experiences" (Lowry 2001: 35).

Because of the difficulty of keeping to this diagnostic wrestling, most preachers exchange it for "description" or "illustration" which lacks the analysis of causal relationships. This is a fatal mistake. For Lowry, what is needed is depth of analysis. In the way that depth of analysis is processed, a sermon should be shared with the congregation. Lowry says, "the overarching purpose of the process of analysis is to arrive at an explanation *why*, first the preacher in the study and then for the congregation in the sermon event itself."

How diagnosis is developed in the sermon is the decisive factor to judge the quality of a sermon. When an inadequate diagnosis is used and, as a result of this, the felt ambiguity of the first stage is lost, a sermon becomes relatively uncomplicated and unambiguous through which tension and interest collapse and the listener will never listen. Conversely, when adequate analysis is maintained through the process of this series of "why's" in the sermon, the listener remains interested because the initial problem has not been solved. Moreover, with the active involvement of the audience, analyzing the discrepancy gets a congregation ready for the resolution to be developed (Lowry 1980:45).

The third stage in the sermonic process is disclosing the clue to the resolution. This stage provides the missing link, which will lead from problem to solution, from itch to scratch. In this movement, a sermon arrives at the 'aha,' "the one piece which enables the whole puzzle to come into sharp focus" (Lowry 1980: 48). Lowry points out that this clue is "felt" rather than "known." Once the clue to resolution is articulated, hearers face unexpected movement of the message that is a reversal of prior expectation. The message alters what the hearers expect and is contrary to everyday life. The new and revelatory clue turns everything upside down. For "there is radical discontinuity between the gospel and worldly wisdom" (Lowry 1980: 60). Since the gospel is itself a radical message, it "will invariably come as a reversal of human expectation and overturn the consequences disclosed through our analysis of the homiletical bind" (Eslinger 1987:81). Anyway, by disclosing the clue to resolution a new door opens and prepares the context in which the word of God can be proclaimed.

The fourth stage of a narrative sermon is experiencing the gospel. Whether this gospel is proclaimed properly or not is dependent on the context in which it is set. When based on the proper context, this fourth stage is most effective. Lowry says, "Stages one, two, and three are intended to prepare the way so that when the gospel is then proclaimed it is effective-that is, it does what it says, and is that to which it refers" (Lowry 2001:77). Since the ability to experience the gospel chiefly depends on the success of the analysis provided in the earlier stage, sermon timing is a decisive key for effective proclamation of the gospel. In the narrative preaching of Lowry, it is a fatal error to announce the good news in the beginning, without considering sermon timing. Lowry indicates this kind of trend as a "homiletical short circuit," in which "the time-oriented sermon plot loses the control of movement essential to its narrative character" (Eslinger 1987: 82).

Rather, Lowry asserts the necessity of delaying the gospel: "The congregation must experience aesthetically the utter futility of the search before the good news is addressed to the matter and releases the sense of futility" (Lowry 1980: 63). For, "Only when such in-depth analysis has occurred are listeners ready to hear the good news of the gospel" (Eslinger 1987: 82). Furthermore, in this stage the inductive process turns into the deductive mode.

The fifth and final stage is anticipating the consequences. This stage focuses on the futuristic expectation which is now made new by the gospel. Long says, "In this final stage, the new discovery of the gospel is projected onto the future" (Long 1989: 100). This final part is the stage of effecting closure. Paul suggests good examples to state futuristic expectation with such expressions as "What then shall we say to this?" and "If God is for us, who is against us?" Likewise, the preacher asks: "What- in light of this intersection of the human condition with the gospel-can be expected, should be done, or is now possible?" (Lowry 1980: 67). By this final phrase of sermon closure, a new door is opened, a new possibility is occasioned by the Gospel. The comparison with the final part of a traditional sermon will be helpful in knowing what the stage of anticipating the consequences is. The final part of the narrative sermon has similarity in position (time-wise) to the presentation of the climaxing "call to commitment" found in traditional preaching. But, the final ending within Lowry's homiletical plot is quite

different from that of the traditional preaching in two aspects. The first difference is that unlike the traditional sermon, narrative movement reaches its climax earlier in stage three when matters are turned upside down, and again when the gospel is experienced in the next stage. The final part of the plotted sermon anticipates how life could be lived (Lowry 1980: 67).

The second difference is found more in the theological area. Lowry criticizes the tendency of traditional sermon "to make the sermonic climax synonymous with the sermonic call as a form of works righteousness." On the contrary, the focus of the plotted sermon "is upon the decisive activity of God, not upon us, and hence the climax of any sermon must be stage four- the experiencing of the gospel" (Lowry 1980: 69). Our response is necessary, but it does not mean that human response is posed in the center of the final part. What is at the center should be the good news of Jesus Christ (Eslinger 1987: 83). Since the gospel is not a form of work righteousness, but proclamation of Christ, the preacher in this final stage opens the door for them but does not push them through it:

The gospel is not a push from the back side of our lives into goodness but a release from the inevitability of doing evil. The proclamation of the gospel must be other than a weekly "guilt trip" placed on our parishioners. The awfulness of human guilt needs redemption, not a lecture. The preached Word makes possible the redemption into new life by its announcement of what God has done and is doing. Sermonically, this means that the central issue is the proclamation of that good news (Lowry 2001: 86).

In this aspect, the meaning of "consequence" within Lowry's homiletical plot does not mean the end but the future.

3.2.4 Preparation process and presentation of the sermon

Lowry presents three major movements in sermon preparation: the attending stage, the imagining stage, and the shaping stage. The preparation begins with attending to the selected text. The attending stage is divided into three sub-steps: immersing oneself in

the text, looking for trouble, and positioning oneself to be surprised. Lowry summarizes these steps:

The three preliminary steps have in common an openness for the experience of the text, a committedly open alertness toward the strange, and a positioned hopefulness to hear. Theologically, these steps are predicted on the belief that God's spirit may be better able to break into the context of the preacher's expectant wonderment-even confusion- than into the position of known certainties (Lowry 1997: 100).

The imagining stage is a following step of the attending stage. This imagining stage consists of naming important issues, images, and incidents, ruminating potential connections, engaging and consulting as scholar in residence. The obvious characteristic of this step is to "move into a modality characterized less by "waiting upon" and characterized more by "acting upon" (1997: 100). In this process, the preacher is shifting toward relationally strategic endeavors in which "the creative energy of the preacher begins to turn toward the fluidity of nascent possibilities for Sunday" (Lowry 1997: 101).

The third and final stage of sermon preparation is the shaping stage. The final stage of shaping consists of four steps: naming the sermon focus and strategy, recognizing the sudden shift and positioning the good news, planning the sermon process, and naming the aim. This final stage "is time to reap the benefits of previous work" (Lowry 1997:107). In this final stage, the suggestions within Lowry's sermon preparation process are quite different from the traditional sermon preparation. Traditionally, in naming the central sermon focus, it intends to find the scratch of the sermon. Unlike this, to Lowry, it means the issue or itch, not concluding the scratch (Lowry 1997:107). What is an interesting thing in the sermon preparation of Lowry, already indicated above, is that this problematic itch proceeds towards the proclaiming, the sudden shift, or the good news. In this case, the matter of "place" or "when" is important. Lowry suggests plotted movement for the appropriate time or place: "The understanding of plotted movement -conflict, complication, sudden shift, and unfolding- provides the rationale for determining the placement of all the sermon material" (Lowry 1997: 111). But there still remains the last thing to be considered. The last question raised is: "What do I hope will happen as a result of this sermon having been preached?" It is a matter of the aim of the sermon. As Henry Mitchell indicates, it is "the behavioral goals of

experience and celebration, not just an ideational goal alone" (Lowry 1997: 113). The primary and sacred task of the preacher is, finally to evoke, to prompt.

The final discussion of the preparation and presentation of sermons will be the four options for narrative sermons: running the story, delaying the story, suspending the story, and alternating the story. Running the story chiefly consists of following the actual flow of the biblical story as it appears in the Bible. Though the preacher utilizes this form to highlight, elaborate, amplify, and en flesh certain portions of the story as he or she makes his or her way from the beginning to the end, nevertheless, the shape of the text will be the shape of the narrative sermon (Lowry 1989: 38).

Delaying the story is the second optional narrative form in which the emergence of the biblical text is delayed for various reasons. Especially, the biblical text includes the resolution to the sermonic issue. Sometimes pastoral reasons require delaying the story. Or a well-known passage should be delayed until the end so as to restore some of its surprise and power (Lowry 1989: 38-39).

Suspending the story is one of the most often used narrative sermonic designs. Like the running story design it starts with a text -except that something happens somewhere along the way. And the biblical text runs into trouble and has to be suspended while another text provides a way out of the dilemma. Once accomplished, the sermon returns to the central text for the completion of the message (Lowry 1989: 39).

Alternating the story is the final narrative sermon design used by Lowry. In this form, a text is divided into sections, episodes, and vignettes. Alternating the story combines the biblical story with other kinds of material. This design is more complicated than the other three forms for it requires more transitions (Lowry 1989: 40).

3.2.5 Sermon analysis of Eugene Lowry's sermon

Sermon title: Stranger in the Night

Sermon text: John 3:1-9

3.2.5.1 What makes an impression on us?

While Craddock's sermon begins from the various bitter examples of contemporary human beings, through Paul's bitterness within the sermon text, to end with the biographical story of Christ's grace, Lowry's sermon starts inside the text, runs into an ambiguous problem, and moves into resolution through the contemporary story of Fred. The initial impression that Lowry's sermon gives is that it suggests a clear conflict between the opening greeting of Nicodemus and the seemingly unrelated answer of Jesus, while Craddock connects the various examples of bitterness to Paul's bitterness within the sermon text. I can also sense a fresh way to solve the tension. Suspending the text's story in the air, Lowry inserts an example of his friend, Fred. In this process, Lowry indicates in an indirect way what Nicodemus' problem is and at the same time what our problems are. The distinctive emergency of the conflict and resolution says that his sermon is intentionally shaped in a plotted-oriented format. In this plotted sermon, the listener can see his or her individualistic-existential problem, in other words, "felt-need" in a more obvious light, beyond merely finding the contemporary meaning of the ancient text for our audience, which is a major concern of the inductive method by Craddock (Long 1989: 98-99). In summary, my major impression is that Lowry's sermon follows the plot line of the Biblical text more than the inductive sermon of Craddock, and that the sermon of Lowry becomes an event to solve the problem of an ambiguity.

3.2.5.2 Where does the sermon come from?

3.2.5.2.1 What type of God steps forth from the sermon?

The Christ (or God) expressed within the sermon of Lowry is described as one who confronts the problem of people and shows a new way to every stranger in the night, as well as to Nicodemus. For Nicodemus who comes to Jesus with a compliment, "Rabbi, you must come from God, because nobody could do the signs you do except God be

with them," Jesus gives a seemingly unreasonable answer: "Truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, one cannot even see the Kingdom of God." Lowry indicates a bit of a communication problem between Jesus and Nicodemus. In the process of the sermon, in order to unravel the communication problem, Lowry explains the deeper meaning in Jesus' answer. Jesus' warning is that Nicodemus cannot "arrive at the conclusion of faith" by adding up the score and relying on his own achievement. Also, in the concluding sentence, Lowry suggests that Jesus is the one who gives a new promise (good news), unlike the worldly standard, to every stranger in the night. The question of every stranger in the night is, "What do I have to do" or "How much success is required?" These questions emerge from the inner emptiness of human beings. The good news of Jesus is, "You have to be born again which is precisely that which one can never do, no matter how committed, how hard working, how bright." Jesus' answer means that man cannot solve his problem with his effort and success. It can only be solved by the gift of the grace coming from the above. As in Craddock's sermon, in Lowry's sermon, the contrast between man's plight and Christ's answer is sharply presented. By clear problem-solving format, Lowry suggests Christ as the solution to satisfying the existential emptiness of the individual.

3.2.5.2.2 How does the preacher treat the text?

Lowry treats the text according to the order of the story-plot line in which "the sweep of narrativity, from opening conflict through increased complication to the fundamental turn (called peripetia) and finally into denouement, makes possible variations of content shape and movement that are unthinkable in other forms of discourse"(1989: 131). Its logic chiefly comes out of "the torque of suspense." For an effective plot-oriented sermon, Lowry begins with the text's story rather than with a situational concern of the congregation and world. Though Lowry recognizes the absolute significance of situation and context, nevertheless, for him, beginning with the text is normative procedure. The story of Nicodemus begun with the text runs into trouble, and Lowry intends to preserve the tension of the Biblical story. In this process, Lowry primarily uses paraphrase, updating the scene of the biblical text in a modern language and story. In this paraphrase, the central story of the text is preserved. For Lowry, the method of paraphrase is important in the fact that it is to "reinforce the text by an additional

rendering, to communicate indirectly that the story is not as remote as it might at first appear, and to commence listener expectations toward later elaboration" (1989: 135). After inserting a contemporary example (a powerful story) concerning Fred which becomes a clue for resolution, Lowry again returns to the central message of the text in which the sermonic "aha" or rehearsal can be now restated. In this plot-oriented frame, what should be considered is faithfulness to the text and the indirect way in dealing with the biblical text. When Lowry speaks about (1992: 86) faithfulness to the text, it means the rejection of two extreme trends. Two extreme temptations for the preacher using the text are: "It is possible for a preacher regularly to find a text "wanting" and then quickly move to another more "compatible" with the preacher's own leanings. On the other hand, not to run that risk may be to open the door to another one; namely, a kind of textual idolatry" (1992: 86). Neither case is not faithfulness to the text in Lowry's understanding. Rather, for Lowry, the meaning of 'faithfulness to the text' is to involve a basic principle of plot-like process when the preacher uses the text. Questioning the text is an absolute factor for effective text usage. It is important to "allow the text to wash over and through us before we start washing it with our own agenda"(Lowry 1992:73). Lowry says;

My experience is, however, that if we begin engaging the text at the point of issues and problems rather than answers, themes, and meaning, we are far less likely to impose our own agenda of convictions (Lowry 1992:73).

At the same time, questioning the text is important in that it provides a clue for the good news of the gospel.

Another characteristic of Lowry's use of the text is the indirect way. As in the sermon of Craddock, in Lowry's sermon, the indirect approach is a major way to explain the content of the text in which the text's meaning is to effect an evocation. With the deep impression created by the contemporary story of Fred, Lowry reveals the central message of the text, not forcing the congregation in a propositional and dogmatic way.

3.2.5.2.3 What is the role of the preacher in the forming of the AOP?

There is no direct mention of the character and personal story of the preacher in Lowry's sermon. Rather, Lowry participates in the personal story (experience) of his friend, Fred, and connects his indirect experience through his friend into juxtaposition with the congregation's lived experience. Lowry enlists the names of an unknown congregation: Sharon, give it up....Allen....Martha...Gene... which means that the central role of the preacher in preaching is to transfer an experience from the preacher to the congregation. Rose indicates (1997:79) that the most distinctive characteristic of Lowry's sermon is a sermon form that aims to shape an experience for the congregation by recreating the preacher's personal experience. The image of the preacher as conveying or transferring an experience is closer to one of the witness than to the traditional metaphor about the preacher. In this process, the preacher incites the congregation to engage in "democratic sharing" (Craddock 1974: 64). This incitement is through using a poetic language and an impressive story, not through using an authoritative proclamation. For Lowry, the story is the most effective way of making the ordered form of moving time. In his sermon "Strangers in the Night," the story of Fred is powerful in transmitting the existential emptiness of an individual to the experience of the whole congregation. Thus, Lowry advises that the preacher who tries to preach narrative preaching must "cooperate, utilize, and be influenced by these definable elements of story" (1980:39-40). In summary, the role of the preacher is not just to preach biblical texts, but to proclaim the Word, the good news of the gospel, through conveying the preacher's experience to the congregation effectively and creatively.

3.2.5.2.4 How does the sermon reflect the situation of the congregation

It is not an exaggeration to say that narrative preaching according Lowry comes out of considering the congregation as a partner of the sermon. In his sermon, the listeners are defined as those who have the same existential emptiness as Nicodemus and Fred. In order to identify the inner problem of Nicodemus of the Bible and a contemporary person, Fred, to the congregation, Lowry uses a "creative paradigm" by a narrative plot consisting of the five sequential stages. Whereas a deductive movement is formed "with the points growing out of a central idea," through a creative paradigm, Lowry proposes "designing sermons around the process of discovery" (Long 1989:100). It builds excitement. By creativity and excitement, the preacher can defeat the enemies of

boredom and apathy, and at the same time, the preacher can provide "the means for enabling hearers to be active and responsible participants in the preaching event" (Long 1989:100). In his sermon "Stranger in the Night," Lowry draws his audience into the process of discovery appropriately. In the introductory stage, Lowry suggests the contradiction between the greeting of Nicodemus and the answer of Jesus. By analyzing the problem, an ambiguity created by the text is preserved in his sermon until the satisfactory resolution (the gospel of Jesus) emerges. The audience participates in the process of solving the ambiguity with the continuing question, "how can the problem suggested by Lowry be solved?" Moreover, the powerful example of Fred makes me recognize both what Nicodemus' problem is and at the same time, what my problem is. That is inner emptiness. In this long process of the sermon by creative paradigm, I am already ready to receive the message of a final Gospel. As some scholars like Long and Campbell criticize, it is a debatable issue that his effort to restore creativity and excitement through the process of discovery can always create the same surprising impact on every congregation. Nevertheless, it is difficult not to appreciate his work in the fact that his creative paradigm considers the situation or need of the audience sensitively and intentionally.

3.2.5.3 Where is the sermon headed?

As in Craddock's inductive preaching, in Lowry's narrative sermon, the major purpose of the sermon is to evoke the experience of the gospel. A slight difference between Craddock and Lowry is that whereas Craddock emphasizes "the experience expressed in or evoked by language," Lowry focuses on the experience created by the plot-oriented form. Lowry believes that an individual experience is given as the result of using creative plotted-form. A plotted sermon, proceeding from the dilemma to the solution, is similarly found in the characteristic of a television series: "Just as the television drama begins each week with "something in the air" and moves toward resolution, each sermon becomes one plot within a series of plots" (cf. Thompson 2001:11). Like television drama, Lowry's narrative sermon appeals to the listener's emotion and entertainment rather than to his cognitive logic and knowledge. In the pursuit of feeling and entertainment, the listeners have their own conclusion and answer, resisting authoritative pronouncement. In this aspect, Lowry's sermon, though Craddock's sermon

is not excepted, is classified as "the practical postmodern method" (Reid 1998: 164-99; Lose 1998: 1-14). This kind of plot-centered preaching will be an effective method to preach the gospel to those who want to be entertained. Also, it will be a fresh way to proclaim the gospel to those who have already heard the Gospel. But, conversely, what is missing in this kind of plotted sermon is "a concern in the larger theological agenda of preaching" (Thompson 2001:11). The purpose of preaching is more than providing entertainment to the individual listener. In new of the future step of the plotted sermon, the preacher can ask: Is it really an alternative way in an amusement culture like ours, when the preacher is merely accommodating the techniques of entertainment? Or is it better right that the preaching of our age follows a more opposing in an evangelistic direction to those who are addicted to the culture of entertainment?

Another interest is that the existential and individualistic trend of Lowry, separated from the ecclesiastical and socio-political effect, can reduce or distort the particularity of the message of the gospel, rather than reviving it. Such sermon direction is clearly found in the main structure of his sermon which moves from the problem of the inner emptiness of Nicodemus and contemporary Nicodemus, Fred to its solution by Jesus. But, in my opinion, what John tries to say through this text is more than to describe the cure of inner problems of Nicodemus by Jesus. The present text depicts Nicodemus as not just an individual person who has a serious problem but as a representative of a group (Pharisees) in the use of plural, 'we know' in v.2. This is not an encounter between just an individual patient and Christ as the hearer, but rather an encounter between religion represented by Nicodemus and Revelation (Jesus). In the center of the text lies the conflict between two contrasted images: from below/ from above, the first birth/ rebirth, misunderstanding/ correctness (truth) by Jesus, and old values/new values. Jesus, in this narrative process, is portrayed as the revealer of heaven's secrets (G. Stibbe 1993:55). Thus, the preacher can find and preach the message of the text for contemporary community through contrasting two images. It can lead our message into a different, ecclesiastical direction which is beyond the limit of the individualistic or existential trend.

3.3 Summary and Conclusion

AOP by Craddock and Lowry began with a critical position against the traditional preaching. Criticizing that the traditional approach to preaching is by patterns of explanation, Craddock and Lowry define a sermon as the patterns of creating experience (Hogan & Reid 1999:122-129). To do so, they argue that the old homiletical paradigm should be shifted into a new homiletical paradigm. This can be summarized as the necessity for the rediscovery of the “how” in preaching as compared to the predominating concern of “what” in traditional preaching. Although the sermonic methodology of Craddock and Lowry is called by different names, such as inductive theory and narrative theory, these approaches all share basic strategies for creating human experience through a sermon. Instead of beginning with conclusions, they strategically delay the arrival of a resolution to a problem “by using logics of mutual problem solving” (McClure 1995:45).

Craddock accomplishes the strategic delay by using an inductive sermonic form that “begins with the particulars of human experience and moves toward the often surprising conclusions of the gospels” (Kim 1999:208). Similarly, Lowry develops Craddock’s inductive model in his plot-shaped form. Lowry’s strategic form of delay is “a series of narrative detours that arrive at an experience of the Gospel” (McClure 1999:42). In this process, Craddock and Lowry believe that listeners actively participate in the preaching process and arrive at an individually relevant conclusion of the gospel message. From the above facts, we can say that the theory of Craddock and Lowry is intended to achieve AOP in the form of mutuality between preacher-hearers.

Our primary purpose, however, is not just describing their theories but evaluating them positively and negatively. Through this, we can examine the benefit and limitation of AOP. These will be the primary focus in chapters 4 and 5 respectively.

CHAPTER IV

THE HOMILETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF AOP

In the previous chapter we investigated the overall approaches of AOP concentrating on the theories of Craddock and Lowry. There we chiefly examined their homiletical theology and practices. In this and the following chapters, we proceed to evaluate their homiletical theories. Before criticizing their approaches, this chapter investigates the positive contributions of AOP in contemporary homiletical development and direction. For, even if we do not accommodate all the methods and suggestions they have presented, their theories and emphases provide significant benefits and insights towards more effective contemporary preaching. Although we cannot say that AOP originated solely from the theories of Craddock and Lowry (Zink-Sawyer 1997:342-343),²⁷ and that no critical issues remain for AOP, their methods have unquestionably made an important contribution to contemporary homiletics. As Campbell (1997:126) says, no criticism can ignore the positive impacts of AOP. This chapter will consider four positive contributions of AOP.

4.1 The significance of the listener in contemporary homiletics

AOP has asked preachers to reconsider the significance of the listener. I will mention only two positive challenges here: mutual communication between the preacher and the listener and preaching to the whole person.

First, unlike traditional preaching, AOP enables us to understand preaching in terms of mutual interaction between the speaker and the hearer. According to the opinion of Craddock and Lowry, the listener in traditional sermon styles has not been a primary

²⁷ In the article, *"The Word Purely Preached and Heard": The Listener and the Homiletical Endeavor* (1997), Zink-Sawyer asks, "Is the move toward the listeners (AOP) really a recent innovation in the practice of preaching? In answer to this, Zink-Sawyer says, "When we take a careful look at the history of preaching since New Testament times, we may be surprised to discover an ever-present concern for communicating the gospel in a manner that will be understood by those who hear" (342-3). As a clear example, the "problem-solving" method commonly used by Craddock and Lowry is intended to hold the

concern. They point out that the traditional sermon mode fails to help the hearer to participate in the sermon process. According to the traditional deductive form, the main theme of the text is stated in the introduction. After suggesting general truths or principles, the preacher applies them to particular situations. The three-point sermon remains a very common style of preaching (Mike Taylor 1998: 94). A representative of this sermon model is a traditional puritan sermon focused on doctrinal development in which "once the doctrine was established, the implications were spelled out in "numerous" applications- scores of applications in some sermons" (Chapell 1992: 123). In such a typical deductive mode, one senses a distinct separation between "exegesis" and "application." Christian preaching addresses the head of the listener, following the rationalistic and propositional logics of argumentation. Its focus lies in "what is said" rather than "what is heard" (Van Harn 1992: 14). In this process, the preacher communicates the gospel to the listener by means of a one-way communication method. According to Craddock, there is "no democracy here, no dialogue, no listening by the speaker, no contributing by the hearer" (1979:59).

The decisive danger of such a sermonic direction is that the sermon can proceed without the interest and involvement of the listener. Since the listener is merely considered as a passive receiver in this preaching process, people who are hearing the sermon may feel uninvolved in it and all the efforts of the preacher to persuade his hearers may fail.

Contrary to this dominant deductive mode, AOP as put forth by Craddock and Lowry rediscovers the significance of the listener and offers the best way to keep the hearer listening to what the preacher is saying. A primary concern of AOP is to produce sermons designed to engage the listeners. They ask, how can the preacher involve people in his/her sermons? How can the preacher start where the people are and lead them to God's truth?

Avoiding the fundamental weakness of traditional preaching, its monological character, AOP's return to the listener requires that the preacher consider the sermon as a two-way oral communication which is the work of both speaker and listener. While the

audience's interest. However, it is not a totally new one. It was already used in the homiletical theory of

traditional sermon focuses on 'ways of speaking' or 'a speech-act character', the AOP stresses the importance of the 'ways of hearing' or 'a hearing-act character' (cf. Cilliers 1992:383-384). To borrow Craddock's words, "not all is given by the speaker; much has to be contributed by the listener. Active participation by both is required" (Craddock 1979:28).

In this AOP structure, listeners are no longer observers but active co-participants of the preaching (Long 1993: 186; Buttrick 1993: 189). From the fact that listeners are co-participants, we can evaluate that, despite some limitations in accomplishing a mutual relationship between the preacher and pew, their approach "moves preaching one step closer to expressing face-to face relationship" (McClure 1995: 42).²⁸ Such an advanced step in AOP encourages contemporary preachers to be more sensitive to the shared oral communication that proclaims the gospel story and to the ways in which people take part in the process of the sermon. It goes without saying, furthermore, that a sermon should get the attention of the hearer from beginning to end (Webber 1998:106).

The second contribution is that AOP, unlike the traditional preaching mode, reminds us that a sermon should be directed toward the whole person. Traditionally, preaching appeals mainly to the cognitive level in an ideal sermon where the gospel becomes a piece of information to be imparted to an audience. Contrarily, preaching in AOP no longer aims merely to transmit cognitive information via a one-man system, but "to effect a new hearing of the gospel" (Campbell 1997:126). Whereas traditional preaching appeals to cognitive, propositional logic that is related to the head, the AOP primarily depends on affective and experiential logic that is related to the heart.

Though the primacy of experience of AOP will be seriously criticized in the next chapter, because it has usually been pragmatic rather than theological, it is, nevertheless, seen as commendable that the AOP makes the preacher reconsider the significance of emotional and affective participation. This aspect has been ignored in the one-way

Fosdick (1997:349). For a well-organized history of AOP, see Zink-Sawyer's article pp. 342-356.

²⁸ McClure (1997:42) continues, "This was accomplished by making symmetrical forms of preacher-hearer relationships central to the task of preaching. Jackson Carroll, "in symmetrical authority relationships, power within an organization such as the church is, in principle, available to all members."

communication of modern preaching. Two representative examples are found in the emphasis on the function of imagination and language.

The function of imagination is very important (Markquart 1985:143-152). For, in AOP, imagination has a crucial role to refer to an immediate, sensory orientation as opposed to a rational, conceptual, propositional orientation. By imagination the listeners encounter the feelings, sights, and sounds of biblical text. By imagination the listeners "take their place in the pew as hearers of the Word, recognizing the colloquial sounds, seeing the controlling symbols, and sensing the reigning ethos of the preaching locale they reclothe Scripture for their hearers" (Wardlaw 1989: 80).

With regard to stimulating the imagination, those who support AOP assert the dynamic and creative functions of language, for the Gospel "came by means of languages, spread through them, and must also be maintained through them" (Markquart 1985: 175). In any sense, the major distinction of AOP is its "new assumptions about language"- "the sermon's words continue to be the locus for an encounter or an event" (Rose 1997: 254). In other words, language shapes human consciousness and creates new images. By using metaphorical, poetic, pictorial language, the preacher stimulates or evokes the affective experience of the listener in which the hearers become involved in the Gospel message (Greidanus 1988:186).

In this respect, AOP tries to address the heart as compared with traditional deductive preaching that addresses the head. Preaching to both head and heart should be balanced in Christian preaching, but unfortunately traditional deductive preaching has lost the aspect of "both-and," emphasizing preaching to the head at the expense of preaching to heart (Swear 2000: 18). Alternatively, reconsidering the importance of the listener, audience-oriented preachers try to address their preaching to the heart of the audience, which has been ignored until now.

What I am trying to emphasize here, however, is not the affective, experiential preaching itself but its sermonic direction toward the whole person. Specifically, a major contribution in re-evaluating the audience as a partner in a sermon is not found in

the fact that it succeeds in proclaiming to the heart of the listener effectively. For, as will be discussed in chapter 5, the experiential sermon has a decisive drawback in that it is a sermon formed by the secular forces of media, technology and American culture rather than by biblical and theological reflection (Zink-Sawyer 1997:351). In view of this, one can say that the contribution of AOP lies in their emphasis on the creation of an affective experience of the listener, for this reminds the preacher of the necessity of preaching to the whole person. Even Campbell, who is the most harsh critic of AOP, recognizes this fact: "the holistic character of preaching, which addresses not just the intellect but also the emotions, has been recaptured; logical argument no longer dominates homiletics texts as it once did" (1997:121). Thus, by the challenge of AOP, contemporary preachers can learn an important lesson, namely that an effective sermon should be "life-size in the sense of touching all the keys on the board rather than only intellectual or emotional or volitional" (Craddock 1978:137). For, as Swear says, "it is when both the head and the heart are addressed that the volition of the hearer can be engaged and a meaningful response is addressed" (Swear 2000: 18).

4.2 The significance of sermon form in contemporary homiletics

AOP has emphasized the importance of sermon form. When they refer to the significance of sermon form, their original premise is the inseparability of "what"(content or essence) and "how" (expression) of sermons rather than that the form is distinct from content (Shiraishi 2000:22). They are very much concerned about the harmony of "what" and "how", though, as I will criticize later, their methods lose a balanced stance and, as a result of this, their sermonic modes are reduced to form or plot-oriented sermons because of their individual, experiential framework. Nevertheless, theoretically, the awareness of inseparability between "what" and "how" leads them to discuss "how" rather than "what", because "the essence is inaccessible without form or, in other words, what can be discussed only through how" (Shiraishi 2000:23).

The history of preaching reveals that the study of the sermon form has been ignored throughout many centuries. As Greidanus aptly indicates (1993:514-5), "For centuries

the sermon had its standard form, sometimes derisively called "three points and a poem," shaped by the "Aristotelian logic" which resulted in deductive sermon form in the sermon (Craddock 1979: 45). The decisive problem of this monotonous standard form is not that it requires a didactic form, but that it deals with all texts with just one approach.²⁹ In this traditional approach, the matter of form is considered as an ancillary and trivial thing- a pretty artifice compared to the content of a sermon (Kim 1999: 215). To those who support that a sermon should be strictly didactic, form and content are "classically treated as separate, ultimate categories" (Wardlaw 1983: 60).

As already mentioned, Craddock and Lowry who support AOP, consider this traditional method of preaching all kinds of texts in this didactic form while treating sermon form as trivial, not proper. In *As One Without Authority*, Craddock asks "why the Gospel should be impaled upon the frame of Aristotelian logic, when his muscles twitch and his nerves tingle to mount the pulpit not with three points but with the Gospel as narrative or parable or poem or myth or song" (Craddock 1979: 45).

Craddock's alternative to this traditional deductive form is basically the inductive sermon within which various forms are available to the preacher. The lists are (Craddock 1985:176-7):

What is it? What is it worth? How does one get it?

Explore, explain, apply

The problem, the solution

What it is not, what it is

Either/or

Both/and

Promise/ fulfillment

Ambiguity, clarity

Major premise, minor premise, conclusion

²⁹ Greidanus (1993: 515) mentions that "although this didactic form is much maligned today by the avant-grade, the problem is not with the didactic form as such but with the notion that one sermon form fits all texts." Thomas Long also indicates (1989: 12) that "an unfortunate result of overlooking the literary properties texts is the tendency to view those texts by default as inert containers for theological concepts. The preacher's task then becomes simply throwing the text into an exegetical winepress, squeezing out the ideational matter, and then figuring out homiletical ways to make those ideas attractive to contemporary listeners."

Not this, nor this, nor this, but this

The flashback (from present to past to present)

From the lesser to the greater.

To Craddock, since these multiple forms are found in the Biblical text, the preacher can use them in appropriate harmony with selected preaching-texts: "if the text is narrative, then the sermon ought to exhibit the characteristics of narrative, if the text is a lament, then the sermon ought to set the tone and mood conveyed by a lament; if it is teaching, then the sermon ought to be didactic in character" (Greidanus 1988: 154; cf, Craddock 1985: 176-180).

Another major alternative to the traditional deductive form is the narrative form of Lowry, a proponent of AOP. As already mentioned, to Lowry, a sermon is not a doctrinal lecture or a creedal statement, but should be an event-in-time (1980:148). Criticizing that a sermon is divided into points or themes, Lowry proposes that a sermon should "consist of a sequence of dramatic movements leading toward a denouement" (Long 1995: 150). Toward this end, Lowry supports the narrative sermon form and suggests a homiletical plot. Though the matter as to whether Lowry's narrative method can be considered as a standard sermon form for narrative genre has been debated,³⁰ no one can deny that his narrative preaching is a creative attempt against a monotonous didactic sermon form. Likewise, the consideration of multiple forms available in AOP encourages the preacher who is accustomed to using a single sermon form to reconsider sermonic form in relation to content.

With the influence of AOP, most contemporary homiletical scholars agree that the sermon form is no longer subordinate to the sermon content. The form and content are

³⁰ Many scholars have different opinions on this matter. 1) Lowry views the narrative sermon form as the only method rather than one sermon form among many. He uses it for all genres of the Bible. 2) Many contemporary homiletical scholars like Greidanus (1988: 148), Jensen (1980: 1280, Swears (2000: 95-104), and Allen (1998:192-3) recommend Lowry's narrative method for narrative Genre alone. 3) Scholars like Campbell (1997), Lischer (1984) and Willimon (1992) reject Lowry's plot-shaped sermon for depending excessively on a plot, neglecting to find the identity of Jesus and community of text. 4) Finally, Ourisman (1997:79) disagrees with Campbell's argument. He criticizes that Campbell discards the function of plot for Christological presupposition. He argues the necessity of both for sound biblical preaching. He says, "I contend that the study of characterization would not be useful apart from a

not two separate entities, because "form is integral to meaning" (Greidanus 1993:127). When considering the form, the preacher simultaneously considers the meaning, "for the form of the text sets our expectations of the meaning of the text and guides us in the questions we ask" (Greidanus 1993:127). Just as in artistic creations, it is not easy to distinguish between form and content³¹, so in sermons - artistic creations of a kind - form and content cannot be easily separated. Craddock (1971:52; 1978: 16) argues the relation between the form and content as follows; "How they do is what they do, and what they do is how they do it" and "it is the method that effects the experience" and "the method is the message."

In the same context, Thomas Long also prefers to use the term "the form of the content" because "a sermon's form, although often largely unperceived by the hearers, provides shape and energy to the sermon and thus becomes itself a vital force in how a sermon makes meaning. Form is an essential part of sermon's content and can itself support or undermine the communication of the gospel" (1989: 93). If form is not separated from content, the form plays a significant part in transmitting the biblical message and in achieving its desired purpose (Pieterse 1981: 11). With this greater awareness of sermon form, the function of form is considered as chiefly reshaping textual form and inviting the audience to be a partner in the sermon act. In contemporary homiletics, the sermon form reshapes the form of the text while retaining sensitivity to the text's form. Since form and content are intricately knit together, when preachers forms on the sermon form, they carefully examine the nature of the text's form. If preachers do not treat sermon form with sensitivity to the text's form, the intended message of the original text can be distorted. But this does not mean that the preacher should strictly copy textual form on every occasion. Rather, it means "such respect for the textual form that its spirit is not violated by the sermon form; such respect for the textual form that its characteristic way of conveying its message becomes a mark of the sermon" (Greidanus 1988: 154). In many cases, instead of copying biblical form, the preacher should reshape the form of

consideration of the way these narratives are plotted....the study of character...can only be approached through the study of plot" (1997:79).

³¹ Long explains (1992: 65) this as follows; "Think of Michelangelo's *David*. What is form and what is content in that magnificent sculpture? Or see the blurring of form and content in the fluid grace of the youthful Willie Mays as he glided almost magically across center field tracking a hard-hit drive (as aesthetic event as well as an athletic achievement)."

the text. For, "The preacher's task...is not to replicate the text but to regenerate the impact of some portion of the text" (Long 1989: 33-4).

In contemporary homiletic discussion, another important function of a sermon is to carry the biblical message to its intended effect on the audiences. According to Buttrick, proper sermon form is designed "to evoke a 'wow' from listeners" (1981: 51). An appropriate sermon form for a preaching-text prepares the hearer for a response that the preacher intends. Hearers can anticipate how a sermon will move by listening to just the opening phrase. If a preacher asks a question, then hearers will expect the answer. If a preacher sets a clear theme in the opening phrase, hearers will expect that theme to be supported throughout the following sermon. Also, when a preacher begins his sermon with the phrase "once upon a time," hearers can expect story-oriented flow (Greidanus 1993:516-7). In these expectations, the listener actively participates in the discovery of the truth through which "form shapes the listener's faith" (Craddock 1985:173). Because of the significance of sermon form which has been discussed above, Allen (1998: 185) indicates that the emphasis on sermon form is one of the most widespread developments in contemporary preaching in the last fifteen years.

4.3 The necessity of sermon movement in contemporary homiletics

Another important contribution of audience-oriented preaching is that it stresses the necessity for theological movement throughout the whole sermon process. Maybe this is one of the most decisive benefits of AOP. At the same time, it may clearly be a watershed to distinguish AOP from the traditional preaching style. According to Buttrick, traditional preaching is called "Enlightenment homiletics" in which a sermon follows "a three-phased sacred rhetoric from Protestant Scholastics, *involving subtilitas intelligendi, subtilitas explicandi, and subtilitas applicandi*: texts were understood exegetically, explicated theologically, and then applied" (1994: 95). In this traditional homiletics based on the objective rationalist rhetoric, sermons are designed for finding purpose or subject matter. In this logic or rhetoric, a sermon progresses along the line.

According to Wilson (1995:220), "It is deductive, convergent, or focused on propositions. Some people speak of it as influenced by the left hemisphere of the brain, which is logical, informational, and sequential." While this tendency may have been true and useful, it runs the risk of ignoring the matters of creative form and style (Buttrick 1994: 97). As a result, a sermon loses movement in the sense that a fixed and standard sermon form with its three-point outline, closes the possibility of creative shaping by which a sermon becomes a journey toward understanding (Markquart 1985: 204). A traditional sermon ignoring movement or progression is analogous to "a still-life picture from which an objective viewer may select some items as a topic for discussion" (1994:95). In *Preaching with Confidence*, Danne illustrates (1980: 70) a sermon that is true and useful, but lacks movement.

Proposition: The Greatness of God's Love (God's Love is Great)

- I. Its Costly Expression
- II. Its Unworthy Object
- III. Its Saving Purpose

According to the view of those who support the AOP, lack of movement is the most crucial problem to be found in Christian preaching history, although all traditional deductive sermons do not lose movement throughout the sermon (Buttrick 1994: 95-98; Lowry 1993: 105-6; Carl 1983: 121; Fant 1975: 122-123). To them, the sermon should have movement, and not simply a central idea or main thought based on the text. It must grow as a good novel develops with continual movement in which something must happen (Wilson 1995:222). In order to scrutinize the various theories of sermon movement, let us hear the voices of Craddock, Lowry, Buttrick, Mitchell, and Troeger. Here, in my opinion, AOP by Craddock and Lowry has a germinal function for further study by other scholars.

Fred Craddock, in his pioneering work on the sermon as inductive form, has emphasized the necessity of a sermon movement or flow as an essential factor of AOP. Craddock maintains:

Anyone who would preach effectively will have as his primary methodological concern the matter of movement. Does the sermon move and in what direction? Movement is of fundamental importance not simply because the speaker wants to "get somewhere" in his presentation but because the movement itself is to be an experience of the community in sharing the Word (1988: 6)

To Craddock, contemporary human beings are living in transition, journeying. The sermon in such a rapidly changing age should have "a mobile sermon design" of thought that is strung by a pattern of inductive reasoning rather than by one of deductive reasoning (Buttrick 1994: 96). For, only to the extent movement exists, can a sermon be a journey with the listener, not a monologue from the preacher.

Lowry, another fresh advocator of AOP, has developed an innovative narrative art form. He states that a sermon without movement is the most dangerous enemy of contemporary preaching, Lowry argues that a sermon should have movement as found in the teaching of Jesus through Parables. Calvin Miller summarizes Lowry's opinion (1992: 105):

Lowry says that just as our education system is geared to make "truth stand still," the same evil has also been a long-standing fault of sermons. If Jesus' Parables are not "still-life" pictures but motion pictures, ...why treat the studies as still life? As stories move through time, their very movement indicates that sermons also move through time, and a good word to describe the movement should be flow.

To Lowry, most sermons should tell the known conclusion such as in a TV series where "the plot involves an unknown middle process, although the end is already known" (Swear 2000: 97-8). The serious concern of the preacher is how one can preach effectively the Christian gospel to those who already know the tale and its ending. Lowry finds an answer in the appropriate use of movement. Swear aptly summarizes (2000:98) this fact by quoting Lowry's argument:

Lowry helps us see that it is the unknown middle ground that provides the context for the building of sermonic tension moving toward resolution for preachers today whose

sermons are being delivered to listeners who know the story's ending as well as they themselves do...It is the movement from statement of the problem to its resolution...This movement from felt discrepancy to resolution is what Lowry calls the homiletical plot.

Beside Craddock and Lowry, many contemporary homiletical scholars consider the sermon movement as the most important alternative for creative sermons, overcoming the boredom of traditional preaching. For Buttrick, a sermon is "a sequence of moves" carefully intended to form the consciousness of the congregation according to the "theologic" of the biblical text (1987: 276-7; 296-97). The preacher's concern about rhetorical "moves" allows the congregation to travel with him. Each move should clearly begin and end as the sermon proceeds from one episode to another. Thus these developments are designed rhetorically, not only to fit congregational consciousness, but also to relate to other moves within a sermon scenario (Allen 1998: 189). His notion regarding "moves" is based on the simple analogy that human consciousness works something like a camera. To Buttrick, a sermon is analogous to a series of snapshots, a filmstrip made by a photographer. In this process, the major aim of the preacher is to "assist a congregation in order to form faith in consciousness, according to "logic of movement" that has to do with the way listeners think (Buttrick 1987: 310; Long 1989:102).

Henry Mitchell, a leading authority on African American preaching, argues that the major characteristic of much traditional African American preaching lies in the use of movement by story. Buttrick's preaching theory regarding moves or plot can be a conceptual framework to describe much black preaching (Allen 1998: 191). In *Celebration and Experience in Preaching*, Mitchell asserts that in order to achieve effective and relevant preaching, a sermon should move from "outline as sequence-of-idea" to outline as flow-in-consciousness" (Mitchell 1990:49). According to the argument of Mitchell, many examples of plot-oriented preaching are found in the African American sermons: "many African American sermons move from one distinct block of material to another. The movements are connected much like scenes in a plot" (Allen 1998: 191). His general sermonic theory follows that of Lowry but a special

contribution of his theory is the emphasis on celebration in the final move. The preacher celebrates God's final triumph and grace at the final act of a drama or the final movement of a symphony, for "the black Bible is the story of God's gracious and merciful actions on behalf of a covenant people little deserving of such compassion" (Eslinger 1987: 43). The final move is not exhortatory and moralistic in the form of "to do." It should express "what God has done, is doing, and will continue to do" (Allen 1998: 191). According to Mitchell, "The surprising good news is that celebration is the best way to motivate people to do the will of God" (Mitchell 1991:63).

Troeger, who is known as one of the most creative and poetic of homileticsians, understands a sermon as movement of images. Though Troeger does not deny the significant place of the clarity of the main idea, the persuasiveness of the reasoning, propositional argument in preaching, he objects to the sermon which is totally dominated by these principles. To him, such a sermon is out of date. The model of homiletics should be changed from idea-oriented style to image-oriented style in order to transmit effectively the Gospel's message to those who are accustomed by the electronic media to perceive in imagery (Troeger 1990:28-30). Troeger asserts that, for those who are living in the world of image, a sermon should be "a series of word-pictures in which the images communicates the meaning of the message" (Allen 1998: 193). The sermon also could be a single, unified image by which the listener can participate in sights, sounds, touches, smell, tastes and feeling of the image world. In result, "an image touches the congregation simultaneously at the level of mind, heart, and will. When the community leaves the world of the image, they can perceive their everyday world from the perspective of the image world" (Allen 1998: 194). In this process, the preacher plays the role of a visionary who vividly transmits the power of the visionary imagination, not of one who just explains the images.

Such a comprehensive and serious consideration of sermon movement allows the message of the Bible to be interactive with the congregation by their active involvement, overcoming the old dichotomy of the then/now (Mitchell 1990:50). According to Buttrick (1987:360-361), through appropriate use of the sermon move, the ancient text and contemporary audience are interwoven.

4.4 The resurgence of story preaching in contemporary homiletics

AOP has forced the preacher to reconsider the importance of story preaching where a sermon is proclaimed in a dialogical style and way. Though no one denies that the story sermon or role of story in a sermon is a powerful tool for Christian proclamation, traditional preaching has weakened the function of story. Unfortunately, in traditional preaching, the story-oriented preaching has been replaced by propositional preaching. Since the primary goal of traditional preaching is to teach truth and transmit the knowledge of the Bible, the sermon points are abstracted from the text in the rational manner of logical and analytical exposition (Kim 1999:101). In this direction, the importance and power of story in preaching has been treated as just an ancillary to communicate the propositional truth (Freeman 1987: 119-120). The danger of this rational and propositional homiletics is that it has lost the narrative structure of the Bible.

However, during the past decades, the situation has been dramatically reversed. In modern homiletics, story preaching has grown increasingly popular as a viable option for contemporary preachers who face postmodern audiences. As Lischer (1984:26) says, "Recent interest in story as a form of religious discourse has spread across the breadth of theology and church life with the result that no discipline or activity remains untouched by the vocabulary of story, storytelling, the narrative, or narration." Today many preachers, especially American preachers, have adapted narrative, storytelling-method as an alternative way to overcome the handicap of a traditional deductive, propositional mode. This may be the most important paradigm change in the contemporary homiletic area. Eslinger calls this shift "The Copernican revolution in homiletics" (1987:7).

According to Bass's article (1982:183), *The Evolution of the Story Sermon*, "The Copernican revolution" began with the publication in 1958 of H. Grady Davis's book, *Design for Preaching*. Davis, as a forerunner who supported the need of the story sermon, pointed out that the gospel itself is for the most part in the form of a narrative,

appearing "in the form of story told" (Davis 1958: 157-162). Since story and narrative is one of the fundamental forms in Scripture, Davis suggested that the form of story told should be considered as the most important sermon form. According to Davis, however, nine-tenths of Christian preaching is verbal exposition and argument, while not even one tenth of the sermon comprises story preaching or narrative (Davis 1958:157). Citing Peter Marshall's preaching as an example of narrative sermon, Davis asserts the extensive need to use the narrative element in the gospel (1958:158).

In the 1970s and 1980s the interest and studies of story preaching became a hot potato in the homiletic area. Though story or narrative sermons have a different meaning for different people, they can be classified broadly into two groups. One is the narrative-like sermon identified by Craddock and Lowry and the other one is "a story told" organic form, growing out of the germinal idea of Davis (Peterson 1984: 90-2: Bass 1982:183-188).

Many contemporary homileticians consider AOP as a revolutionary shift toward the story sermon. For, in a broad sense, inductive preaching by Craddock and narrative preaching by Lowry form a sub-category of story theology and story preaching (Peterson 1984:5). Craddock sees story as essential for the hearing of the gospel message. Since the Bible addresses the community of faith, the church and preacher should listen to the Bible, rather than use it as the basis of argument (Craddock 1978: 66). As already indicated in the previous chapters, Craddock understands the Bible as storybook to be shared between the preacher and the audience. More important, however, than considering the Bible as story, is recognising how the story of the Bible was addressed to another generation and place. Craddock (1978:66) says, "it is generally characteristic of the Bible not to repeat a story verbatim and from that story draw lessons and exhortations appropriate to the particular audience, but rather to retell the story in such a way that it properly addresses the hearers." Bible stories are generally proclaimed and applied to particular situations as relevant address and appeal. To Craddock, story-oriented sermons are one of the most effective speech forms to communicate the Bible stories to the new audiences. This, however, does not mean that

Craddock just retells the Bible stories or uses one long story. Rather, he intends that the sermon should be narrative-like by its inductive movement and style:

Commenting may be narrativelike and yet contain a rich variety of materials: poetry, polemic, anecdote, humor, exegetical analysis and commentary. To be narrative-like means to have the scope that ties memory and hope; it means to be life-size in the sense of touching all the keys on the board rather than only intellectual or emotional or volitional; it means having this movement on its own, as though the presence of the listeners were not essential to its process; it means thinking alongside the hearers (Craddock 1978: 88).

So, Peterson (1984: 88) succinctly summarizes the essence of the story sermon of Craddock. "Story or narrative sermons may contain a variety of speech-forms other than story, yet tell like a story and be heard like a story, if they have inductive movement."

Eugene Lowry, another supporter of AOP, also emphasizes the importance of the story or story preaching in contemporary homiletics. The major core of his preaching theology lies in forming a narrative sermon by plotted movement. It is not strange that he defines a sermon as "a narrative art form" (1980: 15). According to Lowry, narrative preaching by narrative art form "will embody a story-like process moving from opening conflict, through complication, toward a peripetia or reversal or decisive turn, resulting in a denouement or resolution of thought and experience" (1995: 342). In this aspect, Lowry has a similar opinion as Craddock in the fact that Lowry understands the sermon as "a narrativelike movement." In result, Lowry's narrative preaching is not separated from story preaching or storytelling. For narrative preaching, the preacher is required to use sound skills of storytelling. But the story sermon of Lowry aims to retell and deliver the Bible story in narrative plot consisting of five stages and this is different from the pure storytelling way or narrative sermon using one long story.

The second group understands that "a story sermon may take shape as "a story told," as suggested by Davis, Rice, Steimle, and Jensen (Peterson 1984:90). In *Interpretation and Imagination* (1970) Rice asserts the need and practice of story sermons. Advocating a "non-biblical sermon" preached from texts of contemporary literature, Rice showed the

samples of story sermons in which the sermons are based on texts, but are shaped by taking their story-lines from modern literature and a movie. These sermons are made by his own belief that "contemporary literature may be its own application...The application, then, may be in the story itself" (Rice 1980: 96). Bass (1982:186) summarizes the distinctive nature of Rice's sermons as follows: "The stories become the sermons; applications and interpretations are built in. The texts...are not discussed in an open-ended manner."

As the 1980s began, the study of story sermons was particularly enhanced by the publication of two books, Edmund Steimle, Morris Niedenthal, and Charles Rice's *Preaching the Story* and Richard Jensen's *Telling the Story*. These two books, says Bass (1982:186), "have roots in the functional-organic thesis of H. Grady Davis, while drawing on contemporary writers and thinkers to develop their quite different concepts about narrative preaching, "a story told."" Especially, according to Jensen (1980:162), the story sermon is the best option for active participation of the audiences in the gospel story. Jensen begins with the biblical text and uses a modern story to elucidate the text. This way is similar to a correlational approach which interweaves the biblical stories and the hearer's stories (Charles Campbell 1997:147-165). Jensen (1980:157) says, "A simple way to begin story preaching is by creating stories that parallel the biblical text and letting the congregation make the connection between text and story."

Like Rice and other story preachers, Jensen's sermon is one type of "a story told" in which a contemporary story dominates the Bible story³²(Bass 1992:187). The story is sermon and becomes open-ended (Petersen 1984:83). Such a type of sermon- "a story told" has been developed in diverse ways and styles today (Lischer 1984: 26-27; Bass 1992:187).

In spite of the handicap of the open-ended approach and the individualistic, experiential manner of contemporary story preaching, the use of dialogical sermon form and style opens an "evolutionary door" in delivering the Gospel message in a more effective way so that it holds the attention of the listeners. For the story form stirs "the preacher

³² In Jensen's story preaching, "The Lonely Lady of Blairstown Park," based on the parable of the Prodigal Son, he uses "a contemporary story with authentic people, containing the message of the parable" (Peterson 1984: 83).

toward more creative, imaginative preaching, which, in turn, stimulates the imaginative power of the hearers" (Petersen 1984:92). Further, in my opinion, this theory and technique provides much new insight so that preachers interpret and preach the biblical text, especially narrative genres in various and creative ways.

4.5 Summary and conclusion

In this chapter we have seen the homiletical contributions of AOP. Though there are many positive aspects, I have selected and briefly described only four things. The first contribution is that AOP makes us reconsider the importance of listener on which major emphasis is placed in a developed move for interactive preaching between the pulpit and pew and for preaching directed toward the whole person. The above emphases suggest that good sermons should be interactive with hearers and also appeal to the whole person (Buttrick 1993:186; Swears 2000:113-123).

The second contribution I suggested is that AOP offers us a new awareness of sermon form. In traditional preaching, the question of "what" becomes a major concern, relatively ignoring the question of "how." Criticizing the traditional opinion which separates form from content, AOP asserts the inseparability of form and content, or what and how.

Theoretically they assure us that "how we preach" can be deeply related to "what we preach", for, as Craddock (1979: 19-20) points out, "the method is message: form and content are of a piece." It is beyond the discussion of this chapter to examine whether this balance between form and content governs their entire homiletical theory and practice, which will be mentioned in Chapter 5. What is important here is that, through the emphasis of how, AOP suggests another quality of good sermons. Good sermons should be formed in an inseparable unity of form and content.

The third contribution of AOP lies in the necessity of sermon movement. According to Craddock and Lowry, one of the decisive problems in traditional preaching is to lose the movement of the sermon, though traditional sermons may have been textual and

theological. Where sermon movement is alive, the sermon invites the listener to participate in the whole sermon process with interest. As Wilson (1995:177) indicates, "It is not enough to have a central idea. It must develop. It must grow. Something must happen. Movement ...is one of the expectations listeners bring." As this citation shows, good sermons should have movement so that the audience is an active participator in the sermon process.

The final contribution is a challenge for story preaching. The story-oriented preaching by AOP and its modern advocates was a revival of the dialogical type of preaching used in earlier times (Bailey 1988:81). Originally, the nature of the Bible took the form of a story in which God speaks and reveals his word through the medium of story. As Stephen Crites (1971:291, 306) indicates, Christian faith is also formed through story. For these reasons, it is a positive thing that preachers try to regard the narrative nature of the Bible through their new sermon theories. This has been ignored until now by traditional homiletical theory based on the non-narrative, rational exposition form.

In summary, the rediscovery of story or narrative preaching provides a fresh motivation for reconsidering theological methodology in interpreting and preaching especially narrative genres. In the light of this, we should mention another quality of good sermons. Good sermons should preserve the dialogical nature of scripture in their preaching.

However, despite AOP's four positive contributions toward the development of modern homiletic, as Campbell indicates, three important issues remain. I will fully discuss these three major criticisms of AOP in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER V

A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF AOP

In the previous chapter, the researcher examined the positive contributions of AOP. Though AOP has many positive contributions in the area of contemporary homiletics, their theories still have crucial limitations to be evaluated with attention. A main focus in this chapter is to criticize ACP negatively. These criticisms are based on the homiletical view of Charles Campbell who is an ardent supporter of postliberal theology. In the light of Campbell's insights, three homiletical problems of AOP can be identified. The first problem is a crisis relating to the sermon goal focused on creating an experience for listeners. The second problem is that their theories overlook the identity of Christ as a central figure of the narrative of the Bible. The third problem arises out of the individual trend of their sermonic approach where the importance of community is lost.

Though I do not entirely support Campbell's chief criticisms against contemporary AOP, and find, sometimes, that his arguments need to be supplemented, I hold, nevertheless, that his critical evaluation offers astute and valuable theological perspectives that should not be missed. The critique that follows addresses itself to the above three points in turn.

5.1 Crisis in sermon goal: preaching as an experiential event

The first criticism against AOP is to indicate the crisis in the sermon goal of AOP. For a detailed argument, this section falls into three main parts. First of all, it is important to mention the primacy of experience where the goal of the sermon is to evoke an experience of American culture (Thompson 1999:434). After that, I will examine secular audience images of AOP that are influenced by modern American culture. Finally, I will indicate that, as a result of uncritical adaptation of secular audience images, a crucial problem arises as the theological vision of the Bible is downplayed and they fail to proclaim God as the subject and object of preaching (Thomas Long 1989:40-41; Marva J. Dawn 1995:260).

5.1.1 The primacy of experience

We have already provided a detailed description of the theory of preaching epitomized by the work of Fred Craddock and Eugene Lowry. Their theory emphasizes how to create experiential preaching in which "transformation is supposed to happen experientially in individuals" (Campbell 1997:122). Although Craddock and Lowry do not develop their new homiletic theories in exactly the same way, despite their differences, the primacy of experience in preaching is common ground that holds them together (Campbell 1997:120-122; Reid 1998:170). Such an emphasis on the "experiential event" of preaching comes out of the reaction against the tediousness of didactic preaching (Lischer 1993:118). To AOP, the unique way to overcome the boredom of the old rationalist paradigm is for preachers to form the sermon in such a way as to create an affective experience in the audience. In the article "*Preaching as the creation of an experience*," Reid, Bullock and Fleer (1995:1-2) clearly indicate the primary purpose of their preaching as the creation of a human experience: "the most productive aspect of this emerging paradigm shift in homiletic method is its focus on the creation of an experience as opposed to a propositional privileging of content...their productive unity resides primarily in their concern with affective stylistic, with the interpretative experience of listeners."

According to many scholars (Lose 2000; Lischer 1996; Thompson 2001), the danger of their individualistic, experiential sermons lies in the loss of balance between theology and anthropology. In judging the perspective of sound incarnational theology, they have come to depend too much on anthropology based on the problem-solving format, so that the Bible may, in this process, play a subordinate role.³³ This has been called the danger of "secular anthropology" which is largely dependent on the human side of incarnational theology. I distinguish it from "theological anthropology" based on the balance between divine side (the word) and human side (becoming flesh).

³³ Basically, I believe that theology is not separated from the anthropology. As Calvin says, it is true that we cannot know God without the knowledge of ourselves. But it does not mean that we should accept secular culture, philosophy, values, and worldview of the world without serious theological reflection. In this aspect, the post-liberal homiletics by Campbell offers a new direction for overcoming the limit of anthropological approach that AOP depend on, even though he adopts another extreme trend. I will mention this issue in the final chapter.

In the same context, Hilkert (1998) says that such an attempt to evoke human experience from the Biblical story based on secular anthropology inevitably "results in accommodating the Gospel to contemporary culture and experience," where the unique Bible message is reduced to a medium for human existence or experience. Though Craddock and Lowry both emphasize the need for balance between the Biblical text and the contemporary situation, including human experience, they, after all, decline to the priority of the audience, not as a community but as individuals. They "accommodate the Biblical message to fit modern audiences, modifying what it says in an effort to make, or keep it relevant," for they think that since the biblical text is obsolete, contemporary people cannot accept the biblical message without resisting it (Henderson 1998:25; S. Hauerwas and W. Willimon 1989:19-24). Although through this accommodation model, their sermons succeed in creating a human experience, in the process of accommodating the content of the Biblical text to suit the contemporary climate, they inevitably adopt secular audience metaphors which dominate our age (Henderson 1998:26; Campbell 1997:155-156). Their audience images come out of the characteristic American culture or the American way of life.

5.1.2 Secular audience images

Now we should examine the secular audience images that are closely connected with dominant American culture.³⁴ Though Craddock and Lowry do not clearly mention the identity of the audience they visualize, we can assume, through serious scrutiny of their sermon theories, that they mainly adapt three audience-images from contemporary American culture. In his recent book (1998) *Culture Shift*, Henderson asserts that the major audience images governing modern American culture are consumers, spectators, and self-absorbed individuals. In my opinion, these audience images have greatly influenced the audience metaphors of AOP by Craddock and Lowry (Lischer 1996:169-180; Campbell 1997:143:155). In this chapter, only two listener images – those of

³⁴ In his book "The Integrity of Biblical Narrative," Mark Ellingsen (1990:7) says, "the new attraction of American churches to story approaches to theology and proclamation reflects accommodation, albeit insidious, to contemporary cultural propensities."

consumers and spectators - will be mentioned; while the third audience image - self-absorbed individuals - will be criticized in chapter 5.3 (cf. Campbell 1997: 143-144).³⁵

5.1.2.1 Audience as the consumer

During the last few decades, one of the most notable changes facing church and Christian theology is that Christian ministry is governed by market concerns, based on a more pragmatic view of ecclesial ministry (see, Kenneson 1993:319-48; John Bolt 1998:12-17; Guinness 1993; J. MacArthur 1993; Webster 1992). John Bolt (1998: 42) aptly indicates this change:

The challenges arising in the church context come from strongly held convictions that the church and the world today are in a new, unprecedented situation calling for radical revisioning of ministry and restructuring of ministerial formation. Theological institutions are re-engineering themselves for a new era, intentionally using a business-world attitude to refocus attention on the "customer."

As Bolt has implied, the fundamental change by market-driven ministry lies in reconsidering the audience of the church. That is, how the church can embrace the audience newly as customer in a changing society. According to Barna (1993:23), it is the way that the church accommodates marketing principles, especially consumer sensitivity. He says that the church should actively accept marketing techniques by which it can successfully capture people's attention and affections. An important duty of the church in our age is to effectively sell the product to customers in the way all modern business sell their products (Barna 1993:23).

In this marketing mindset, the gospel is regarded as a "product," the clergy are the "producer" and the laity or seeker the consumer (Ian Stackhouse 2001:247; Bolt 1998:26). Though the goal of marketing strategies is to satisfy both the producer and consumer, anything that tends to lose the "consumer" should be discarded. In this aspect,

³⁵ Campbell (1997:114) implies that AOP is a product made by the "tyrannies" of America culture within which the hearers may live.

the marketing model has a radically individual customer-oriented mentality. Always at its centre there are consumers. Consumers, in marketing driven society and church ministry, are the most important factor. Thus, it is not an exaggeration to say that product and producer exist for consumer. By adopting this radical audience-centered position, church ministry is governed by the premise of all marketing that the consumer's need is sovereign, that the customer is always right (Wells 1994: 82).

In order to examine the close relation between the consumer image and the audience image of AOP, it is necessary to mention two important issues of the consumer mentality.

The first issue is that such a consumer mentality puts its priority on the need of the consumer. Philip D. Kenneson (1993:338), in his article, "*Selling out the Church in the Marketplace of Desire*," indicates this fact: "the whole enterprise (of *Marketing technique*) is ultimately shaped by those needs that the consumer desires to have satisfied." For, as Barna (1988: 41) says, marketing church by marketing strategies is the process that aims to satisfy the needs and desires of the consumer. What we, in result, realize is that the marketing model is rooted in need-based, therapeutic strategies. By embracing a secular marketing technique that considers its primary goal to hold customer's preferences, church marketers "would refashion the church into a sophisticated and market-sensitive institution whose primary agenda would be validating people's felt-needs by attempting to meet them" (Kenneson 1993: 338).

Since such a consumer-centered direction emphasizing need is based not on theological reflection but on the secular or pragmatic mentality of American society, its fundamental question is "not in terms of seeking what is true but of "finding a right fit," landing on something that is "me." It's about meeting my needs, not about submitting myself to God's call" (Hauerwas and Willimon 1989:24; Henderson 1998:55).³⁶ As Kenneson sharply indicates, the marketing model of the church changes the content of the Christian faith. In church, sound theology begins to disappear. Instead, a market model in which human needs are more emphasized than the greatness of God's story has filled the vacuum.

It is very apposite to our discussion that the central purpose of secular customer images are closely related to felt need. For, today much Christian preaching and its theories, including AOP, have been developed on the theme and presupposition of the consumer mentality in the sense that they are eager to establish relevant preaching mainly by considering the audience as the priority of preaching. (Wells 1994:60). The emphasis on the need plays a crucial role in establishing contemporary listener-centered preaching.

In the need-oriented sermon trend, the standard of successful preaching is related to fulfilling people's needs (Robinson 1996: 16; Kenneson 1993:321; Dawn 1995: 216). A sermon is regarded as a tool to please the audience as consumer, rather than seeking a higher sermon goal and purpose through serious theological reflection. Such a trend is clearly evident in AOP. AOP shows how much their theories have to do with the secular consumer image. Their sermonic method is strongly based on satisfying the felt-need of audiences as a primary way of assessing relevant preaching, in the process of which the identity of Christ (Christology) is subordinated to a reduced form of Soteriology. Thomas Long considers the sermonic theory of Craddock and Lowry as a process of addressing the felt need of the audience by inductive and narrative sermon forms, although there is a slight difference between them:

Craddock's own label for his proposed form, "problem-solving activity," is the real key to understanding this approach to sermon structure. In Craddock's view, the preacher should imagine that the hearers are going to solve a specific problem (my emphasis "felt need"), and then design the sermon to give them all the necessary information, and in the proper order, to resolve that problem for themselves. It is crucial to remember that in Craddock's scheme the problem being solved in the sermon is always the question, What does this biblical text mean for us today? ... For Craddock, the one problem to be solved was the problem of the text's contemporary meaning, but for Lowry, any "felt need" on the part of the hearers - whether originating in the biblical text, a theological text, a theological doctrine, or a situation in life-can serve as the original task. Lowry believes that sermons should begin by describing this problem, dilemma, or bind so clearly that the hearers feel "ambiguity" and desire its resolution (1989:98-99).

³⁶ Henderson continually says, "That makes for some real challenges when talking about a faith in which

To Craddock and Lowry, the gospel is presented as the solution to all our problems, the resolution of all conflict. Meeting felt need becomes the ultimate goal of preaching in which the gospel is reduced to a solution formula for personal problems.

Another important issue to be considered in relation to consumer image in marketing strategies is the matter of authority. In this consumer-driven culture, emphasis on the needs of audience naturally leads to assuming the authority of audience. Since the aim of marketing strategy is enticing the customer to buy by satisfying the taste and need of the contemporary audiences, the listener as the customer is always right. Ultimate authority for deciding whether it is true or not lies in the consumers (Webster 1992:25-37; Lischer 1996: 169-181). In a similar context, the authority of preaching in AOP is totally different by comparison with the traditional preaching opinion. AOP is closely related to the understanding of authority in secular marketing principles.

Traditionally, many preachers and homiletics have found the authority of preaching in the close relation between the preacher and the biblical text, rather than in the relation between the text and the listener. Sidney Greidanus says that preaching has authority when a preacher is faithful to the Bible. He says,

The only proper authority for preaching is divine authority...The Bible alone has the divine authority. If preachers wish to preach with divine authority, they must submit themselves, their thought and opinions, to the Scripture and echo the word of preaching... Accordingly, if preachers wish to preach with divine authority, they must proclaim the message of the inspired Scripture (1988:12-13)

To him, authoritative preaching is to announce the good news as it is recorded in the Bible. Holding a similar opinion, Elizabeth Achtemeier (1989:13) insists, "the one basis of our authority is the Holy Scriptures, and if we do not preach out of them, we should not be preaching at all." According to both, in order for preaching to be authoritative, the preacher should continue to preach the Bible as it is given to us in the scripture (Greidanus 1988:12; E. Achtemeier 1980:18).

the Master says to the MasterCard generation, "Following me starts with dying to yourself."

In AOP, however, authority of preaching lies not merely in the relation between the text and the preacher as emphasized in the past. Rather, they think that the authority of preaching is found in the relation between the preacher and the listener. Though it sounds plausible and its positive contribution cannot be overlooked, it is, nevertheless, not very different from the trend which emphasizes the authority of the consumer in secular marketing strategies. As an example, Craddock asserts that, owing to a change of social structure, "no longer can the preacher presuppose the general recognition of his authority as a clergyman, or the authority of his institution, or the authority of Scripture" (1971:14). The traditional mode of sermon has failed to reach the contemporary listeners who are constantly visually and electronically stimulated. To them, the traditional discursive sermon and authoritative language is no longer effective. Now the authority of preaching is understood in a new perspective. It is found in the way that a preacher preaches a sermon in order to be heard by the contemporary audience by a new mode of developing sermons. In the new relation between the preacher and the listener, according to Craddock, the preachers should be without authority while the hearers have the final authority to decide if it is true or not. The primary function of the preacher is to preach a sermon that can appeal to a listening audience, especially in a postmodern society, as a producer would try to do his best to hold the interest of the customer (see J. Thomson 2001: 6). The problem is not that AOP emphasizes the reaction of audiences. Rather, as Lischer (1996:173) indicates, the decisive drawback lies in its premises about the autonomy of the listener. In result, in this homiletical paradigm, the real authority of preaching resides in the hearer who ultimately makes the sermon (Lischer 1996:173).

Through the above discussion, we can clearly confirm that the audience image of AOP is similar to the customer image of secular marketing techniques in the sense that it over- emphasizes the need and authority of the customer. The aim of preaching in AOP is to hold the mind of consumers which is where Craddock and Lowry follow the secular presupposition and standard which dominates so much of American culture: something is considered valuable only to the extent that it has instrumental value for me. In this structure, all that is required is good marketing, not the true identity of Christianity (Lischer 1996:172-175). Thus, as Walter Brueggemann (1978:11-13)

indicates, the ethos of consumerism fails to develop an "alternative consciousness" for the prophetic ministry of the church, including the preaching ministry.

5.1.2.2 Audience as the spectator

The audience image as the spectator is also closely related with AOP. A serious challenge facing contemporary Christian ministry is how the church responds to the requirement that people want to be entertained. This challenge is not separated from consumer-oriented church demand, for amusement and excitement has become a remarkably valued prerequisite for satisfying the need of the consumer (Webster 1992:86).

As Babin (1991:18-33) indicates in his book, *The New Era in Religious Communication*, the need for entertainment has been radically increased by the characteristic of the age of electronic media. In the age of oral culture, there was no way of communicating, other than the old ways that are essentially linked to oral culture such as symbolic actions, gestures and actions within the community, celebrating traditional feasts, repeating prayers, texts, and stories, and just listening to the speaker or preacher. Since the distinctive nature of communication is presented in the repetitive model by the center of a distinctive story, the communication mode becomes primarily circular and repetitive (Babin 1991:19; Raymond 1993:19-29).

Unlike oral culture, in the age of print media, the characteristic of communication is "a cumulative model with processes of change" in which the delivery of the message has a straight-line form that is directly linked from introduction to conclusion (Chio 1996:138). In this mode, logical argument and knowledge is stressed and the preacher offers the audience a catechistic lesson. In a catechistical way, major Christian doctrines and truths are taught and fundamental Biblical texts are committed to memory (Webster 1992: 87; Babin 1991:28). Over a long period, this communication mode, which is called the linear code, has been used as a popular preaching and teaching style. In this type of communication the linear code is a process in which a sender encodes a message to a receiver who decodes the message. The linear school views communication mainly

as rational, objective, and static (Reymond 1993:19-29). Audiences do not look to the church for amusement.

With the advent of audiovisual technology and the electronic media age, however, the communication mode has been changed from a logical, analytical form to imagery and symbolic form. Unlike the linear school, to those who are influenced by electronic media age, "faith is nourished above all not by dogma, but by the fundamental forms and impulses of the imagery." What is important to them is not a systematic order by cause-result but an intruding and interesting message for the audience. This communication style is called the semiotic code, which is the study of signs and the meanings they evoke in the receiver. The semiotic school views communication as symbolic, subjective, and dynamic (see, McClure 1991:52-92).

In the media communication that is governed by the semiotics school, "how to create entertainment" is more valuable than "what is truth." As Fore (1987:35) says, "feeling good' for them has replaced 'being good,' and relationships are based not so much on a religious conviction about the essential worth of every individual as they are based on contractual arrangements in which each person is considered of value to the extent that he or she is of value of me." As in the consumer-oriented mentality, "the question, "Is this right or wrong?" is replaced by, "Is it going to work for me, now?" (1987:35). In such an age of electronic media that the human search for meaning and significance is turned into an endless quest for excitement and escape, the greatest enemy of Christian ministry and preaching is not nihilism, but boredom. Boredom is the bane of the age of electronic media and should be avoided at all cost (McCullough 1991: 30-32; Webster 1992:75).³⁷

Many communicators believe that the solution to boredom is entertainment. And to contemporary people, the most regular form of daily entertainment is television. As evidence, Henderson considers how much time contemporary people spend in front of television to alleviate their endless boredom. He says:

³⁷ McCullough goes so far as to say, "The church has called this one of the "seven deadly sins"- the sin of *acedia*, the sin Frederick Buechner describes as "a form of suicide." It is a choice for death, a willing separation from the joy of life" (p.30).

The average person in the U.S watches more than four hours of television a day. That's twenty-eight hours-more than one full day-every week plunked in front of tube, 1,500 hours a year spend staring at the screen. We spend more time watching television than doing anything else, except sleeping and working. On any given night, as much as half of the population of our country can be found in front of the television (Henderson 1998:72).

Most people "do not approach the TV set with a desire to be challenged intellectually, religiously, or morally." They "just want television to entertain them. And by "entertainment" they mean leisure-time fun or diversion; more than anything else they want to be relieved from the boredom of free time and diverted from the stress of the real world" (Schultze 1991:190). Television watching is so pervasive that contemporary people have an entertainment attitude that avoids this boredom by choosing endless programs and enjoying them in the way of the non-logical and non-linguistic communication. In such a television-saturated age, preaching, like all forms of instruction, faces increasing pressure to accommodate the Gospel to audiences shaped by television. Our serious question is, should we deliberately shape our sermons to reflect the age in which we live - in particular, this visual, television age? The way in which the preacher answers that question will influence his or her preaching (Robinson,1996:16). AOP exemplifies how much their sermons have been shaped by the visual, television culture.

Although he does not explicitly mention the relationship between television and AOP, Henderson's comments on how television uses techniques for holding the attention of an audience, support a close connection between them. According to Henderson (1998:77-79), television uses "running multiple plots" to hold a viewer's interest. Half-hour or one-hour shows, for example, have many plot lines unfolding at the same time. "In a sense, the show is changing the channel for you, moving you on to another show within a show before you have time to get bored." Even within a given plot segment, the producers change camera angles every couple of seconds in order to sustain the viewer's attention (Henderson 1998:77).

For Henderson, however, these tricks are not enough; each shot also must have movement. In television programs, everything moves. And a constant stream of motion hits the viewer by which the engagement of the audience is increased.

According to Henderson, another technique to hold the viewer's attention is "setting the hook at the start of a show." He (1998:78) says:

Begin an episode with some explosive predicament that grabs viewers and keeps them hanging. The thought is that if you can get them to stay with you for the first part of the show, you've probably got them till the end. And if early on you can find some person or situation or setting that the viewer can identify with, all the better. People watch shows to which they can relate.

So, in the article, "*Mass Media and Religious Values*," Sullivan (1983:15) says that hooking the audience is the most common technique of every television program. As a result, television makes us expect entertainment by building dramatic tension. As Henderson (1998:87) says,

The flow of drama grips an audience, first setting the stage, then introducing complications or an antagonist, and finally seeing the characters and the story through to a satisfying resolution.

What is a serious thing is that, in the process of building dramatic tension to arrest the viewer's attention, television renders the audience private spectators to the events seen. Television propels the way of the privatizing of consciousness and human experience. Sullivan (1984:15) says,

Television ...is monological in form. There is the program communicator and the listener. People are not encouraged to discuss and problematize what they are seeing or hearing. For each viewer or hearer it is a private and intimate event between the program communicator and each individual viewer or hearer (Sullivan 1984: 15).

In a similar context, Lischer says, "Today's technology ushers us into our own rooms, each with its own screen and monitor, so that we can dial up a truth that suits us" (Lischer 1996:172). As a result, the electronic media, especially television has challenged literary culture, which is characterized by objective, analytical, formal, logical communication, with postmodern emphases on personal experience, cultural pluralism, and non-rational discourse (Schultze 1995:473). Oral culture by electronic media emphasizes a narrative form of communication and subjective experience rather than objective truth and argument.

The results of this shift in modes of communication are crucial for understanding the context of AOP. We dare to say that the greatest distinctive of AOP is to graft the oral method by using postmodern technology on Christian preaching theory. To entertain the audience, Craddock and Lowry, whether intentionally or unintentionally, use similar techniques to those of television programs and shows, in the center of which the audience is considered as individual to be entertained or spectator (Lischer 1996:173-176). That is, AOP follows the way of the electronic media, especially television in the sense that it "has made entertainment the focus in presenting experience, and it has thus shaped its own kind of audience" (Willimon 1990: 206). I have no doubt that their theories accurately reflect the challenges of preaching in this visual, television age. The point I wish to make is this: if preachers have set the sermon's goal on entertaining the audience, and our preaching has taken on the same rhetorical characteristic of TV commercials, then this may threaten the church's self-understanding formed through learning and interiorizing the particular language of the Bible (O' Day 1993:18). The danger of AOP is, since they have capitulated to the "itching ears" of their audience which desire to be entertained, they depend too on the skill of capturing the audience's attention. Fore (1987:27) classifies this as "technique communication" in which they believe that the technique is essentially a method of problem solving. To them, technique is a major method of converting the audience to the value system of the Bible. However, their conviction that using the technique of electronic media, especially television achieves the end of Christian communication is self-defeating. For, as Willimon (1990:206) indicates, their technique-oriented preaching theories recreate the gospel in images and categories of the world for satisfying congregation's demand to be

entertained, rather than allowing the gospel to recreate the congregation by its demanding image and language. As a result, though their theories are succeeding in creating creative form, they fail to portray the ultimate nature of God's world or reality (O' Day 1993:18). In contrast to the opinion of AOP, the true goal of preaching is not to proclaim message that audiences want to hear, but to proclaim the message that they must receive as God's people.

5.1.3 The loss of theological vision

Through the above discussions, we have proved that the starting point of AOP is to create sermon forms that relate to creating the audience's experience, which is directly correlated to major characteristics of American culture. As Campbell has said, one of the great dangers we face in the homiletic method of Craddock and Lowry is the loss of a theological vision (Campbell 1997:155). When we here speak of theological vision, we mean that AOP does not appropriately establish the centrality of God as the subject and object of our sermons.³⁸

Since the Christian theological vision begins with God's revelation and theology can be defined as a conversation with God, an emphasis on God and God's redemptive activity in history is a fundamental element of the evangelical theological vision (Lints 1993:82). As Lints says, the theological framework is primarily listening- listening to God himself. So, if we fail to listen to God himself and to proclaim God's centrality, our theological vision is impaired (Lints 1993:59; 82). In relation to the loss of theological vision that is

³⁸ Dawn (1995:207), utilizing the sentence of Benton Lutz, deplores the loss of God as the center of the sermon in contemporary homiletics:

Looking for the gospel. It has been strangely absent...In the church, worn-out preachers too often preach worn-out words from a worn-out tradition to people who no longer expect to be challenged.

What went wrong?

Instead of trying to make visible what to many is invisible, the church has been about creating a fabricated reality, a reality of our own design. It is trying to be a force in society while ignoring the force of God already present and working in society.

These pastors force stale, dry words into our heads rather than telling the stories of Scripture in ways that illuminate our lives. They do not crack the kerygma open and let those stories spill over the real events of our daily lives.

centered on God, although not writing about Craddock and Lowry, Lints' criticism of the contemporary theological trends can be applied to them. In his book, *The Fabric of Theology*, Lints (1993:82) says,

We most often capitulate to this temptation by placing alien conceptual boundaries on what God can and has said in the Word...we concede a disproportionate influence to our filters in our efforts to understand the biblical revelation. We force the message...into a cultural package that distorts its actual intentions.

In this process, the God-centered message is changed into a human-centered message which is mainly focused on human experience and feeling, based on secular cultural images and languages (Keck 1993: 47-48). As already mentioned, to Craddock and Lowry, "the sermons must appeal to people by meeting their "felt needs," rather than by giving them the Word of God that actually meets their genuine need" (Dawn 1995:222). Though theoretically they have argued the fact that sermons should balance being faithful to the Word and attentive to the needs of listeners, nevertheless, the priority of AOP is to make the Gospel or God's story relevant for contemporary people by adapting human language that reduces the Biblical truths. Like many postmodern theologians, they pursue the re-appropriation of the Bible in the context of American socio-cultural concerns (Lintz 1993:254). Their sermon theories, in this aspect, are more in tune with liberal and anthropological trends, rather than with theological, biblical reflection. Anthropological or psychological interests replace the message of God. If a sermon is meaningful only when it evokes human experience, God, in result, is no longer functioning as a major object of biblical preaching and proclamation.

This, however, does not mean simply that Craddock and Lowry do not mention God. Rather, it means that God, they have said, is "identified relationally through experience." To them, "the identity of God is known primarily in experience, not by the role God plays in the stories that are told of God (Campbell 1997:132). In Frei's terms, such a trend brings with it the danger of theological "relationalism"- a relationalism that dares to make no claims for God apart from the experience of human beings (Campbell 1997:141). This kind of experiential relationalism makes God too dependent on human experience in which God as the center of the Christian sermon is treated as a cipher for

human experience (Dawn 1995:206-209; Campbell 1997:142). As a result, in AOP, while human experience becomes the focus of the sermon, God's centrality has seriously been lost or diminished (Campbell 1997:141).

In a similar context, O' Day indicates the drawback of theological relationalism. According to O' Day, when preaching becomes anthropology in terms of theological relationalism, and becomes preoccupied with the language-society correlation, God's language which gives God's people hope is reduced to individual human language of worldly culture. God's language as the logic of Christian belief is replaced by human language as the logic of secular culture. Within such a framework, God's language or story is interpreted through language and categories of the world rather than that the world is interpreted through the language and categories of the gospel (O' Day 1993:18).

Rejecting the way of theological relationalism, O' Day argues that a God-oriented preaching offers the true hope for which our society so desperately yearns. As an example, O' Day reminds us of the presence of the salvation oracles as the power of God's spoken word to offer hope in the face of fear. She says,

The salvation oracle of Isaiah 41:8-13 ends in verse 13 with a repetition of the words of salvation, "Fear not, I have helped you." This repetition of the words *fear not* shows that the word of salvation is indeed the core of the promise of salvation. The repetition also shows that the community needs to hear these words again and again, We are timid, embedded creatures, and our fears reach deep into our being. The words fear not of the salvation oracle resound as persistent refrain in the preaching of Second Isaiah...Second Isaiah's preaching could not of itself make the Babylonian threat go away. His preaching could, however, invalidate the Babylonians' power by placing it in the context of God's promises. His preaching could remind his listeners how to speak the language that defines the world in terms of freedom and fullness of life and authorizes them to speak that language anew. Through his preaching he offered his community the sights and sounds of their authentic world, a world determined the only way to move his people out of despair and into the hope-filled future already initiated by God was to reassert God's promise over and over again, so that finally the language that shaped the life of the community would no longer be "I am afraid" but "do not fear" (O' Day 1993: 25-26).

In summary, what today's contemporary audience needs is a hope through God's language, rather than replacing the biblical word as a new language, a contemporary idiom for creating an experiential word event. People can participate in this hope only in faith, for it is not a matter of technique to make the irrelevant, outdated word relevant or meaningful for contemporary audiences but a matter of faith. Dawn (1995:224), quoting Ellul's writing, says that "Ultimately, either the biblical text carries the revelation or it does not; it is a predecision of faith or of unbelief. Only by faith we know that this Bible has a meaning, and that it is true."

5.2 Crisis in Christological identity

The second criticism against AOP manifests a crisis in Christological identity. It will consist of three main parts: the loss of the central character of biblical narrative, the loss of the Jesus identity by parabolic preaching, and a homiletical example of preaching Christ in relation to Paul's theology and rhetoric.

5.2.1 The loss of the central character in the biblical narrative

AOP is primarily based on the homiletical use of narrative.³⁹ Most homiletic scholars define Lowry's sermon theory as narrative preaching. Also, Craddock's homiletical theory has closely to do with narrative preaching. Though Craddock's preaching theory is called inductive preaching, as Ourisman (1997:15) evaluates, the concern about narrative preaching was first raised when Craddock articulated an interest in the form

³⁹ In Craddock, the term "narrative" has a broad meaning. That which has a plot, character, and setting is called "narrative." To him, "story" is another name for narrative and he includes parable also in the category of narratives. In Lowry, "narrative" and "story" are used in different meanings. Everything which has characters, setting, action, tone, and plot is called "story" by Lowry, while he sees in "narrative" a particular "plot form, which always...begins with a felt discrepancy or conflict, and then

and function of the text. Because of his initial homiletical response to the move towards the literary or narrative approach, it is not an exaggeration to say that he became the pioneer for contemporary narrative preaching.

Basically, the narrative approach in Biblical study and preaching starts with an intention for overcoming the limitation of historical criticism which interprets not the stories themselves but the historical circumstances behind them (Powell 1990:2). As Perrin (1977:6) argues in his book, *The Resurrection According to Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, literary or narrative critics ask different questions of a text than historical critics.

Now we no longer ask ourselves, Did Jesus appear as risen from the dead to his disciples not at all (as in Mark), or in Galilee (as in Matthew), or only in Jerusalem and its environs (so Luke)? Instead we ask ourselves, what is Mark trying to say to us by deliberately omitting appearance stories, or Matthew by locating the major appearance in Galilee, or Luke by limiting appearances to the Jerusalem area? ... What is it that the Gospel writer is challenging us to accept or to deny by means of this particular narrative?

In this aspect, unlike historical criticism, narrative criticism is a text-oriented approach in which the intention of the text is more important than the intention of the real author (Jang 2001: 35; Kingsbury 1986:38). When it is said that narrative criticism is a text-oriented approach, it does not mean that preachers only attend to the content of the text: rather, it means that preachers must consider the content and the form at the same time as important factors in making a biblical sermon. For, a biblical sermon "may seek not only to say what the text says, it may also seek to do what the text does" (Long 1983:13). As has already been mentioned, among many important characteristics of narrative criticism,⁴⁰ the idea that the meaning of texts cannot be separated from the form which

makes its way through complication, make a decisively sharp turn or reversal, and then moves finally resolution or closure" (Eugene Lowry 1997: 23).

⁴⁰ In comparing with historical criticism, Powell (1990:6-10) indicates four differences of literary or narrative criticism. First, the focus is "on the finished form of the text" rather than the written and oral predecessors to the extant texts or its process of formation. Second, rather than viewing the text as a string of pearls, an anthology of traditional material, there is an emphasis on "the unity of the text as a whole." Third, rather than viewing the significance of the text in terms of its referentiality to historical events, the text is seen "as an end in itself" whose significance is seen in its capacity to affect its readers. Finally, rather than viewing the text as the culmination of a historical process, the literary critic sees the text as a

it is expressed in, becomes the most fundamental presupposition in creating narrative preaching (Powell 1990: 6-10; Craddock 1978: 77; 57-78; 1985:7-14; Buttrick 1981:49, 51; B. J Bennett 1988:179; Wardlaw 1983:22-23; Ourisman 1997: 13-31).

Theoretically, AOP supports the importance of both content and form as a reaction against the sermonic trend that ignores sermon form. As Craddock (1978:77)⁴¹ argues, the homiletical turn to literary critical approaches may bring recognition that the biblical texts "come to us as pieces of literature in which form and content are wedded so as to create certain effects upon the reader." But, despite their theoretical recognition, their sermons do not hold on to the way of "both-and." Craddock's balanced theory harmonizing both the sermon content and the sermon form does not guarantee a sound biblical preaching that respects both text and form appropriately and faithfully because of his experience-centered presupposition. This also is not an exception for Eugene Lowry. Theoretically, Lowry recognizes the absolute importance of both the content and the form of text. But, owing to his primary interest to make the Christian message relevant by relating it to the "general human experience," Lowry also fails to sustain the balance of the both. Campbell sharply criticizes how much they are inclined to invent a new form for the purpose of holding a contemporary audience's interest, while sacrificing the unique message of text itself. This drawback is clearly seen when we investigate the primary purpose for which they use narrative.

Narrative has been valued because it is rhetorically effective in engaging the congregation and enabling participation in the sermon; because everyone likes a good story; because stories are "open-ended" and allow everyone to make his or her own meaning; because much of the Bible takes narrative form; because individuals and communities have their identity in stories...Craddock argues that the sermon should move like a good story and that stories are the primary vehicle for indirect speech, which enables people to overhear the gospel....Lowry has focused exclusively on formal matters, distinguishing between telling a particular story, and using a narrative plot in the sermon (Campbell 1997:167-168).

medium of communication between an author and a reader. Among them, a second thing will be mentioned later.

If Campbell's indication is true, the primary concern in the practice of Craddock and Lowry lies in exclusive emphasis of the sermon form, rather than that of sermon content. In result, a homiletical move toward the narrative preaching of AOP is intended as another extreme reaction against the topical and propositional style of preaching (Lose 1998:1). And its major concern is how to make a sermon that holds the audience's interest from the beginning to the end of the preaching. Because of this biased interest in satisfying the audience rather than in distilling the truth, their homiletical practice has a decisive danger when describing the specific narrative character of the biblical text, especially the gospels.

According to Campbell, their emphasis on form for creating an experience for contemporary audiences is not a new trend, for their sermon theory comes out of a theological presupposition. Borrowing Hans Frei's logic (1974:Chapter 1), Campbell says that their anthropological orientation based on existential experience, is similar to modern liberal theology in its apologetic nature that aims to explain the religious and moral appropriateness of the Christian message in relation to general human need and existential experience (Campbell 1996: 151). To those who support liberal theology, "the world...has changed radically since the early creeds of Christendom were formulated; this makes the creeds sound archaic and unreal to the modern" (McKim 1994:41). So, the aim of liberation theology and preaching is to remodel the Christian message, which is old and outdated, into a new form which the contemporary world and people can understand and accept. To this end, some forms of correlation are generally used for the major method of liberal theology for relating the Christian truth to the existential experience of modern people. As Campbell says, liberal theology "has basically sought to relate or 'correlate' the Christian message with dimensions of human existence that can be discerned apart from the 'linguistic world' of the Christian faith itself" (Campbell 1997: 33).

⁴¹ For his more detailed argumentation, see the chapter "Concerning the Story" (pp.57-78) of *Overhearing the Gospel* (1978). See also Craddock's discussions in "The Sermon and the Uses of Scripture," *Theology Today* 62 (1985) 7-14.

The presupposition and method of this liberal theology are totally different from the interpretation and the Bible reading of the traditional biblical narratives. The difference is clear when we compare Frei's understanding of the biblical narrative with that of modern liberalism.⁴²

According to Frei, until the eighteenth-century, the traditional Christian understanding of the biblical narratives, especially the Gospels, was concentrated on the description of realistic narratives⁴³ that provide us with a picture of God in Christ (Frei 1974:2-3; Stone 1995:261). The Bible interpreters tried to establish the meaning of God's action in history and provided a historical standard by which Christians could assess their own cultural and historical perspective (Stone 1995:260). In concert with Frei, Campbell (1997:37) says, "Throughout most of the church's tradition, ... believers have read the Bible 'intratextually.' The 'world of the Bible' had been the one 'real world' within which life was interpreted." The significance of realistic reading based on Frei's theory is that, in this Bible reading, the particularity of the main character, the unique, unsubstitutable Savior, Jesus of Nazareth, was considered as the most crucial factor in interpreting the Biblical narrative.

However, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a great reversal took place. Among many people who lead this reverse, according to Stone (1995:261-262), two theological giants, Schleiermacher and Bultmann are very important for the early impact of modern liberalism on narrative theology. To them and their followers, the earlier realistic understanding and interpretation of biblical narratives must be replaced by metaphorical and demythological interpretation of the narrative in which the biblical world of miracles and supernatural events described in the Bible could no longer be accepted as

⁴² Since it is beyond the intention of this paper that we discuss the entire narrative theories of Hans Frei, I will just compare his realistic narratives with liberal theology. That is, I limit my interest to how the realistic narratives of Frei are changed in the liberal theology.

⁴³ In his excellent book, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (1974: 2-3), Frei indicates that a narrative and literal reading of Scripture, which is often called "realistic" or "precritical," entails three presuppositions: 1) the narrative refers to and describes actual historical circumstances (it is not-symbolic); 2) the events in the biblical world/ narrative are temporally sequential and therefore depict a single, cumulative story (the unity of the narrative); 3) the world depicted in the biblical narratives is the one and only real world and therefore embraces the real world.

part of the real world.⁴⁴ They shifted the significance of Jesus of Nazareth away from the biblically narrated world of miracles and supernatural happenings to the "inner meaning for us" of Christ's death and resurrection (Stone 1995:261). For Schleiermacher, this "inner meaning" resides in the feeling of absolute dependence upon God, since to him, religion is not a matter of belief or of practical action, but is a feeling or intuition. So, to find one's true religion one's true consciousness should be investigated (Osborne 1991:368).

For Bultmann, this "inner meaning" resides in the "existential" transformation of the believer's spiritual life. Bultmann wants to make the Christian message meaningful and appropriate to the contemporary audience. To do so, there is a matter to be solved. In his view, the biblical narrative of Jesus' life, death and resurrection was a mythic narrative which is filled with what he called its mythological language. The serious problem is that the modern believer living in the prevailing scientific world could not accept this mythical narrative. Bultmann, to solve this predicament, suggests the demythologized interpretation (Bultmann 1957:1-44). In this way, Bultmann replaces the realistic understanding of the biblical story with a primarily subjective, existentialist reading of the Bible (Klein, Blomberg & Hubbard 1993: 48).⁴⁵ Where they approach Christian narrative from a fundamentally anthropological starting point, according to Cornel West (1983:300), the understanding of traditional biblical narrative is reduced to mere springboards for theological apologetics or launching pads for existential myths. In result, in the liberal movement, the description of God (Christ) in Biblical narrative was reduced to the inner experience of contemporary people (Ellingsen 1990:18-52; Campbell 1997:31-44; McKim 1985:40; Stone 1995:261-262). The earlier realistic understanding of the biblical story was changed into an experiential form. In this tradition, AOP emphasizes the form, or plot for the purpose of creating the existential experience of the audience.

⁴⁴ Frei also indicates German historicism and British positivism as two central culprits that ignore the realistic nature of biblical narrative. West says, "The former precluded realistic narrative analysis of the Bible because of its rigid conception of the Bible as an object of scholarly commentary; the latter prompted the rise of realistic narrative form in the novel but did not permit a corresponding tradition of criticism viewing the Bible as such" (1983:300).

⁴⁵ As J. Stone (1995:261) says, to Bultmann, "The narrative events were now regarded as cultural products of a primitive mythological worldview, events more similar to fictional descriptions in a novel than a chronicle of historical happenings"

Against their unbalanced emphasis on plot or form, Campbell now suggests the homiletical implications of Frei's postliberal theology as an alternative way beyond the direction of modern homiletic which operates on the premise and method of liberal theology. The alternative direction is that contemporary preaching should be shifted from a plot-shaped move to a character-shaped move. As already indicated, one of Campbell's major criticisms of the recent sermonic paradigm shift toward narrative preaching is that it has thoroughly misunderstood the character and function of the biblical narrative by constructing it in terms of its plot structure or form (Lose 1998:6). Campbell has noted that this homiletical emphasis of plot-shaped sermons depreciates the particularity of the text. Although he does not clearly argue what the relation between the plot and character are and his argument tends to follow a dichotomous trend between plot and character (Ourisman 1997:30)⁴⁶, nevertheless, his criticism of AOP makes us reconsider whether a plot-shaped approach is faithful to the biblical form. And further, it succeeds in suggesting the alternative vision articulated by the God-centered or Christ-centered message of the biblical text. Thus, what I try to argue is not the priority of the character or content at the expense of the form, but the nature of the plot-shaped approach that Craddock and Lowry argue. More specifically, does their plot-centered preaching really follow the rhetorical function or the persuasive structure that each text faithfully embodies? In my opinion, their plot-centered approach is more concerned with the existential trend to create individual experience than with the texture or rhetorical form of the Biblical text. For such a reason, a narrative preacher like Lowry becomes so enchanted by narrative form that he believes that he can preach all genres using one narrative plot form (Greidanus 1988:152). It is evident that Craddock and Lowry do not follow faithfully the plot of biblical narrative. Rather, plot is considered as a magic formula that allows the contemporary audience to participate in the Biblical story.

If this is true, despite the fact that the emphasis of sermonic form has contributed to contemporary homiletic, the homiletic direction taken by Craddock and Lowry can have

the disastrous result of eclipsing the more important unique, unsubstitutable identity of Jesus of Nazareth. So, indicating the danger of this plot-shaped trend of contemporary preaching, Campbell has suggested that the gospels are about their central character, Jesus.

While contemporary narrative homiletics has been concerned with formal matters of plot, Frei's work shifts the focus to the particular matter of character. This simple shift of focus has extraordinary implications. Whereas for the homileticians the narrative shape of the gospels leads to plot and sermon form, for Frei the narrative shape leads to an emphasis in character and Christology (Campbell 1997:171).

Briefly speaking, while the assumption of contemporary homiletic by Craddock and Lowry is about narrative structure, that is, plot as a form, the explicit premise of Campbell's homiletic is about Christology. Whereas the major rhetorical goal of AOP lies in the skill or technique to amuse the audience, to Campbell, the major rhetorical function of the gospel narratives describes the identity of Jesus in terms of an interaction of character and incident (Higton 1997: 88). Campbell's methodological shift from plot to character is asking: how does Jesus' characterization contribute to the christological affirmations the narratives are seeking to make? As Campbell (1997:171), borrowing Frei's words, says, "Christians are interested in narrative only because Jesus is what he does and undergoes, not because of anything magical about narrative form per se." Since here Campbell's study is limited to narratives of the New Testament, he only focuses on the Christological perspective. But, when we consider the Old Testament as well as the New Testament, his Christological approach should be extended to the trinitarian approach. I believe that the trinitarian approach is a more broad perspective beyond the narrow scope of the Christological approach.

5.2.2 The loss of Jesus' identity in the parabolic sermon

According to Campbell, beside their emphasis on plot, or sermon form, another reason why the narrative homileticians lose the importance of the character or identity of Jesus

⁴⁶ D. Ourisman, in his Ph.D thesis, *Preaching the Synoptic Narratives*, criticizes the dichotomy between plot and character of Campbell. To him, the approach of Campbell has a danger ignoring the plot form of

is that they have made parable paradigmatic for preaching. Campbell (1997:1743-4) says;

They do not hold up the "literal sense" ("realistic narratives") of the gospels as the key for narrative preaching. Rather, they turn almost exclusively to the parable. In narrative preaching it has generally been the case that narrative equals parable. And in the parable, of course, Jesus himself is not a character, except as the narrator.

Because of such a tendency of narrative homileticians, they regard the parables as decontextualized narratives for aesthetic objects. In other words, they treat parables as self-contained stories that are divorced from the larger narratives in which they are located. Parables, in their view, are the clearest example for discrete, self-contained story.

To Craddock, the story sermon based on inductive logic is no more than parabolic preaching. The parable lies in the center of his sermon. In his homiletic textbook, *Preaching* (1985: 205), Craddock suggests two ideal sermon models that every preacher should develop. One is Jesus' use of parables such as the Prodigal Son and the other is Nathan's story-telling to David. According to his explanation, Jesus did not deliver his sermon in the format of "three principles of forgiveness." Rather, he suggested his message with the parable: There was a man who had two sons..." Also, though Nathan's story is parable genre, Nathan did not indicate David's sin directly, rather he used the story of parabolic style indirectly (Craddock 1985:205). It shows how closely his sermon method is related to parables. Craddock suggests that preachers should not aim at telling the truth, but rather they should use a delaying strategy to help the hearers draw their own conclusion to the sermon. For this, his sermon begins with the existential experience of people and moves to an open-ended stage. Nathan's interest lies mainly in the way to relate the biblical text to common human experience where the parabolic sermon of Craddock is intended to incite "discrete aesthetic objects divorced from the larger narratives in which they are located" (Campbell 1997:177). It is thus not strange that Craddock suggests parable or parabolic sermons as the contemporary Christian sermon model.

the biblical text (1997:30-31).

To Lowry, the emphasis on parables as self-contained stories is also manifested in his plot-shaped sermon direction. His relatively recent book, *How to Preach a Parable*, makes a clear example of his assumption: "if one cannot catch the meaning of 'neighbor' from inside Jesus' story of the good Samaritan, one is not likely to discover it elsewhere" (1989:23). Though Lowry at times recognizes the necessity of a larger context in interpreting a text, it is only for understanding the intention of a redactor, not that of the implied author of narrative art. In other words, it is not his intention to see parable or text in relation to their larger literary context (Lowry 1989:33, 127; Ourisman 1997: 33). Like Craddock, Lowry also "isolates the parables from their literary context and seeks the experience expressed in them" (Campbell 1997:177). In his thesis, *The Christian Preacher as Poet*, Philips (1986:35) defines this tendency as "a pericope-based methodology" that explores a passage to determine a life-situation. Though Philips does not clearly mention Lowry, it is true that Lowry's method of homiletical analysis strongly exemplifies "a pericope-based method." Believing that the strongest rhetorical appeal is based on emotional dynamics, Lowry develops the affective dynamics of plot in his five-stage model of plot-centered preaching. Briefly speaking, these five stages are summarized into two major elements to move from sermonic tension by ambiguity to resolution of sermonic tension in which the listener engages emotionally. In this rhetorical movement of "disclosing the clue to resolution," Lowry's expectation is to create a dramatic reversal in the audience's mind. Lowry (1980:48) says, "It is often the case that the clue...comes as a surprise. It is not quite what one has expected, and 'arrives' from where you were not looking. And it turns things upside down."

Through a concrete illustration of Lowry's parable sermons, we can more clearly indicate such a trend. We take as our example Lowry's sermon "Who Could Ask for Anything More," which is the sermon based on the parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard in Matthew 20:1-16. The tension of this sermon lies in the fact that the landowner paid the same amount regardless of when the labourers arrived and how long they worked. Lowry developed this tension with the story of Jesus' encounter with the rich young man and Peter's reaction in relation to the event in Matt 19:16-30. Here,

Lowry suggests that Peter feels cheated like the workers who worked all day in the vineyard. And then Lowry suggests the resolution in a modern, imaginative illustration:

Now I want to ask you to imagine that today you are the parent of three children - three, six, and nine years of age. Now, do you love the nine-year-old three times as much as the three-year-old, because, of course, the eldest has been three times as much help around the house? You, who are nine years old-do you love your parents three times as much as you did when you were three? (Lowry 1989:130).

This parable style sermon is a typical form that governs all Lowry's sermons.⁴⁷ Like Craddock, the limitation of Lowry's method is that it fails to appropriate the sermon in text larger narrative context in which it is located.

As the exclusive emphasis of sermon form for creating an existential experience is based on the liberal theology, so the discrete trend of parabolic preaching also comes out of the theological premise and background of a significant parable interpretation school. As many scholars agree, in fact, the excessive emphasis of parable or parabolic sermon in AOP is deeply rooted in the New Hermeneutic's understanding of the parables as existential, experiential events. The scholars of the New Hermeneutic like Fuchs and Jungel emphasized the power of parables to bring to expression the reality to which they point. The power of the parables lies in creating a "language event"⁴⁸,

⁴⁷Ourisman (1997:89-90) indicates that Lowry uses almost same style as the above parable sermon. Two examples are John 3:1-9 and 1King 19. As already analyzed in the Chapter 3, Lowry's sermon "Strangers in the Night," (John 3:1-9) locates the disequilibrium in the non sequitur of Jesus' response to the question asked by Nicodemus. Resolution is provided through a new understanding of Jesus' answer gained through remembering the story of an overachieving but existentially empty friend named Fred. Nicodemus had asked "what he had to do." Jesus' answer consisted of that one thing that a person cannot do. "You have to be born again, Jesus said- which is precisely that which one can never do, no matter how committed, how hard working, how bright. The one thing no one can ever do is birth oneself. Birth is always a gift of another." (Lowry 1990: 83). Another example is a historical narrative of the O.T. In his sermon, "Listening to the Dark" (1King 19), Lowry begins with the tension which is upset by the incongruities in the prayer Elijah prays. Though Elijah is running for his life (1Kgs 19:3), he prays to die (1Kgs 19:4). Elijah confesses that he is no better than his forbears (1King 19:4) though he will soon claim to be the only one of Israel to have remained faithful the covenant (1King 19:10). The key to resolution comes from a boyhood experience with Lowry's brother Ralph and leads to a careful reading of God's question to Elijah in 1King 19:9. "God asked: 'What are you doing here?... The question was not: 'What are you doing there?'" The sermon's insight is that God is surprisingly present where least expected ("Listening to the Dark," Pulpit Digest 1990:17).

⁴⁸ As an example of how Jesus' parables become language events, Fuchs looks at the parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Costly Pearl (Mt. 13:44 and 45ff). Kissinger, quoting Fuch's writing, says;

persuasively challenging traditional beliefs or knowledge (Snodgrass 1992:592; Blomberg 1990:138-143; 1994:244-5; Osborne 1991:250-1). These parables as language events also should have existential character because the purpose of the parables is completed when the listener is drawn into them as a partner. Following the footsteps of the New Hermeneutic, many scholars (Via 1967:77-93; Crossan 1980; Tolbert 1979:15-50), are interested in the power of the parable to deliver us today in a new and significant way more than finding the original meaning of the parable (Grant R. Osborne 1991:251). In other words, they describe what the parable of Jesus does rather than what it means in the original context. In this regard, we can say that modern AOP actively accepts the existential-experiential trend of parable. Blomberg (1990:140) indicates this fact clearly: "Undoubtedly the modern preaching of the parables would gain much by carefully crafted contemporizations or re-presentations of the parables in modern garb to stir today's audiences more in the manner in which Jesus' originals affected his listeners."

No one can deny that such a parabolic preaching based on the New Hermeneutic's approach of the parable is one of the best vehicles for evoking change in the audience by appealing to new feeling and experience. However, when this parabolic sermon becomes a typical form for all sermons like AOP proposes, we can lose Jesus' message to be proclaimed and taught by reason and logic (Feltman 1996:77). As Campbell (1997:176) indicates, what is important to the parabolic style sermon as advocated by AOP "is not Jesus as an agent rendered through the interplay of character and incident in the gospel narratives, but rather Jesus' "religious experience" linguistically expressed in the Parables." In this process, according to the expression of Campbell (1997:176), "Jesus as the ascriptive subject of the gospel narratives is lost." If the parabolic sermon mode by Craddock and Lowry introduces Jesus as ascriptive subject, He is primarily reduced to Jesus who is suggested as an exemplar to express the understanding of his own existence in such a way that this existence is available to his hearers (Campbell 1997:176; Snodgrass 1992:592).

"Through these parables Jesus has mediated a sense of certainty and of joy in God. But what is more, they reveal the secret of the rule of God, of the love that is grounded in Jesus' own experience. Thus these parables can become a language-event for those who perceive that God is their ultimate security and that He has acted to draw them to His side. Such an event truly places the existence of the recipient in a new perspective" (W. S Kissinger 1979: 185).

Here Campbell's corrective against AOP is clear. The alternative direction is a shift from parable to Gospel so that the ascriptive logic of the biblical narrative is alive in Christian preaching.⁴⁹ That is, Campbell's approach in preaching the parables and the biblical texts, especially gospel narratives, is totally different from that of AOP. It is to understand the parable and each Gospel narrative in the light of the larger context or story identifying Jesus of Nazareth.

In a similar context, Blomberg interprets the parable of Jesus. His suggestion becomes a good challenge. Briefly speaking, his challenge is that the parables should be interpreted in relation to Christology. In his book, *Interpreting the Parables* (1990:289-327), Blomberg says that the central theme uniting all the lessons of the parables is the kingdom of God that Jesus Christ inaugurated with his ministry. Jesus is at the center of the kingdom of God. Though Christological claims in the parables are veiled in comparison with other portions of the Gospels, the Christological question or identity should be central even in interpreting the Parables (Blomberg 1990:325-7). Blomberg develops his argument in the light of discipleship formed by the Christological approach. According to Blomberg, the Christological question and identity enable his audiences to decide "whether to accept these claims and worship him or reject them as misguided or even blasphemous... the single most important decision anyone who listens to the parables can make is to follow Jesus in discipleship " (Blomberg 1990:327). The same urge for decision must continue to function in the same way today. If this is true, unlike the trend of AOP, the parables seek not simply assent or aesthetic experience, but commitment to Jesus of Nazareth. For this, the parable passages should be related to clear Christological concerns based on the understanding of the Kingdom of God.

Similarly, in concert with Farley, Thompson (2001:125) describes the perils of preaching from texts without reflection on the Christ or gospel;

⁴⁹Summarizing Campbell's homiletical theory, Lose (2001:136)says, the ascriptive logic of the biblical narrative "provides not merely the form but also, and essentially, the content of the sermon by reorienting preaching to its fundamental task of reenacting the biblical narrative and thereby rendering the unique and unsubstituable identity and reality of the Jesus of the Jesus of the gospel in the presence of the gathered assembly."

Edward Farley has made the important distinction between preaching the Bible and preaching the gospel. He reminded us that the preaching of the Bible is no guarantee of the preaching of the gospel. We may preach the Bible, offering small morsels of scriptural text each week without ever addressing the larger theological themes of scripture. Our task is to see the text within the larger context of God's revelation in Christ.

5.2.3 Preaching Christ: The Christological Orientation in "Pauline Theological Rhetoric"

So far we have investigated the fact that AOP has a crucial limitation in confessing and proclaiming Christ who is the center of the biblical text. Despite their emphasis on balance between the form and the content, Craddock and Lowry, in result, decline to embrace exclusively the magical function of plot. For this reason, AOP, according to Campbell's criticism, fails to preach Christ who is the major character of the entire biblical text. As an alternative approach, Campbell suggested two shifts, a shift from plot to character and a shift from parable to gospel.

Though we recognize that Campbell appropriately criticizes the drawback of AOP, his sermonistic move, if it is not supplemented, may create a false dichotomy between the form and the content (Ourisman 1997: 30-31; Lose 2001:137-143).⁵⁰ So, our major concern in this section is, how can we preach Christ as the primary gospel of the Bible, without ignoring the sermon form?

In my opinion, the above question can be solved by understanding the relation between Paul's Christological premise in his theology and Paul's recognition of rhetoric. In his book, *Preacher and Cross* (1999), Resner provides excellent insight concerning the present issue. For a more detailed argument, I first want to recall our earlier discussion of Rhetoric in the preliminary chapter, and then I will present an example text of

⁵⁰ A full-scale discussion of the limitation of Campbell's homiletical theory will be given in chapter 6. Here, I limit my discussion in relation to preaching Jesus.

1Corinthian 1:4-2:5 in the light of the study of Dennis L. Stamps. The aim of this section is to find some direction for preaching Christ through an understanding of Paul's radical Christian rhetoric, without separating the content and form or rhetoric and theology.

As briefly sketched in the preliminary chapter, Resner's major argumentation lies in suggesting what Stamps (2002:441) calls "theological rhetoric"⁵¹ primarily through Paul's approach. To Resner, "Pauline theological rhetoric" becomes an alternative way to solve the debatable relation between rhetoric and theology in describing preaching. Until now, many scholars have separated rhetoric and theology. As we have already examined, this is not an exception in the area of homiletic. According to the expression of Resner (1999:136-140), two extreme poles of rhetoric and theology are "rhetorically framed homiletic" and "theologically framed homiletic." The premise of those who support "rhetorically framed homiletic" developed from Aristotles, Augustine, Fred Craddock, Lowry, and Clay Fant renders the gospel as simply the message to be communicated in a larger rhetorical communicative strategy. In this view, homileticians primarily pay attention to audience persuasion in which the speaker considers the listener as "lord" insofar as he/she is the final judge. As D. Lose (2000:221) exactly indicates, in this way, "they have no room for Christian message to form its unique voice and thereby make the gospel nearly indistinguishable from any other message."

Contrary to the above attitude, the presupposition of those who advocate "theologically framed homiletic" formed from Tertulian, Jerome, other Latin "fathers" and Karl Barth judge any and all rhetorical strategies as blasphemy to replace the power of God's word with human work dependent on rhetorical technique (Resner 1999:3, 140). While the "rhetoricians" mainly focus on the persuasion of the audience, the "theologians" primarily emphasize preaching's efficacy which directly comes out of the power of God's very word rather than the power of human capacity. The proponents of this way treat the rhetorical situation of preaching as an insignificant thing, believing that Bible authors, particularly Paul, eschewed the use of rhetoric of his time (Resner 1999: 2;140-

⁵¹ When Stamps (1999: 249-257; 2002:441) used this term, it meant to distinguish Christian rhetoric form other forms of rhetoric, "particularly classical forms of rational persuasion." However, here, I use this

2; Lose 2000:221). For, as Winter (1994:35) says, the rhetoric of Paul's time "was designed to draw attention to the messenger and his rhetorical abilities, and not the content of his message." To those who support this position, the clear evidence that Paul deliberately chose not to engage in such oratory theory is taken from several statements in 1 Corinthians 1-2 (1 Corinthians 1:17; 2:1, 4-5, 13). Many scholars like Pogoloff, Litfin, & Bullmore think that Paul, in these opening chapters, deliberately chose not to proclaim the gospel message in the oral, rhetorical norms of his time, though Paul knew well what the Corinthians wanted were the message in professional, rhetorical manner (Weima 1997:66).

In Resner's judgement, however, these two opposite opinions form only a half-truth.⁵² For overcoming the impasse of both, Resner suggests Paul's approach to the relationship between rhetoric and theology as the third way. Particularly, he develops his alternative suggestion from first Corinthians. According to Resner, Paul first gives absolute priority to the message which is grounded in the logos of the crucified Christ. In other words, "Paul grounds his ethos appeal to the Corinthians in his Christology" (Resner 1999:106). This, however, does not mean that Paul rejects all concern for rhetoric like those who have a theologically framed opinion. Though Paul's approach is different from an Aristotelian notion of Rhetoric, in which the preacher invites the listener simply to entertain another perspective, it does not remove the rhetorical effect in gospel proclamation (Farris 2001:12). Rather, as Lose (2000:224) says from Resner's perspective, Paul does not so much dismiss the prevailing patterns of rhetoric as he does reframe such concerns in the perspective of the cross of Jesus Christ. Lose, following Resner's opinion, suggests that in order to preach in Paul's vision, one first perceives God's work in Christ as most clearly revealed in Christ's cross and resurrection and, in so doing, does not eschew the rhetorical means but rather inverts its categories, interpreting and assessing them through a cruciform lens (Lose 2000:225). In a recent

term more for expressing and emphasizing the harmony between rhetoric and theology in Resner's argument.

⁵² Resner succinctly indicates the limitation of both as follows:

Some, operating with rhetorical principles as primary, have followed Aristotle to draw the conclusion that the person of the preacher, as with any orator, is perhaps the most important factor in the persuasion of the hearers. Others, operating with theological assumptions as primary, have argued that since preaching is nothing less than God's word for which God alone is responsible and which God alone makes efficacious, then any talk of the human person making the word "more efficacious" is idolatrous (1999:134).

book, *Preaching Like Paul* (2001), in relation to this matter, Thompson agrees with Resner and Lose's argument. He argues that Paul's letters were inevitably formed by the modes of rhetorical persuasion of his culture. However, "Paul brought to his culture a dimension of persuasion that transformed and subverted the oratorical tradition that he had inherited" (Thompson 2001: 75). According to Thompson, this is well expressed in Paul's distinctive "grammar of faith" that forms the communal identity of God's people (2001:79-82). What is important is that Christology lies in the center of this "grammar of faith" as expression of radical Christian rhetoric.

Stamps' study (2002:441-457) offers an acute example of this. By analyzing 1 Corinthians 1:4-2:5 as a concrete example, Stamps clarifies that, despite the apparent parallel to Paul's mode of discourse in classical rhetorical approaches, Paul reverts them into a new perspective. From the same perspective as Resner and Thompson, Stamps understands that Paul's theological arguments are influenced by the form of classical rhetoric but are not identical with them. Before fully examining the specific text, Stamps first argues that Pauline Christian rhetoric is different from classical rhetorical forms in the sense that Pauline theological rhetoric uses "its persuasive strategy by assessing the appeal to Christology "(Stamps 2002: 444). It is one of the key characteristics of Paul's intended rhetorical argument.(Stamps 2002:442).

For more concrete explanations, Stamps now proceeds to the concise analysis of 1 Corinthians 1:4-2:5 in relation to the christological presupposition in the theological rhetoric (Stamps 2002:448-457).⁵³ According to him, 1 Corinthians 1:4-2:5 can be classified as at least three different units: 1.4-9; 1.10-17; 1.18-2.5.⁵⁴

The Thanksgiving (1.4-9)

⁵³ Since it is beyond our study to present a full exegesis of this text, I will succinctly sketch this text within the extent to prove the christological premise.

⁵⁴ Accepting Conzelmann's basic three divisions (1.4-9: thanksgiving; 1.10-17:survey of the problem; 1.18-2.5: the first argument), Stamps explains further that "using an epistolary framework for the analysis, 1.4-9 will be treated as thanksgiving; 1.10-17 as a statement of the letter purpose; 1:18-25, 1:26-31 and 2:1-5 as discrete sections which provide an initial argument. There are distinct transition points at 1.10, 1.18, 1.26, and 2.1. The transition at 2.6 is not as sharp rhetorically, but the adversative, *de*, and the change from first person singular to first person plural suggests a key transition.

The thanksgiving section, which is crucial to establishing the basis of the epistolary context, is written in Christological terms. Verse 4 starts with a word of grace given by Jesus Christ who uses a distinctive grammar of faith that has no parallel in ancient speeches and rhetoric (J.W Thompson 2001:80-81). What is important is that Paul gives thanks to God for what God has done through Jesus Christ. It is quite different from the Greek family/ friendly letter, in that the sender does not directly give thanks for the recipient.⁵⁵

The distinctive of this thanksgiving lies in that the orientation is spiritual. Here, Paul thanks God for what God has given the sender and Church- a special spiritual benefit, being in Christ: *sophia* (including both rhetoric and its content), knowledge, charismatic speech, and spiritual gifts of the Corinthians. According to Witherington (1995:87), this thanksgiving has a rhetorical purpose as an *exodium* which is to "use praise to secure the goodwill of the listeners while encapsulating the main theme of the speech or letter."

In verse 6-8, this Christian identity, assured by these benefits of God in Christ, encompasses the past, the present, and the future which are christologically defined (Stamps 2002:455).

This thanksgiving also establishes a shared spiritual bond, which is called the *koinonia* of God's son, between God's people and Christ. In summary, "The content for the letter established by the letter opening is spiritual and based on a shared understanding and experience of spiritual identity conferred by God in Christ" (Stamps 2002:449).

1.10-17 : A statement of the letter purpose

As in many discourses of deliberative rhetoric, so in verse 10, Paul states the main reason of his writing. This introductory formula to the entire discourse is clear evidence of how much Paul loved to follow Greek-Roman epistolary (or rhetoric) convention. Witherington (1995: 94) explains the reason for this deliberative discourse, in that in this main advice, "the rhetor wants his hearers to heed and is followed by arguments to

⁵⁵ In his commentary, *Conflict & Community in Corinth*, Ben Witherington III, borrowing Kennedy expression, says, "It is possible that we should view this thanksgiving to God in light of the newly emerging rhetorical form of the *actio gratiarum*, the speech of thanksgiving to the gods (and to the emperor) given by a consul on assuming his office. If so, then one of the rhetorical functions of this thanksgiving may be to indicate that Paul is resuming authority over the Corinthians before he addresses them in an authoritative manner." (1995:87).

persuade the audience to follow the course of action that the rhetor recommends."⁵⁶ Despite the fact that v.10 was profoundly shaped by the classical rhetorical tradition,⁵⁷ the unconventional aspect of Paul's rhetoric is that the appeal is christologically grounded. Paul says, "I appeal to you...*in the name of our Lord Jesus* (v.10).

After stating the main problem of the Corinthian church, Paul again addresses three rhetorical questions which reassert the christological foundation already established in the opening: Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul? (v.13). While the answer to Paul's rhetorical question is clearly no, the rhetorical purpose is to "reinforce the context established by the letter opening (1.1-9) and the appeal in the statement of the letter's purpose (1.10)" (Stamps 2002:450). Using rhetorical effect, Paul, in verses 14-17, makes his audiences recall the commonality of baptismal identity and the purpose of preaching. For Paul, the preaching of the cross of Christ and their christological experience of baptism is the foundation for the unity of the Corinthian church (Stamps 2002:455).

1.18-2.5 Initial argument

The main focus of this section lies in refocusing his audience on Jesus as God's wisdom and power by contrast with human wisdom and foolishness. This main theme, according to R. B Hays' divisions, 1.18-2.5 consists of a three-part analysis: 1:18-25; 1:26-31; 2:1-5 (Hays 1997:26-36). In 1:18-25, the contrast between wisdom and foolishness is suggested in the message of Christ crucified. The message of Jesus crucified is foolish to those who are outside Christ. Ironically, however, God is pleased to reveal his wisdom and power through the cross of Jesus. To Paul, "it was not God's plan that the world should be able to know God on the basis of its own wisdom" (Witherington 1995:112). Rather, God's plan is fulfilled through the paradoxical way of a crucified Jesus. And this God's scheme, is contrast to human wisdom.

⁵⁶ Classifying 1 Corinthians as a deliberative rhetoric or deliberative discourse, Resner (1999: 104) also says that its purpose is to "persuade the Corinthian Christian community to unity."

⁵⁷ Witherington (1995:94) states that the *propositio* of ver 10 has a parallel with Greek-Roman rhetoric: It is not surprising that Paul's *propositio* has some notable parallels in the literature, for example, Demosthenes Ep.1.5. The most remarkable parallel in formal terms is in P. Oxy. 3057, which is from the first or second century A.D. It not only begins in almost identical fashion to 1 Cor. 1:10 with "But I

In this deliberative discourse, which most appropriately employs proof by example, Paul now rhetorically moves from the principle to the concrete example (Stamps 2002:453; Resner 1999:104) In 1.26-31, the contrast between wisdom and foolishness is discussed in view of the experience of the Corinthians. As Stamps (2002:455-6) says, "Their calling confirms the distinctive wisdom of God and locates them in this divine wisdom, Christ, in whom also is located God's righteousness, sanctification and redemption." Because of the Christological implication in their calling, they cannot boast because of the standard of the world, of their social status, wealth, or heredity. In spite of the lack of such qualities, salvation in Christ comes to them (W.A Meek 1983:271). Thus, one who wants to boast should do so because of what God has done 'in Christ.' For, as Stamps (2002:454) concludes this section, "In a world where God acts in Christ, the world's system is potentially reversed and definitely reoriented according to the way God has acted in Christ."

The contrast between wisdom and foolishness is plainly stated by the rhetorical strategy of Paul's practice of preaching when he came to Corinth. While in Corinth, though Corinthians considered wisdom in the form of rhetorical eloquence as the ideal, Paul avoided proclaiming the gospel with eloquence or superior wisdom. Rather, Paul wanted to preach Christ and his cross in the power of Holy Spirit. As has already been mentioned several times, this does not mean that Paul eschews the rhetorical approach per se. Rather, it means that he rejects Sophistic rhetoric that makes oratory an end in itself, divorcing it from the gospel of Christ crucified and its power (Witherington 1995:110).

Paul's attitude towards preaching reinforces the mutuality between Paul and his audiences. Rhetorically, this common identity is powerful. Since Paul and the Corinthians are united by the cross-event-proclaimed, Paul decides to solely proclaim the word of the Cross so that their faith might rest on God's power, which is in Christ crucified (Stamps 2002:455).

exhort you, sister, no longer to have words," but also goes on to urge an alternative to divisive speech, namely concord (homonoian) and loving speech."

Through a short sketch of 1 Cor. 1.4-2.5, we find that Paul's writing is deeply rooted in the rhetorical strategy of his age. However, instead of accepting uncritically the oratory standards, which were conditioned by classical rhetorical heritage, Paul subordinates them in the standpoint of a countervailing Christian perspective, that is, in the view of the message of the cross-event-proclaimed (Resner 1999:106, 140). 1 Cor 1.4-2.5 is a clear example of Paul's Christological argument. Through a rhetorically crafted argument, Paul progressively develops his christological presupposition. In this process, as Stamps (2002:456) says, "The letter recipients learn that being in Christ means that they are located in the power, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption of God which is particularized in God's action in and through Christ." Though 1 Cor.1.-2.5 is only one Pauline text in which it is suggested, I, in the assurance of Resner and Stamps, believe that a christological foundation is a major characteristic of theological rhetoric (Stamps 2002:457).

In summary, from Campbell's perspective and Paul's argument as described by particularly Resner and Stamps, we conclude that Christian preaching should focus on the appeal to Christ and in this process, preaching Christ from our text will succeed when rhetorical strategy and its effect are used and added. This is a totally different perspective from AOP which depends too much on rhetorical technique, losing the proclamation of Christ ascriptively.

Preacher and audiences newly find their identity by reorienting to the identity of Christ. In result, Christology becomes the basis of ecclesiology. In the following section, I will examine ecclesiology which comes out of Christology.

5.3 The loss of communal identity of church

The third and final criticism against AOP is to indicate the lack of communal vision of the Church. For this, this section will criticize the trend of "the self-absorbed individualism," of AOP, which, according to Henderson's assertion (1998:96-107), is another secular image of modern western society. We then will then examine the church as community and communal preaching by Campbell where I will show a sermon example of how to move from Christology to ecclesiology.

5.3.1 "The self-absorbed individuals"

"The self-absorbed individualism," so-called by Henderson (1998:96-107), is another audience image that we should consider in relation to AOP. Like the other two audience images of consumers and spectators, this audience image of the self-absorbed individual is also deeply rooted in the contemporary American culture rather than in the Biblical teaching.

In their work, *Habits of the Heart*, Bellah et al (1985:142) say that the center of western culture, especially American culture, consists of individualism. Individualism governs every area of thinking and life style of contemporary western (American) people. Henderson (1998:97) clearly indicates this fact;

We drive alone, make life's hardest decisions alone, raise our children to stand alone, and lay down to die alone. Boil any one of us down and what remains stuck to the sides of the pot is simply this: my concern for me.

"Self-" has become the modifier of choice....self-image, self-esteem, self-actualization, self-concept, and self-help are newcomers to the English language, products of a culture that has the individual as its primary concern.

To many scholars, this American individualism is a crucial obstacle to the communal identity of society (Allen, Blaisdell, & Johnson 1997: 146; G. Lohfink 1985:1-5; Walton 1994; Dietterich 1993:353-356; Van der Ven, Hendrik, & Pieterse 2002: 102-127; Henderson 1998:96-107; Grenz 1993:166-169). Describing and analyzing the "process of separation and individuation," Bellah (1985:84) highlights the deceptive powers of individualism as follows:

There are truths we do not see when we adopt the language of radical individualism. We find ourselves not independently of other people and institutions but through them. We never get to the bottom of ourselves on our own. We discover who we are face to face and side by side with others in work, love, and learning. All of our activity goes on in relationships, groups, associations, and communities ordered by institutional structures

and interpreted by cultural patterns of meaning... Finally, we are not simply ends in ourselves, either as individuals or as a society. We are parts of a larger whole that we can neither forget nor imagine in our own image without paying a high price.

Not surprisingly, such American individualism washes over into the way many people and churches approach matters of faith. As an example, Woodbridge indicates;

In the nineteenth century... people adopted a new working definition of the church. Whereas Christians previously had seen the church as God's primary agent of activity in human history, the new view saw it as a voluntary association functioning to aid the individual Christian in practical goals such as spiritual growth and the getting of converts. In the new perspective no institution had an inherited or traditional authority; instead, all human organizations found their basic authority in the uncoerced consent of the individual. The will of the individual was the primary foundation for human organization and the church was no exception (1982:175).

Facing the growing challenge of a world of individualism, according to Lillis, western people, both inside and outside the church, place great emphasis on cultural values of autonomy, independence, and self-sufficiency. Under the influence of such an individualistic direction, it has become a common phenomenon that Western (or American) people and churches have turned from their Judeo-Christian roots and have sought meaning and fulfillment in other sources (1998:1).

As Henderson (1998:101) indicates, one of the powerful sources of the individualism of contemporary western society is therapeutic counseling based on secular anthropology, on which contemporary Americans draw in their search for self-fulfillment. Henderson (1998:101) indicates that a crucial factor strengthening the growing self-absorption of western (or American) culture is the rise of the self-esteem movement by some psychologists such as Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Eric Fromme, and Rollo May. This secular therapeutic style, according to Henderson (1998:101), is formed by four basic values:

1. Self-understanding: getting in touch with what I'm feeling.

2. Self-acceptance: having a positive view of myself regardless of what I say or do.
3. Self-expression: being myself-even defining myself-without regard to others
4. Self-fulfillment: getting my needs met; being happy.

Contrary to what the Bible has taught, contemporary therapeutic culture entirely emphasizes that the understanding of contemporary people is based on inner psychological processes and selfish individualistic concerns. Defining that we live in an age of the "Gospel of Therapy," Dawn indicates that today many people often treat the Christian Gospel as a mere step towards correcting one's life disorders or co-dependences. Their concern is to "provide the Gospel in the form of directions toward the better inner life for the purpose of self-improvement" (Dawn 1995:209).

Unfortunately, "the influence of this therapeutic approach coupled with the implicit cultural values of autonomy, independence, and self-sufficiency have resulted in individualistic attitudes concerning one's relationships to self, society, and other individuals" (Lillis 1998:2).

Now the direction toward the therapeutic individualism of modern (American) western religion has continued uninterruptedly in our preaching ministry. Far from revisioning this individual posture of such a religious faith, those who support AOP have instead accelerated its way by adapting existential individualism. As already mentioned, Craddock is a fervent supporter of existential individualism in which his intention is to make the gospel appropriate in the American way of life. Though Craddock indicates the importance of community in his later book, *Preaching* (1985:90-98), his entire homiletical paradigm mainly focuses on the privacy of the individual hearer by which the readers should arrive at their own conclusion. R. Lischer indicates this fact well. Lischer (1996:173) says;

Relying on Kierkegaard's experience of "Christendom," Craddock counsels preachers to illuminate indirectly those experiences that will reawaken hearers to truth that, at some level, they already know. By means of stories that echo or reproduce the dynamic of revelation, the sermon creates and orchestrates resonances with divine truth. By the time

it concludes, the hearer will have experienced the word of God on his or her own terms... In the end, each listener makes his or her own connection to the gospel, and each gets to decide if it is true or not. The individual hearer- and not the church- "makes" the sermon.

According to Campbell (1997:163), the existential, individualistic trend in Lowry's theory also becomes evident in the second stage of his homiletical plot. The effective way for the audience to experience the gospel depends on how the preacher succeeds in making the proper analysis of human condition. For this, as Campbell (1997:163) indicates, Lowry's analysis of the human condition tends toward an individualistic, psychological form, "focusing on the subjectivities and interior motivations of the characters." Like Craddock, Lowry also appeals to the American way of life, which is based on existential individualism, rather than on biblical teaching.

The most decisive danger of such a trend in AOP based on psychological, therapeutic individualism is that it depreciates the teaching of the Bible about church as the community of the believers. In other words, it causes the absence of communal ecclesiology. They have too easily read the Bible in the light of their own cultural setting by which they form an ecclesiology based on their individualistic culture (Giles 1995:19). Though he does not limit his discussion to the homiletic area alone, Grenz (1993: 164) indicates that one of the fundamental problems of contemporary Christianity is "a poorly defined ecclesiology" which is caused by the theological indifference toward the biblical nature of the church. While Grenz mentions several misconceptions about the teaching of church in the Bible, what he deplores most is the neglect of communal vision about the church in contemporary theology and its practice (1993:168).

Henderson, quoted earlier, mentioned that today many people understand religious faith merely as an individual and purely private matter. What is important to them is not the corporate nature of church, but an individual relationship with Jesus. This does not mean that those who have focused upon the individual as the center of religious faith entirely deny the communal nature of the church. Rather, it suggests that, in spite of their assertion of the significance of the church as community, the major emphasis

primarily resides in the individualization of faith, in which process communal dynamics and interactions of the community of believers are considered as a subsidiary thing. Always the individual - proud, self-reliant, alone - comes first. Community, as Dieterich (1993:354) says, "is seen as a by-product -- an external social objectification of the private needs or ideas of discrete individuals, set up and maintained by such persons to serve their ends" (:354). In this direction, the nature and practice of the communal church can no longer be considered as a proper subject for theological discourse. Church, after all, has become merely a means for accomplishing the end of the individual's self-actualization. As Dietterich (1993:349-366) says, such a tendency blocks the dynamic and effective ecclesiology to which the Bible testifies. It is the most serious crisis in the modern church (Grenz 1993:166).

According to Thompson's criticism (2001:14), the supporters of the AOP, who strongly stand on an individualistic trend, have said little about how this kind of preaching will overcome the crisis in the contemporary church. Rather, as already mentioned, because of its distinctive direction towards individualism, AOP fails to build communities of faith (Thompson 2001:14).

It is Campbell's work that criticizes the individualistic trend of AOP in a more serious discussion. According to Campbell,

The purpose of open-ended, indicative preaching is to allow individuals the freedom to experience the sermon for themselves, to feel their own feelings and think their own thoughts. The focus of preaching is finally the individual hearer. Each person is to draw his or her own conclusion... In the end, the goal of preaching is to enable every hearer to "stand alone" before God (1997:133, 135).

In the light of Hans Frei's later thought, Campbell warns the preacher to avoid the anti-communal tendencies of contemporary AOP which exclusively emphasizes the experience and conclusion of the individual. Instead, Campbell's vision against AOP is to follow Frei's communal orientation of the church (Lose 2000:137-138). As Campbell indicates, "In his interpretation of biblical narrative, Frei turns from a general, literary approach based on the genre of realistic narrative to a particular 'communal

hermeneutic' focused on the church's tradition of literal reading. His key categories become not text and interpreter, but scripture and community" (Campbell 1997:77).

In order to move from individualistic preaching based on "a poorly defined ecclesiology" to corporate preaching based on "a faithfully defined ecclesiology," in a following section we shall examine "preaching on the basis of communal ecclesiology" (see, Grenz 1993:163-189; 1994:603-631). Therein, I will briefly sketch such topics as "covenant ecclesiology", the peculiar community of Jesus, and finally I will provide a homiletical example of Campbell.

5.3.2 Preaching on the basis of communal ecclesiology

5.3.2.1 "Covenant ecclesiology"⁵⁸

In contrast to the direction toward individualism in contemporary AOP in which ecclesiology has been ignored, homileticians like Campbell (1997), Long (1993) Lischer (1996), Pieterse (1991), Cilliers (1992) and Bohren (1981) emphasize the importance of corporate ecclesiology as a starting point for developing a theology of preaching.

The shift provides two important directions for our present study. The first is not that "the consensus among social scientists now favors "community" above individualism, but that the nature of biblical Christianity requires it (Lischer 1993:113). The second significance, as Long (1993:465) indicates, resides in the fact that this shift from individualism to corporate ecclesiology provides a different sermon approach based on the sound biblical notion of the church.

⁵⁸ I pick up this terms from Stanley Grenz's book, *Revisioning Evangelical Theology* (1993:179).

Unlike our modern Western (or American) way of thinking, the Bible testifies to the communal notion of the church from beginning to end (Lohfink 1985; Giles 1995:19-23; Grenz 1994:624-631; Hanson 1986; Clowney 1987:13-87; Shaw 1990; Bohren 1971:516). Fundamentally, the Bible describes the church as a communion of believers (Bonhoeffer 1963), rather than just a collection of saved individuals. The church community in the Bible, as Hanson says, is the people called (Hanson 1987: 467-518).⁵⁹ It means that to be a Christian is not just that one confesses one's individual faith in God in Christ, but that one is in relation to other believers, in community. Christianity and community belong together. They are not separable (Henderson 1998:107). Due to the corporate nature of the church in Biblical teaching, as Giles indicates, "to suggest that the Bible is ultimately about individual salvation, or that the church is but a local assembly of individual who are bound together only by their personal associations, or that each individual congregation is in no profound way linked with other congregation, introduces ideas alien to biblical thinking. Those who suggest such things reflect their own cultural values, not the values of the biblical writers" (1995:21).

Though we, in various perspectives and motifs, can explain the communal aspect of the church that the Bible testifies to, the strongest sense of corporateness of church, according to Stanley Grenz, is in the image of the covenant between God and His people. In his *Revisioning Evangelical Theology*, Grenz calls it "covenant ecclesiology" (1993:179). Grenz believes that the covenant concept of the Bible is an alternative image for overcoming the individualistic direction that permeates the modern Christian ministry and preaching. For the image of covenant is used as the major way in which the Bible describes the relationship between God and His people and between one another, as those in covenantal relationship with God (Grenz 1994:605).

The key motif that defines the church as a covenant people lies in the meaning of the Biblical word, *ekklesia*, which the New Testament authors commonly used to portray the church. The term *ekklesia*, which is a compound word from the verb *kaleo* ("to

⁵⁹ August (2000:62), in the light of Hanson's writing, explains this fact; "It is the people called from diverse sorts of bondage to freedom, called to a sense of identity founded on a common bond with the God of righteousness and compassion, and called to the twin vocation of worship (communion with God) and participation in the creative, redemptive purpose that unifies all history and is directed to the restoration of the whole creation within a universal order of SHALOM (the eschatological community)."

call") plus the presupposition *ek* (out of), means the called out ones (Clowney 1987: 17).

As many scholars agree, *ekklesia* is closely linked to the Old Testament word *qahal*, translated "congregation," or "assembly." This assembly, however, does not indicate merely an "organization" or "society. Rather, it expresses "the calling of people out from the broader community and together within the broader community of the inhabited world to become the community of God - for God's redemptive purposes with the world" (K. August 2000:62). In other words, it is said that a particular significance of *ekklesia* (rendered *qahal*) in the Old Testament, lies in the fact that it describes the covenant-making assembly at Mount Sinai or later on Mt. Zion (O' Brien 1993:124, see Hanson 1987:467-518).

In such covenant-making ceremonies, the heart is summarized in the following phrase, "I shall be your God, and you shall be my people" that is continually used in the covenant records. This crucial proclamation means not only that the identity of Israel is found only in relationship with God, but also that it is found in God's covenant people, one to another in covenantal relation with God (Clowney 1987:30). In result, in the Old Testament, covenant is the basic notion in forming the identity of Israel. Joseph Shaw appropriately states this fact: "Israel received its communal existence not simply from inherent psychic traits, but from its election by Yahweh and the gift of the covenant" (1990:23).

In the New Testament, the communal nature of the church is developed even more fully in Jesus Christ. The whole life and ministry of Jesus, as Lohfink (1985) says, is to draw people toward community. Since the New Testament church in Christ is the new and true Israel, one with the Old Testament people in the spiritual ethnicity that defines the people of God in all ages, it is not surprising that the image of covenant fulfillment is placed in the center of His ministry (Marshall 1992:123). At the Last Supper on the night before his death, Jesus explicitly manifests the meaning of his death in relation to covenant; "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many" (Mark 14:24). Also, in 1 Cor. 11:25 Jesus says, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." In

these passages, Jesus fulfills God's covenant for his people through his sacrificial death. Here its core also lies in the reciprocal relationship between Jesus and His people as, in the Old Testament, God was with his people, Israel. To explaining this fact, McClendon (1986:215) paraphrases Jesus' words: "This rite we share tonight in the upper room is my reaffirmation of YAWH, God's ancient pledge, linking us to it and thereby to the ancient solidarity of God-and- Israel." He continually emphasizes that this rite is "aimed at the shaping of the common life of the Christian community" (1986:216).

In summary, the Bible presents "a covenant ecclesiology" where people are in relationship with God in Jesus Christ. As Grenz (1994:624) says, "The covenant enhances the community dimension of the church. Indeed, the presence of the covenant is what transforms a loosely related group of people into a community." Since the beginning of salvation history, God's plan has been directed toward covenantal community, we can say that the church is far more than a collection of saved individuals. The church is the covenantal community of God in Christ where they share fellowship with each other as well as with God in Christ.

As I mentioned earlier, the fact that the church is deeply rooted in the "covenant ecclesiology" requires a new sermonic direction in which covenantal community is in the center. Unlike the AOP where the primary emphasis is to create individualistic experience, Setters (1991:271) defines an ideal sermon as "covenantal preaching" which "moves against individualistic hearing toward a more corporate listening."

5.3.2.2 The peculiar community of Jesus

As underlined in the previous section, the church is not just any community. There are many communities that have gathered for various purposes. Unlike these communities, the particular identity of the church is found in the fact that "it gathers for one purpose, which is to reflect the Lordship of Jesus Christ" (Williamson 1994:31). The church as

community finds its true identity, its meaning, and its character in the person, work and teaching of Jesus Christ. The Church, in this aspect, is defined as the particular, peculiar community of Jesus. In his article, *Reformed Theology and The Identity of the Christian Congregation*, Jonker (1994:103) clearly argues this fact;

When we speak about the theological identity of the congregation we mean nothing else than its 'being the Christian church', representing the body of Christ. This identity is given in Christ... the church should also strive constantly to be and to become what it already is in Christ.

Glebe-Moller (1989:37) also indicates that the church is the community of Jesus in the sense that the praxis of Jesus becomes the praxis of the church. According to Glebe Moller, in the New Testament, we find that Christology merges into ecclesiology or Jesus' praxis merges into the church's praxis. As an example, Ephesians in the Pauline letters testifies that God's word is in the first place Christologically represented, and then is ecclesialogically reoriented for identity awareness of His people (Mouton 1994:370).

Campbell, in the light of the later thought of Frei, explains the close relation of both Christology and Ecclesiology with precise clarity. Campbell (1997:225-7) says;

Jesus' presence and action in the world...is indirectly embodied in the church through the presence and action of the Spirit. The church is now the spatial and temporal basis of the presence of Jesus in the world. The church, that is, embodies Jesus' indirect presence in and for the world... the church must be follower, rather than a complete reiteration of Jesus. Jesus has enacted the good of all people on their behalf once for all; the church has no need to play the role of Christ figure. Rather, the church is called to be a "collective disciple," to "follow at a distance" the pattern of Christ's intentional action that is narrated in the gospel.

For this reason, the church as the community of Jesus stands in sharp contrast to all other secular societies. The church is no longer an institution that uncritically follows the values and presuppositions of secular society. Instead, the church is a community

that exists as counter-culture to a society eroded of corporate identity by self-centeredness.

To borrow Lohfink's terms, the church as the community of Jesus is "a contrast-society" (1985:122). Though the Bible does not exactly use the same terminology, the notion of the church as "a contrast-society" or "the counter-cultural community" governs the entire Bible. Particularly, as the New Testament testifies clearly, in Jesus' intention of gathering his disciples, they are portrayed as a contrast-society. Unlike the political, revolutionary expectation of Israelite society, Jesus called his disciples to nonviolence and the renunciation of domination. It clearly implies the perspective of a new society, which both resists and challenges cultural imagery of domination and subordination" (Lucy L. Hogan & Robert Reid 1999:131; G. Lohfink 1985:124).

Though they do not use the same terms, Hauerwas and Willimon recognize the same biblical portrait of church awareness as the counter-cultural society. In their book, *Resident Aliens*, Hauerwas and Willimon (1989), have described the special characteristic of the community who are in Christ:

Christianity is an invitation to be a part of an alien people who make a difference because they see something that cannot otherwise be seen without Christ... That which makes the church "radical" and forever "new" is not that the church tends to lean toward the left on most social issues, but rather that the church know Jesus whereas the world does not (24, 28).

Likewise, based on Jesus' identity, the church as God's contrast society now "exists for the world, but it renews its identity when it gathers for worship. It speaks in the world, but it learns its "distinctive talk" when its members come together around word and sacrament" (Lischer 1993:115). In this process, the church can stand truly as "a contrast-society" to make visible the way of Jesus to the world. The way of the community of Jesus in our world, in result, is the way of "a counter-cultural community" whose members would belong to him, love one another, and earnestly serve the world (John Stott 1986:255).

However, as Williamson (1994:32) puts it, to be a contrast society for the world and to make this particular alternative visible to a doubting world is a very difficult challenge. The serious temptation that Christian community has faced is to throw away the peculiar aspect of Christian faith and adopt instead the values and practices of the world around us. Standing before such a temptation, the tragedy of the Christian church in our day is that too often it does not see itself as a peculiar institution (Williamson 1994:33).

AOP, in the perspective of post-liberalism, according to the theory of Campbell, is a representative movement that forsakes the peculiar, alternative way of the community of Jesus. Since Craddock and Lowry focus on individual human experience, it is not strange that AOP as advocated by them replaces the particularity of the alternative community of Jesus with the universality or common basis of human experience (Lischer 1993:123). Their excessive enthusiasm for the persuasion of the individual eclipses the essential function of the Christian preaching that builds up the community of faith. Although it should be acknowledged that AOP is an important homiletical response for those individuals who live in the postmodern age, it must also be stated that, in the process of translating God's unique story for the contemporary church, AOP carries the risk of destroying the identity of the church as the community of Jesus. For, if our preaching does not hold before people the peculiar values of God's word that make those who follow Jesus different from the society around them, the identity of the church as the community of Jesus will collapse (Dawn 1995:212).

As in the "covenant ecclesiology," the understanding of the church as the community of Jesus also provides a primary insight for communal preaching. Here, Walter Brueggemann's argument (1995:324) is helpful. According to him, the Bible creates a new vision of reality that has formed out of the world "inside" the text. As Paul offered a "new world" to the Corinthians, so the preacher invites the church as "a contrast-society" to dwell on an alternative world of values. For preaching to revive the identity of the community of Jesus, the preacher challenges the church to make "available a different world in which different acts, attitudes, and policies are seen to be appropriate" (Brueggemann 1995:324).

Specifically speaking, it demands that the preacher ask important questions, which have so far been neglected in the sermonic direction of AOP: "How does this text form us to be the people of God? What do we learn from this text that cannot be known apart from the community of faith? How can we offer this alternative understanding to the world?" (Dawn 1995:215). Where these questions are appropriately requested and found, our sermons can be communal preaching, overcoming the individualism of AOP.

5.3.2.3 A Homiletical example of communal preaching

So far, in the above two sections, we have examined communal eccleciology and its homiletical implications through which I have attempted to overcome the limitation of AOP based on secular individualism. Now, for a more concrete sermonic application for building up the community of Jesus, this section will first summarize the notion of communal preaching of Campbell once again. After this, lest this emphasis seem too theoretical and abstract, I will briefly survey a short sermon of Campbell preached from John 1:1-14.⁶⁰

As frequently mentioned in earlier sections, the primary focus of biblical preaching as defined by Campbell, is that "it begins with the particularity of Jesus of Nazareth and moves from there to the church in and for the world" (Campbell 1997:193). Instead of proposing and developing a "plight-to-solution" model in the well-intended desire to be "relevant," Campbell wants to preach a sermon that builds up people by presenting the particular identity of Jesus.

In *Confessing Jesus Christ: Preaching in a Postmodern World* (2000), David Lose summarizes the sermonic direction of Campbell in the following sentence. Campbell, according to Lose (2002:137), encourages the preacher to inculcate in the people the church's "peculiar speech" formed by Jesus of Nazareth "so as to develop a community of faithful listeners and thereby build up the church." From the above fact, we can say that Campbell's communal preaching is not separated from Christology. Rather, where

⁶⁰ In fact, this sermon is closer to homiletical reflection of a lectionary text, rather than a traditional sermon format. Campbell does not suggest any sermon title.

the identity of Christ is faithfully proclaimed, true ecclesiology is formed (Fisher 1996:81).

From this principle of communal preaching by Campbell, I analyze an example sermon of Campbell. The purpose of this sermon analysis is to clarify how the sermon text moves from the identity of Jesus Christ to the "upbuilding" of the community of Jesus and, through this, to suggest what communal preaching looks like.

As the lectionary reading for Christmas day, Campbell preaches on John 1:1-14. Campbell's sermon opens with a comment that Christmas Day is a time that is full of mystery and wonder that cannot be solved by human reasoning and language. To him, Christmas day is not a time for plausible explanation and logical analysis, but a time that God's people should stand before the mystery of incarnation (1995: 394).

This concise introductory remark about Christmas day is connected with a brief overview of John 1:1-14. According to Campbell, although John 1:1-14 is theologically dense, the author does not suggest systematic theology or intellectual knowledge. Rather, John portrays his prologue in the form of poetic narrative, a hymn of praise, and the language of worship. Campbell emphasizes the function of this prologue: "John's prologue reminds believers that the incarnation is not a problem to be solved, but mystery to be engaged and lived (1995: 394)."

After making this insightful comment, Campbell explains John 1:1-14 according to the order of the text. Through the first sentence, John does not argue logically and intellectually the relation between God and Jesus, but simply witnesses: "the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This bold proclamation governs the entire text. Though to those who live in a scientific, technological world that worships human explanation and management, it is a difficult thing to accept, it is John's intention to confront us with God in Jesus, who invites worship. In relation to the Old Testament, John suggests multivalent meanings of logos (word) (1995:395).

In order to explain the main body of John 1:1-14, Campbell now describes the rich allusions and metaphors in the sermon text: the allusion of creation (v.1-5), the metaphor of birth (vv.12-13), the metaphor of light and darkness (vv. 5, 10-11), the image of the tabernacle. The primary characteristic of depicting these images lies in the fact that Campbell explains them intratextually in relation to the Old Testament. But, a more important consideration is that it is read Christologically where an abstract God's name and nature changes into fresh and vivid images. In this process, the particularity of Christ stands in the center. Campbell (1995: 396) says;

The image challenges all abstract presuppositions about God's nature...To know God, we begin not with general definitions of the "divine," but with the particular person, Jesus of Nazareth. This claim is audacious and scandalous, particularly for modern people who frequently prefer "universal religion" to the particularity of Israel and Jesus.

Now Campbell's sermon arrives at the highlight to reveal what the entire purpose of these metaphors and allusions are, in which he naturally connects Christology with a lesson for contemporary congregation. In the light of these images, the larger aim of John's prologue is not simply to invite congregations to learn specific information of Jesus' birth. Rather, it invites congregations to dwell on the purpose of incarnation. The primary purpose of incarnation, according to Campbell, is to give eternal life revealed in Jesus to the congregation (1995:397).

A matter to be seriously considered here is how the text proclaims this new, eternal life to a modern congregation. Campbell's answer is "in terms of the "new time" that has entered the world in Jesus" (1995:397). Through the event of the word become flesh, Jesus, who is eternal life, has entered sinful human time and now offers a new time in which the people of God live in the way of a new, eternal life. To those who know only sinful time, the new time given by Jesus Christ is good news.

In the final section of the sermon, Campbell suggests the true meaning of Christmas day for contemporary congregations who live inevitably under the influence of "sinful time"

where they experience deep frustration and despair. For Campbell, the Christian gospel to be proclaimed on Christmas day is that one can move from sinful time toward eternal life. It is therefore the good news about the transformation of time inaugurated and completed by Jesus Christ.

In summary, though Campbell's sermon is not composed entirely in a sermon format, it provides a hint for communal preaching. In this short sermonic reflection about John 1:1-14, Campbell puts the primacy of his exposition on representing the identity of Jesus Christ. In this process, the particularity of Jesus becomes the message for contemporary community. Contrary to AOP, in his message, the peculiar gospel of Jesus is not absorbed into general human experience, but rather congregations are invited into the story world of Jesus Christ. In the highlight and ending of the sermon, Campbell challenges the congregation to accept this particular message of Jesus where Christology and the peculiar language of Jesus become the basis for building up his community.

5.2.2 Summary and conclusion

So far we have criticized the theories of AOP from mainly the post-liberal viewpoint of Campbell, though we partially indicated the limitation of Campbell's theory and we supplemented his theory through more developed opinions. To do so we divided our criticism into three parts. First, it was closely related to the crisis of the sermon goal. The primary sermon goal of AOP is to create the individual-existential experience of the audience. The problem of AOP is not just that it emphasizes human experience. Rather, it lies in the fact that AOP have tried to create human experience by adapting the secular audience images. It is a cultural, anthropological approach more than a theological reflection. In this case, the particularity of the Christian message is absorbed into the secular story wherein a God-centered direction is seriously limited. The second criticism, according to Campbell, is related to the loss of the identity of Christ. The major concern of AOP, which is often called narrative preaching, is to make the plot-shaped sermon and the parabolic sermon paradigmatic for preaching. They firmly believe that, through these sermonic directions, the preacher can hold the interest of the

audience from beginning to end of the sermon.

Despite a theoretical approach that argues the balance between sermon form and sermon content, their emphasis concerning plot and parable reveals how their sermonic directions lose a balance of both. They fail to describe the character and identity of Jesus of Nazareth in terms of an interaction of character and incident. For alternative directions, Campbell suggests two paradigm shifts, a shift from plot to character and a shift from parable to gospel where the Christian sermon should be about the unique, unsubstitutable savior, Jesus of Nazareth. Campbell's direction is similar to Paul's Christological premise and logic (see, Thompson 2001). Paul's Christocentric preaching, however, shows up a potential drawback of Campbell's theory by sustaining the balance between the form and the content through his "theological rhetoric" or "radical Christian rhetoric." In Paul's writing and preaching, we find faithful proclamation of Christ without neglect of the rhetorical form of his age. The third criticism is closely connected to the loss of communal identity. AOP is a homiletical adaptation of American individualism in which a decisive problem of their sermon theories lies in the trend of individual ecclesiology. This AOP based on American individualism is totally different from the vision and the identity of the church in biblical teaching. The church in the Bible is mainly described as the community. For our study, I limited my focus to two important notions or images about community among many others things. First, it is the covenant community of God that is established and united by God. The covenant image is the strong sense of corporateness of the church. Second, the church in biblical teaching is the alternative community of Jesus. The church as the alternative community of Jesus stands on the spirit and the value of Jesus and she rejects the premise and the way of secular society. This reveals how the identity of church or ecclesiology is closely related to the identity of Jesus of Nazareth or Christology. So, unlike the AOP that moves from human experience to the gospel which is merely reduced to a solution formula for personal problems, the communal preaching by Campbell based on the corporate ecclesiology moves from Jesus' message to His peculiar people. In this process, the major concern of communal preaching is to build up the community of Jesus.

Through the above criticisms mainly by Campbell, the AOP theories are challenged and their sermonic directions are re-examined, just as the traditional preaching is corrected and reconsidered by the AOP perspective of Craddock and Lowry. The outcome of the Post-liberal perspective of Campbell reminds us that a sermon should practise community formation, not by appealing anthropologically and physiologically to individual human experience, but by revealing realistically the identity of Jesus. His direction offers breakthrough thinking for reorienting truly community (congregation)-oriented preaching which is totally different from the AOP. Despite the challenge of Campbell and his supporters toward congregation-oriented preaching, as already suggested in part, their theories need to be supplemented with the vision of “both-and” where a false dichotomy should be overcome. Also, in order to create a developed congregation-oriented preaching, their theories should add the role of the Holy Spirit, for communal preaching is only possible in the Holy Spirit. In result, I think that true communal preaching can be accomplished in a conversational-collaborative model together with the Holy Spirit. This will be the focus of discussion in the final chapter.

CHAPTER VI

TOWARD TRUE CONGREGATION-ORIENTED PREACHING : A CONVERSATIONAL-COLLABORATIVE MODEL GUIDED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

Since the purpose of this thesis is not only to criticize AOP but also to suggest an alternative way of overcoming the problems of AOP and the limitation of Campbell's theory, an unsolved question would be What is the most effective way for true congregation oriented preaching? As the closest answer, in this chapter, I offer a conversational-collaborative model under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Before fully examining the content of the conversational-collaborative method under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I will make some preliminarily remarks regarding my first task to summarize briefly the limitation of homiletical theories that are formed by an "either-or" option. And then I will suggest a definition of conversational-collaborative preaching by scrutinizing the theories of three homiletical scholars. After this, I will examine the preacher, the text and the congregation as the three basic elements of the conversational-collaborative preaching process. The role of the Holy Spirit in the collaborative preaching model is another main topic in this chapter. Finally, since the goal of conversational-collaborative preaching method lies in the transformation of the life of God's people, I will summarize the characteristics of transformative preaching in the light of the above discussion.

6.1 Preliminary remarks: The limitation of the "either-or" option and its antidote

For a long time, the traditional deductive sermon style has been considered as a normative way of preaching the Christian gospel. It is characterized by preacher-oriented rhetorical strategies that use a monologic style⁶¹ and consider primarily the

⁶¹ In his thesis, *A Co-operation Approach to Preparing for the Preaching Event*, Felton (1987:9) defines the characteristic of the traditional sermon as preacher- centered preaching based on a monological style;

“what” question rather than the “how.” As a result, the concern of the audience in the sermon process has been relegated to a position of less importance (Hills 1989: 35-62).

However, with the rise of AOP of Craddock and Lowry, the traditional preaching theory has been challenged and its rhetorical features have been re-examined. In AOP, the audience becomes the starting point in the homiletical process. For making an interrelated sermon with the audience, their rhetorical emphasis moves from one-way communication which is governed by images like authority and superiority to two-way communication which is governed by images like equality and mutuality (Chartier 1981: 24-5). And, to them, it is impossible to have audience-based preaching without reconsidering how to address the audience.

Although no one denies the fact that AOP has caused a revolutionary paradigm shift in the modern homiletical area, it is also true that the AOP theory leans toward the way of “either-or.” Just as, in spite of the emphasis on the importance of the audience in the long history of preaching, traditional preaching considers the stance of the audience as secondary, so, despite the recognition of the nature and function of traditional preaching, AOP fails to reflect the benefits of traditional preaching in their sermonic theories and practice (Hills 1989: 101-5; 212-224; Lose 2000: 146-155; Zink-Sawer 1997: 342-56). Lose (2000:151-2) indicates this fact: those who advocate AOP “jeopardize the sermon’s ability to engender significant participation⁶² in a tradition.” To them, the sermon is “not about proclaiming “truth” but rather about discovering “meaning” in life...More important than truth is meaning...of life’s experience” (Lose 2000:151-2). Since such a view of preaching takes account of the hearers only at the cost of the tradition, the Christian messages in AOP risk becoming indistinguishable from any other cultural talk (Lose 2000:154).

“monological preaching tends to look upon the preacher as a performer, the sermon as a performance, and the congregation as an audience. The preacher’s sermon, then, is an organization of his thoughts which he seeks to transmit to the minds of the people.”

⁶² Lose (2000:64) borrows the term from Paul Ricoeur. In concert with Paul Ricoeur, Lose emphasizes a creative tension between “participation” or “participatory belonging” and “distanciation” or “alienating distanciation” for the task of interpreting written texts. According to Lose, both AOP and the postliberal homiletic theory of Campbell fail to develop their theories with this creative tension. Whereas AOP

As I examined in the previous chapter, Charles Campbell has provided a critical theological evaluation of AOP. In his book, *Preaching Jesus*, Campbell provides a christological-ecclesial homiletic deeply rooted in Frei's work. The center of Campbell's theory lies in a distinctive understanding of biblical narrative as an alternative to an anthropologically-driven approach to preaching like AOP. Criticizing the fact that AOP "risks the particularity of Christian identity through the diminished role it gives to Scripture and tradition," Campbell argues, "the Biblical narrative grounds the believer in the Christian community and thus supplies a narrative and communal identity" (Lose 2000:129). Unlike AOP, the major duty of Christian preaching is to build up the congregation through the identity of Jesus of Nazareth. Though Campbell's proposal provides some alternative ways beyond the limitation of AOP, his theory still stands nevertheless in the stance of "either-or."

Because of the "either-or" option, some scholars indicate that the postliberal theory is not sufficient for a balanced sermon direction. As I have already mentioned in the methodology of this thesis, some homiletic scholars indicate the two-fold problem of Campbell's theory:

1) Campbell's homiletic has the danger of a false dichotomy in losing a creative tension of "both-and" (J. McClure 1998:36). As some homileticians indicate, the incarnation of Jesus is the most appropriate model for "both-and" preaching. In the light of the incarnational model, preaching can be summarized as the issue of theological anthropology (Hogan 1999:10). This theological anthropology is different from AOP that emphasizes secular anthropology while ignoring theology. Also, it is different from postliberal theory that focuses too much on theology, ignoring anthropology.

2) Campbell's homiletic loses view of the importance of the Holy Spirit. His theory has strong advantages in approaching a sermon in a Christocentric and ecclesial manner where the ultimate aim of the preaching lies in formation (Lischer 1993:121). However, Campbell does not attend adequately to the role of the Holy Spirit in the formation of the congregation. Specifically speaking, Campbell does not suggest a clear

belongs to "distanciation," Campbell's homiletic, which is closer to traditional preaching mode, belongs

understanding of the relationship between the pneumatological and anthropological (particularly, the role of the preacher) dimension in communal preaching (cf. Koopman 2001:2-3). In relation to this issue, AOP stands in an extreme position in the sense that the role of the Holy Spirit is replaced by a preacher's skill to make dramatic plot-formed sermons (Chapell 1996; Pinnock 1999), whereas Postliberal homiletics, under the influence of Karl Barth, may flow toward the other extreme trend that ignores the human role (Koopman 2001:2-8).

Through the above facts, we realize that though Campbell offers a better way for communal preaching than AOP, it is insufficient for true communal preaching. I recommended placing the distinct contributions of Campbell and AOP in creative conversation with each other (Lose 2000:7). The alternative efforts are suggested by several figures like McClure, Rose, Lose, Don Wardlaw and Pieterse. They find an alternative vision in the active collaboration between the preacher and the congregation in the center of the text. Though some of them suggest concrete methods for making collaborative sermons, such as sermon seminars and group discussions, their major concern leads not so much to a new model of sermon preparation but to more urgent matters – how can our sermons be prepared and proclaimed in a dialogical nature and mode (Ward 1995:29) ?

Further, since true conversational-collaborative preaching is the work of the Holy Spirit as well as the work of human beings, an antidote beyond the problems of the “either-or” option will be conversational-collaborative preaching under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Cilliers 1982:171-7;1993:251-255; Bohren 1971). I associate myself closely with this view, and I will try to elaborate on some aspects of this perspective in the chapter.

6.2 Definition of a conversational-collaborative approach under the guidance of the Holy Spirit

In order to clearly understand conversational-collaborative preaching, I briefly discuss the theory of three homiletical scholars adhering to this new direction. They are John McClure, Lucy Rose, and HJC Pieterse. Of these, McClure represents an important

to “participation.” I will mention later the dialectical or dialogical process by Paul Ricoeur and Lose.

landmark in the developed discussion of the collaborative preaching area. Introducing a brief history of the collaborative model, John S. McClure (1995:8) evaluates the further contribution of his approach as “investigating the implications of collaborative preaching for congregational leadership and homiletical method.” The primary concern of McClure’s approach resides in how the Bible, which is the center of the sermonic process, can be most effectively preached to the congregation. He finds the answer in collaborative preaching. According to him, the collaborative approach means a kind of preaching mode in which the preacher and the congregation work together to hear the voice of the text (McClure 1995:48).

Though inductive and narrative preaching have suggested the importance of collaboration with the text, these forms, according to him, are inadequate because they provide only the illusion of listener participation: “Instead of actually participating in the sermonic process, the hearer is simply being brought along on a pre-established homiletical trip” (McClure 1995:47). Unlike these modes, the actual difference of his collaborative preaching is that he strongly recommends sermon brainstorming group “through which the biblical interpretations and theological insights of the congregation find a voice in the pulpit” (McClure 1995:7). McClure believes that the congregation, in this process, forms real, dialogical partnership with a preacher through this ongoing roundtable conversation. Whether one agrees with his practical alternative or not,⁶³ his approach makes us realize the urgent necessity of the conversational-collaborative approach in modern preaching.

L. Rose is another homiletical scholar who advocates conversational-collaborative preaching as the way of overcoming the limitations of other sermonic theories. In her *Sharing the Word: Preaching in the Roundtable Church* (1997), Rose surveys and evaluates three older homiletical models: the traditional, kerygmatic, and

⁶³ Though I agree with the absolute importance of collaborative approach in contemporary homiletics, I am not sure that his practical suggestion of a “sermon brainstorming group” can be applied effectively to all situations. In the context of the Korean church, the literal application of his suggestion is still premature for this rather has the danger of confusing Korean congregations who believe the absolute authority of sermon. Rather, I appeal to the function of the pastor in which preachers should have interactive relationship with the congregation through their whole ministry, not just in a sermon brainstorming group.” Particularly, in the situation of the Korean church, the visitation is an excellent opportunity for preachers to be interactive with the congregation.

transformational theory. Traditional homiletical theory, characterized by primarily John Broadus, emphasizes the preacher's persuasive power in effective preaching. The goal of the preacher is "to transmit the sermon's truth or message to the congregation" (Rose 1997:15). In doing so, traditional preaching deeply depends on the rational character or logic. The weakness of this theory, according to Rose, is that it has a danger of separating the preacher and the congregation. In this theory, the preacher is the transmitter and the congregation is the receiver.

Kerygmatic preaching, which is characterized by C.H Dodd and Karl Barth, understands the sermon as the event of God's speaking when God's word bursts into the congregation through the medium of the sermon (Rose 1997:36-39). Like traditional preaching, the kerygmatic theory is also troubled by the gap between the preacher and the congregation. The congregation in kerygmatic preaching still remains the "target" of the sermon (Rose 1997:49).

The third and final preaching theory, which is epitomized by the writings of Craddock and Lowry, sees the sermon as a transforming experience for the congregation (Ronald Allen 1998: 24). Though their theory is developed in the fact that it rediscovers the importance of the congregation in preaching, it fails to eliminate the gap between the preacher and the congregation. Quoting Rose's writing, Lose (2000:147) indicates this fact: "even in transformational preaching the relationship implied by the sermon is predominantly a one-way affair, as the preacher "creates" a transformative experience for the hearer who is still, by and large, a recipient. Such a gap perpetuates the separation of preacher and hearer "even while community and shared life are affirmed" (:147).

As a remedy to the limitations of the above homiletical approaches, Rose suggests a homiletic of conversation. Contrary to the dominant preaching modes, which is rooted in separation, Rose's homiletic of conversation is based on solidarity, equality, and mutuality. According to Rose, "the preacher and the congregation are not separate entities but a community of faith" (Rose 1997:89). Since preachers come out of their

congregations, they should involve their congregation in the task of interpreting the text through ongoing conversational processes.

Like McClure, Rose understands the purpose of preaching as gathering the people of faith around the Word. In such a context, the power of preaching lies neither in the preacher nor in the listener, but in the Word of God: "The power that gathers the people of God and the center that continues to sustain and shape the community of faith is the word" (Rose 1997:93). The difference, in comparison with McClure, resides in the fact that Rose's theory does not mean as much physical dialogue or interaction between the preacher and the congregation as McClure's.⁶⁴

H.J.C Pieterse, a South Africa homiletician, also defines his homiletical theory as "communicative (or conversational) preaching." The reason that he adopts the communicative preaching model is that it is not only a major nature of biblical preaching but is also an excellent way of true congregation-oriented preaching in the sense that the congregation communicate with each other (Pieterse 1987: 7-9).

Specifically, 1) his definition of "communicative preaching" does not come out of his own opinion but has a biblical foundation. The Bible, according to him, emphasizes dialogical relationship between God and humans and between preacher and congregation. From the evidence of the Bible, Pieterse (1987:7) supports dialogical preaching in which the preacher and the congregation exist in interactive relationship (1987: 7).

2) Further, according to Pieterse, conversational preaching becomes an effective way for the congregation to hear the Word of God: "Dialogical preaching aims to create a dialogue between the text and the congregation, in which the congregation experiences that God himself speaks to them and their situation" (1987: 8). In this sense, his communicative preaching is not just suggesting a communication theory. Rather, it can

⁶⁴ While McClure emphasizes the absolute necessity of a sermon brainstorming group for collaborative preaching by which the preacher involves the congregation through pre-sermon discussion and feedback, Rose focuses more on the image of conversational preaching for an alternative to older sermonic approaches. Though Rose does not ignore the actual practice (pre-sermon discussion) for conversational preaching and she recognizes that it is a possible form, Rose criticizes that McClure's actual practice cannot cover the whole dimension of conversational preaching (Rose 1997:133).

be defined as “gospel-oriented communicative acts,”⁶⁵ for it is tightly bound to expound the Scripture or the gospel hermeneutically and contextually for the congregation’s encounter with God (Pieterse 1990:223; 2001:16).

From the above perspective, Pieterse (1987:20) indicates that ideal conversational preaching is “relevant preaching, in which the preacher succeeds in bringing the sermon text and his own context together hermeneutically, so that the message of the sermon text can be disclosed in the situation, language, and conceptual framework of the congregation”.

Although his concern is primarily how to make true communication on the human level, nevertheless, he does not lose the importance of the divine side of true conversational preaching. In contrast to the fact that McClure and Rose do not mention this divine side seriously, Pieterse’ repeated comments give more developed insight for our study. Pieterse firmly believes that an encounter between God and human beings happens through the work of the Holy Spirit (Pieterse 1987:75; 2001:16; Cilliers 1982:171-177). Without the presence of God through the work of the Holy Spirit, “Preaching is no more than idle babbling, hot air evoking boredom, disgust and rejection” (Pieterse 1987:75).⁶⁶

In summary, conversational-collaborative preaching means a sermon that is formed by the reciprocal process between the preacher and the text, the preacher and the congregation, and between the text and the congregation through the work of the Holy Spirit.

In the conversational-collaborative approach, “preaching is determined, therefore, not only by the text, but also by the congregation and by the personality of the preacher... Preaching involves not only the “what” of its content and the “how” of the form of communication, but also the “who” of the preacher” (Pieterse 1987:12). Each factor involved will be discussed in the following section.

⁶⁵ In fact, following a definition of practical theology by Jacob Firet, H.J.C Pieterse (1990:223) describes practical theology as “gospel-oriented communicative acts.”

⁶⁶ For further explanation concerning the work of the Holy Spirit, it will be very worthwhile to investigate Bohren’s “Theonomic reciprocity. I will investigate it later.

6.3. Preacher, text, and congregation in collaborative process

6.3.1 A brief sketch of three factors in the collaborative relation

As already mentioned, conversational-collaborative preaching is formed by the mutual relation of preacher, text, and congregation which is a triptych of communication. Borrowing the expression of communication theorists, those who support the conversational-collaborative approach accept the semiotic communication model rather than the linear communication model where the sender and the receiver become equal partners around the message (Chartier 1981:15; Schuringa 1995: 165-6; McClure 1991; Hogan and Reid 1999). In the light of the semiotic communication model, according to Wardlaw (1988:63), the Christian preaching model establishes the dynamic swirl of interaction of scripture, preacher, and people so that a sermon creates the word-event. He says, "A fundamental point this model makes by its very gestalt is that the preaching event consists of a cluster of dynamic interaction" (Wardlaw 1988:63). Wardlaw suggests three interactions of the preaching moment as a way of effective collaborative preaching. These interactions are "the interface of scriptural text with preacher; the interrelation of preacher with people; and the interconnection of the people with Scripture" (Wardlaw 1988: 63).

In the process of a Christian sermon, these three interactions move from the relation between the preacher and the text, through the relation between the preacher and the congregation, to the relation between the text and the congregation.

When a sermon is prepared, the preacher, who comes out of the community of faith, is involved in two conversations simultaneously, i.e. the conversation with the text and the conversation with the congregation. Though the two conversational partners of the preacher are not separated in the sermon process, Lose (2000: 166) says that the preacher approaches each conversational partner with a slightly different interest. In a dynamic conversation with the text, preachers hear the voice of the text to their congregations. Borrowing Lose's expression, they are involved in "their exegesis" (Lose 2000:166). However, preaching is not merely the matter of exegesis in order to examine what the text means. Preaching should also reveal the significance of the text for contemporary community. According to Lose, in the conversation with the

congregation, preachers are involved in “their sermon preparation” (Lose 2000:166). Thus, Pieterse (1987:12) says that in order to do effective conversational-collaborative preaching, the preacher should make a sermon “faithful to the Bible and directed to the congregation.”⁶⁷ From these collaborative processes, where the Bible’s message is proclaimed through faithful conversation with the text and the congregation, “the congregation is invited to appropriate its meaning, and so identify itself with the biblical faith and the world church” (Keck 1978:107).

Brueggemann has advanced a similar claim. He says that when the preacher exegetically and contextually encounters the text and the congregation, something new occurs. This is the newness of the text for the congregation by which the meaning of the text is being created and recreated (Brueggemann 1988: 127). Here, preaching “is not an act of reporting on an old text, but it is an act of making a new text visible and available” for the congregation (L. T Tisdale 1997:22). In result, in the collaborative preaching, the word, which is totally new, moves through the preacher to the congregation. That is, the world of the text meets the world of contemporary congregation via the preacher in which preaching becomes “an event in which the congregation meets the living God” (Wilson 1995:2; Bohren 1965:62-65; Farris 1998:10-18). Each aspect of the three elements of collaborative preaching (the preacher, the text, and the congregation) will be mentioned in detail.

6.3.2 Preacher, text and congregation in a conversational-collaborative setting

6.3.2.1 The preacher in a conversational-collaborative setting.

The first important factor to be considered for effective collaborative preaching concerns the preacher in the conversational-collaborative setting. For this, I will primarily mention three portraits of the preacher: The preacher in the community of faith, the preacher as a listener, and the preacher as a witness.

⁶⁷ Once again, I clearly emphasize the relation of what we call “exegesis” and “sermon.” The two can be distinguished, but cannot be separated. I object to “the romanticist hermeneutical dichotomy” which has primarily governed the traditional preaching theories and practices. For an excellent treatment of this issue, see the thesis of G. Nancy Lammers, *A Re-Examination of Recent Homiletical Theories in Light of the Hermeneutical Theory of Paul Ricoeur* (1992). I will mention this fully in 6.3.2.1.3 The Preacher as the Witness.

6.3.2.1.1 The preacher in the community of faith

In formulating conversational-collaborative preaching, it is crucial to understand anew the preacher as a community person (Willimon 1981:51-63). In the traditional preaching model, the preacher comes from outside the congregation where the preacher is set apart from, and set against the congregation. The preacher just speaks *to* the community of faith, not *for* and *with* the community of faith. Since the preaching is totally a duty of the individual preacher, the aim of the sermon is to persuade the hearer according to the preacher's own idea and direction in which the sermon is an individualistic enterprise. Quoting Brueggemann's writing, Williamson explains the traditional preaching model as follows:

The Traditional way... is to picture the preacher and the scripture on one side; the preacher uses the word to browbeat the congregation, or at least to get the people to straighten up and act in proper way. In this traditional model, the preacher is the expert, bringing a word from outside to a holistic and recalcitrant congregation which must be won over to the right way of seeing and acting. In this model, the preacher and the word are on one side, the congregation on the other side (Williamson 1994: 42).

According to Bohren (1965:51), to understand preaching as the work of solitude based on the individuality of the preacher is neither a biblical notion nor the Protestant understanding of the preacher. Bohren (1965:51), in contrast to the traditional image of the preacher and preaching, argues that preaching should be more than just individual ministry but should be communal ministry. Bohren, however, is not the sole homiletician to support this image of the plural preacher.

As indicated in the precious chapter, homiletical scholars like T. Long, W. Willimon, R. Lischer and B. A Muller emphasize the importance for communal preaching where the preacher comes from the midst of the congregation of faith (Williamson 1994: 42). In the communal mode, the preacher speaks *for* and *with* the congregation as well as to the congregation (Willimon 1981:61; D. Schlafer 1992:22). Since, in this sermonic direction, the work of preaching is mutual or relational, the purpose of a sermon is to

build up the community of faith (Kim & Venter 1999:516-518). Again, Williamson, quoting Brueggemann's distinction, explains this communal mode:

He (*Brueggemann*) proposes the text on one side, and the preacher and the congregation on the other. The project of preaching is where preacher and people are together before the text, seeking some word from the Lord for the day (Williamson 1994:42-43).

As T. Long (1987:10-11) indicates, in this communal way of preaching, the preacher is not an expert who comes from outside the congregation but an inside person who is ordained as representative of the gathered faith community who leads the entire community together in the process of discovering God's word. Thomas Long says:

They (*Preachers*) come from within the community of faith and not to it from the outside... When we who preach open the sanctuary door on Sunday morning and find a congregation waiting there for us, it is easy to forget that we come from these people, not to them from the outside. We are not visitors from clergy-land, strangers from an unknown land, ambassadors from seminary-land... We are members of the body of Christ, commissioned to preach by the very people to whom we are about to speak (Long 1989:10-11).

Thus, the fact that the preacher is involved in a particular community of faith reminds us of the role of the preacher as pastor in the sense that the crucial agenda of the preacher is "the continued formation of a community" (Thompson 2000:90).⁶⁸ The pastor image or pastoral preacher who comes from the congregation and builds up the community of faith is best expressed in Paul's example. In their article, *Equipping the Congregation by Means of Preaching*, Kim and Venter (1999:517), examining Paul's sermon at Miletus (Acts 20:17-38), argues that Paul as a pastor firmly believes that (*pastoral*) preaching is the most effective means of forming God's people.

Thompson develops this idea further. According to him, the two major points of Paul's

preaching are evangelistic and pastoral preaching. To him, the model of biblical preaching is found in the close interrelationship between evangelizing people and building up the church. Particularly, in relation to our study, the metaphor of pastoral preaching “suggests the priority of cooperate community over the individual” where the duty of the preacher as the pastor is the upbuilding of the people (Thompson 2000:91).⁶⁹ As a result, Paul’s preaching based on pastor image or pastoral ministries has a dialogical nature where pastor and congregation engage together in the entire preaching process. If Thompson’s insight is true, effective collaborative preaching happens in the pastoral engagement and conversation between the preacher, who comes from the congregation, and the congregation.⁷⁰

6.3.2.1.2 The preacher as listener

In conversational-collaborative preaching, another crucial factor is to understand the role of the preacher as listener in the process of studying and mediating the text and in relational communication with the listener (Bugg 1992:65-92; Keck 1978:53-68; Williamson 1994:83-86; Pieterse 1987:77-80; Meier 1993:33-35).

Traditionally, the preacher is understood just as the speaker when his/her major role has primarily to do with the way of speaking. It may not be a wrong concept, but it should just form a part of the whole preaching ministry and process. A way of hearing should also be included in the role of the preacher. As J. Cilliers (1992:383) indicates, preaching does not only have a speech-act character, but also a hearing-act character. Without considering the hearing-act character (or a way of hearing), the speech-act character (or a way of speaking) cannot be completed effectively.

⁶⁸ Thompson (2000:90), criticizing the individualistic trend of modern pastoral preaching, likes to use the pastoral image according to Paul’s model. The focus of pastoral preaching by Paul’s example lies in the building up of the congregation.

⁶⁹ He (2000:92) says, “Contrary to much contemporary usage, which focuses on the edification of the individual, Paul’s concern is the construction of the corporate community, as the edifice that will survive the ultimate test at the parousia.”

⁷⁰ H.J. C Pieterse (1987:101) states this fact: “The most obvious point of contact is the preacher’s pastoral work. All the elements needed to build a profound relationship in faith between preacher and parishioners are contained in pastoral dialogue. What matters is the way the pastor enters into such dialogue- his basic pastoral approach... Pastoral work is the area of ministry in which the preacher can work at these essential relationships.” In the same context, Willimon (1981:22) indicates the limitation of preaching outside the pastoral context: “The stars of the radio and television pulpit may be entertaining, and their sermons at times may be helpful, engaging, even biblical. But their preaching will never achieve the depth, the specificity, and the power of great Christian preaching—because they will attempt to be preachers without being pastors.”

Pieterse (1987:80) also emphasizes this fact: "Speech without listening is empty. Listening is an indispensable part of communication. When the art of listening is lost, the art of communication likewise goes by the board." In a similar context, Schulafer (1992:22), in his book, *Surviving the Sermon* (1992), reminds us of the fundamental importance of listening before speaking God's word. Schlafer says:

Words must be spoken, obviously, if any preaching is to take place. Yet the preacher can only speak of what she has heard. Listening is more fundamental than speaking in the activity of preaching, so the most important task for any preacher is to become a good listener. The spoken word of the sermons is both an orchestration of, and a response to, the many voices to which good preachers are constantly listening (:22).

If it is true that to be a good hearer is a prerequisite condition to be a good speaker, we can then say more specifically what listening means. Pieterse (1987:80) clearly defines the meaning of listening in the communication process. To him, listening does not just mean "the physical process of hearing." Rather he understands the listening or the hearing as "an intellectual and emotional process" where "a person integrates physical, emotional and intellectual abilities, in an active, emphatic search for meaning" (Pieterse 1987:80).⁷¹ Such a listening ability is necessarily required by the preacher as well as by the congregation. Tisdale (1992:88), in this aspect, calls the preacher theologian who has a "listening mind."

This listening is done to have various voices. Though a homiletician like Schulafer (1992:34-58) suggests the various voices⁷² that the preacher as listener should hear attentively, it largely can be summarized as two listenings: the listening to voices of the text and the listening to voices of the congregation.

The preacher as listener should first hear the voices of the text as a representative of the church or the community's person. In this listening process, the task of the preacher is

⁷² Schlafer (1992:34-58) mentions voices in the Scripture, voices in the congregation, voices in the cultural environment, voices in the liturgy, and voices within the preacher.

“to help in broadening and deepening the meaning of those first reports, as well as to make new, distinctive observation” (Schlafer 1992: 39). As already mentioned, it is generally regarded as the exegetical or hermeneutic process in which the preacher should be attentive to the theological and hermeneutical tradition as well as the text itself. However, it does not mean that the preacher as listener should be involved only in the academic exercise. The duty of the preacher in the exegesis lies in considering all areas that are required for hearing the voice of God. So Eugene Peterson calls this entire struggle for hearing the voice of the text “contemplative exegesis” (Peterson 1987:75). When this is done well, the sermon of a preacher can be a true word-event and the congregation can hear the dynamic and living word of God. For this reason, before the preacher speaks from the biblical text (tradition), he or she should listen to the text (tradition).

Also, the preacher as listener should be sensitive to the situation and world of the congregation. Since, as Bohren says, preaching is completed with the amen of the congregation, “the preacher needs to engage in and work through the preaching process in sermon preparation with the listeners and their situation constantly in mind” (Pieterse 2002:1). Although, for this effective involvement of the congregation, some homiletical scholars suggest the sermon seminar or sermon discussion group, this method cannot expect the same effectiveness in all circumstances and cultures. In the situation of Korea, it should be used with serious reflection. Rather, in my opinion, for an effective listening process between preacher and congregation, the preacher should utilize the whole pastoral ministry as the activities of listening. Especially in the Korean church context, the listening through visitation is one of the most effective ways in which the preacher can hear the problems and needs of the congregation. As Williamson (1994:88) argues, visitation becomes the best opportunity for pastoral listening. When the preacher listens and knows the congregation and their circumstances through visitation, the preacher can truly speak for and with them as well as to them and thus the effectiveness of the collaborative preaching is increased.

From our discussion, we now can say that the preacher who wishes to collaborate in the activity of preaching with the congregation needs to learn to listen well to the text and

to the congregation. Where the preacher becomes an active listener to the text and the congregation, he or she can avoid a preoccupied self-centeredness (Williamson 1994: 86).⁷³ As a result of this, the role of the preacher as listener becomes a basis for collaborative preaching. For, as Keck (1978:62) says, "Priestly listening means listening/ hearing in solidarity with the people, vicariously; it is doing so on behalf of the congregation."

6.3.2.1.3 The Preacher as witness

The final preacher image for effective collaborative preaching is that of witness. Thomas G. Long speaks of an important attempt being made today to reflect the importance of the witness concept. In his excellent book, *The Witness of Preaching* (1989), Long develops his homiletical direction around Ricoeur's notion of "witness."⁷⁴ In so doing, Long's major concern is to suggest an alternative way to overcome the limitation of the three preacher images and the gap between text and sermon in modern preaching theories, though he does not ignore practical suggestions for concrete sermon process (Gross 1992:191-5; Long 1984: 24, 42-43).

First, T. Long suggests the image of witness as an integrative way beyond the weakness of three master metaphors: the herald, the pastor, and the storyteller (Long 1989:23-47; Waznak 1990:9). Among these three preacher metaphors, the herald image has been the most extensively accepted by many preachers until now. The weakness of this image is that it is limited by the danger of authoritarian extremes. Another popular preacher image that of "pastor" has also a danger that preaching of God's word is regarded as just the solution to problems and needs of individual believers based on felt need (Long 1989:33). Unlike the previous two images that tell us "who the preacher is," the storyteller image, as a third image, focuses on "how the preacher preaches" (Long 1989:36). Despite the positive contribution of this direction and its theoretical

⁷³ As Williamson (1994:86) indicates, "The preacher who is concerned only with speaking has belied the very communal nature of the church's communication. Such a preacher has removed himself or herself from the basic life of the community."

⁷⁴ Following the four identifications of witness of Paul's Ricoeur, T. Long (1989:42-43) says a witness is, first, not a volunteer, but one who is sent to testify. Second, The testimony of the witness is about God's claim upon life, not about the global meaning of human experience. Third, the aim of the testimony is to proclaim to all people. Fourth, the testimony requires engagement of speech and action.

recognition of harmony between form and content, it also has a danger i.e. to canonize form at the expense of content.

For Long, the witness image is an antidote against the three preacher images in the sense that it gathers and holds the strengthen of the above three images. So, as Long emphasizes, the new image is not merely another preacher image, but “is more suited than any of the others to disclose the true character of Christian preaching” (1989:41). As Miller (1990: 66) indicates, the notion of witness, in Long, can be summarized as words “from the church to the church.” The image of witness is relational and collaborative in that T. Long understands the witness as “one who is sent by and from the congregation to the biblical text to explore the Scriptures, to discover there the truth of God’s claim upon God’s people, and then to turn back toward those who wait and tell them the truth” (Gross 1992:191).

As another dominant issue of his book, the witness notion is closely related to the issue of overcoming the gap between text and sermon. A serious problem of contemporary preaching in relation to text and sermon is the dualistic trend where text and sermon, exegesis and application, explanation and understanding are separated as different processes. In her thesis, *A Re-Examination of Recent Homiletical Theories in Light of the Hermeneutical Theory of Paul Ricoeur*, Gross (1992: 189) calls this the problem of “the Romanticist hermeneutical dichotomy between explanation and understanding.” According to Gross, Long, with the insight of Paul Ricoeur, tackles this most serious and important issue in contemporary preaching. Facing this issue, T. Long asks the critical questions: “How do we move from text to sermon?” “What sort of bridge should be constructed between text and sermon, and what kind of traffic shall it bear?” Concerning these serious questions, the most common wrong answer, as already mentioned, comes first out of dualistic positions by preachers. Their basic theory is that the preacher should move from “exegeting the text” to “exegeting the congregation” in the sense that the congregation can participate in the sermon process after the preacher finishes the process of the exegesis alone (Long 1989:79).

Against this misleading approach, Long suggests a more correct answer by

reconsidering the notion of witness. Long says, “the bridge the preacher must now cross is the one between the text-in-congregational-context and the sermon-in-congregational-context” (Long 1989:12). Only the witness who comes from the community and enters into the community with the community can move back and forth across this bridge (Gross 1992:192).

As a result, Long, addressing the role and function of the witness, offered a new vision wherein the traditional preacher image and contemporary preacher images stand in harmony and in this way hermeneutics and homiletics work together. Agreeing with T. Long’s opinion entirely, I add one more factor of witness notion that is required for maximum collaborative preaching. That is the person of a witness. Though T. Long places less emphasis on the person in the pulpit because of a different interest in his book, the matter of the person of the preacher is an indispensable factor to connect the preacher and the listener around the word. Preaching by witness “does not stand alone as objective artifact to be admired...artistic merits alone. It is indispensably connected to the life, the faith, the doubt, the compassion, the passion, the history of the woman or the man who is preaching it” (Swear 2000:41). A witness is one who proclaims what he or she has seen and heard through his or her personality. For this reason, Stott (1987:60-79) explains the witness notion in relation to the preacher’s character, especially the preacher’s experience and humanity.

Furthermore, Swear (2000:44-45) maintains that the effective proclamation of the gospel requires a concrete incarnational act of witness that is called self-disclosure represented by the person in the pulpit. In this sense, a sermon by a witness is confessional in nature (Lose 2000)

Resner (1999:179) also argues how much the character of the witness and its self-portrayal is important for an effective sermon:

Fundamentally, to serve Christ means to render the epistemologically reorienting word of the cross known and intelligible to people in the true circumstances of their lives. Through the medium of personal witness, the preacher appeals to concrete moments in his or her life regarding the ways in which the gospel has been personally experienced as judging and redeeming, as disorienting and reorienting... As the preacher (*as a*

witness) relates the apocalypse of the gospel in his or her own experience, the hearer may see “what the gospel looks like” in the present day preciously through the experience of the preacher. By using personal story as witness to God’s redemptive activity through the cross in today’s world, the preacher embodies the claim that God is still active in the world.

As Bugg (1992:27) puts it, after all, the congregation is involved more in “who the preacher is” than in “what the preacher says” in the sense that transmitting a message without speaking to a person is ineffective, although these factors (who the preacher is , and what s/he says), must never be separated.

In conclusion, the sermon can be collaborative when the preacher truly becomes one who comes from the congregation, the listener as well as the speaker and the witness, in her/his exegesis, sermon and person (self-disclosure).

6.3.2.2 The text in a conversational-collaborative setting

The second important factor to be considered for effective collaborative preaching is the text in a conversational-collaborative setting. For this, I will primarily investigate three issues: the centrality of the text, the conversation in the text, and the conversation with the text.

6.3.2.2.1 The centrality of the text in collaborative preaching

As already indicated in the section of “the definition of collaborative preaching,” the major characteristic of collaborative preaching lies in the centrality of the text in the conversational-collaborative relation. Correct collaborative preaching is text-based preaching in the sense that preaching empowers when the preacher and the congregation are bound up together in both the discernment and communication of God’s living Word (McClure 1995: 34). W. Williamson (1994:72-3) describes this fact appropriately: “the operating image *in collaborative preaching* is of preacher and people gathering around the authoritative Word” [italics mine]. He (1994:73) goes on to say that the preacher leads the congregation around God’s word that “speaks to the lives of all of them,

preacher and people alike: Let's see what this old text has to say to all of us today."

The reason that preaching should be text-centered proclamation and should connect both the preacher and congregation through the text, according to Brueggemann, is closely related to the role of text itself. For Brueggemann (1993:20), the function of the biblical text is that it provides an alternative vision to the dominant vision of the world. The text invites the congregation into a new world that the text depicts and draws. This new world, which is rooted in the covenant and community, inevitably makes the congregation confront the value and priorities of the old world which are dominated by individualism, isolation, and acquisition (Feltman 1996:29-30).

Because of this fact, in his writing, *The Preacher, the Text, and the People*, Brueggemann (1990:237) says, "The Bible, especially through the lens of its most vigorous interpreters, can be dangerous, subversive, and scandalous." In order for a scandalous text to be voiced and heard in the community of faith, and in order for an alien and subversive text to be connected with the life of the congregation, it is important that the text should not disappear in an unhealthy relation of triangles or triangling that becomes "the single one left alone against the other two" (1990:238). He (1990:238) explains via a concrete example:

My impression is that in controversies in the church that get the pastor in trouble, controversies about theology and ethics, that is, controversies about interpretation, we usually assume two parties, controversies predictably lead to win/lose situations. What has happened in many such situations is that the text has disappeared as a live, vocal partner in the conversation. The text has disappeared in the church largely... In the place of the text, stands the voice of the pastor. That leaves the pastor vulnerable and exposed, for it is only one person's voice. People are not fooled by the substitution when they receive the word of the pastor instead of the voice of the text.

More specifically, Brueggemann (1990:240-1) indicates two extreme positions of liberal and conservative camps which fail to hear the voice of the text that is alien, subversive and scandalous. Liberal camps "have utilized historical criticism largely to explain away the voice of the text, so that when we finish with the text, there is no authoritative voice

left except our own” (Brueggemann 1990:240). This is the way of relativism. On the other hand, conservative camps “find the text too dangerous or problematic. In that case, the preferred way of avoiding the danger of the text is to submerge the text into a theological system so that the text loses its dangerous voice and becomes either a servant and an echo for some intellectual articulation that is distanced from the dangerous utterance” (Brueggemann 1990:241). This is the way of dogmatism. Though relativism and dogmatism stand in extreme poles, they have in common the fact that both make dialogue impossible and unnecessary (Combrink 1996:199).

From these misleading positions, in order for the triangle to work properly, “the text must have power and freedom to utter its own voice as a real voice in the conversation” (Brueggemann 1990:240). For this, though there are no easy ways to understand the text as scandalous or subversive, the preacher tries to hear the text in theological, exegetical, communicational, and rhetorical approach. Brueggemann (1990:240) says:

This is in part a theological matter concerning inspiration, revelation, and authority. Closer to home, however, it is now an issue of textual theory and literary interpretation as well. Newer literary approaches to the text, rightly handled, will let the text regain its own voice. There are important methodological developments in Scripture study, mostly concerning narrative, and mostly in Old Testament study, that can be useful in letting the text utter its own voice.

Since the aim of collaborative preaching is not to give personal opinions on subjects, but to open up a portion of the biblical text in all of its peculiarity and particularity, it is important that the text, which is subversive and scandalous, speaks to the congregation through the preacher so that the congregation comes into contact with the living God (cf. Muller 2001:7).⁷⁵

In summary, when the text is laid in the relation of healthy triangle or triangling, it can be alien, scandalous, and subversive. Only in the centrality of the text, the preacher and the audience can hear a true voice where a text “summons its audience in each hearing

⁷⁵ So, in his class notes, Muller (2001:7) states, “the text is not an end in itself; but is nothing more than an intermediate toward the encounter with the living God...invitation and challenge issued by it.”

to become the community for which the text is voiced” (Brueggemann 1990:244). It, however, is accomplished not in a violent or coercive way, but in a conversational way and process. Thus, in the following sections, we need to take into account the two issues of the text in a conversation and the text in conversational process. It is the matter of both the nature of the Bible and the interpretation (or exegesis) procedures for effective hearing of the text.

6.3.2.2.2 Text in conversational character

In order for the text to be a living word forming God’s people, two questions must be asked: what is the nature of a text? and: how can a text be studied or interpreted in a dialogical process?, are crucial matters to be considered in this section and in a following section. Before examining the conversational process of the text itself, we first clarify the conversational character of the text in which the dialogical nature of biblical revelation, namely the inner texture and the intertexture, will be investigated. We, first, need to examine the dialogical nature of revelation found in the Bible. As already mentioned, Pieterse (1987:7), briefly sketching the entire Bible, indicates the dialogical nature of revelation:

Writers (*of Bible*) agree that the basic structure of God’s revelation in the Bible is dialogic: God speaks, man answers; God questions, man questions or raises objections; and in this interaction God reveals himself and his will. Jesus’ ministry is filled with conversations in which he asks questions and elicits answers to questions. Jesus compels no one, but acts in such a way that He invites people to follow him.

In the same context, Swank, in his book, *Dialogical Style in Preaching* (1981), explains the dialogical character of God’s revelation throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament. Among many examples, I particularly choose Moses’ story in Exodus 3 and the conversion story of Paul. Moses’ calling reminds us that God’s revelation is in the form of dialogue. When God called Moses as a savior of his people, he hesitated to accept God’s suggestion. Moses asked why he should be involved in this difficult work, and God encountered him in a dialogical way until Moses finally decided to go toward God’s new mission that delivers Israel (Swank 1981:28).

The event of the conversion of Paul is another good example in understanding the dialogical nature of the Bible. In the same dialogical pattern, Saul asked a question (“Who are you, Lord?”) and Jesus answered his question (I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting). It is the typical form used when Jesus dealt with people. Jesus was engaged in dialogue with people where He approached them not in a forceful way but in an invitational way (Swank 1981:29).

Since, the Bible is dialogical in its original nature or character, Farris (1998:11) understands the revelation of the Bible as encounter event which happens between God and people both through the presence and activity of God and through human response. For this reason, preaching should bring revelation for this encounter. Farris (1998:11) says:

The aim of the preacher is not primarily to uncover meaning or to create understanding, but to hear and speak a word from God. In this encounter what may be communicated is not information about God but something of God’s own self. The goal of sermon is therefore.... Revelation.

From the above facts, we can say that the Word as revelation of God is not just a collection of static, objective truth statements, but is communicative interaction between God and his people.

Such a discussion concerning the character of revelation invites us to consider texts in dialogue with one another, which Robbins calls texture. With the rise of socio-rhetorical methodology, many scholars begin to explore the texture of biblical texts. According to Robbins (1996:4), rhetorical criticism drives the preacher and the interpreter “to explore a text in a systematic, plentiful environment of interpretation and dialogue.” As Kim (1996:78) indicates, the rhetorical approach “has shifted from discovering the immediate pragmatics of the text to discovering the dialogic nature of the text.” This refers to multiple conversational relations that a text comprises.

In his book, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, Robbins (1996:2-4) suggests five different

angles from which to explore multiple textures within biblical texts: 1) inner texture 2) intertexture 3) social and cultural texture 4) ideological texture 5) sacred texture. Since it is not our intention to explain these multiple textures, in this section, the focus will be on only two types of texture - inner texture and inter texture.

Following Robbins' explanation (1994:176-9), Combrink (1996:195) "distinguishes between inner texture as the dialogue between different voices in a discourse and the intertexture where the dialogue with other texts can occur in the form of reference, recitation, recontextualization, reconfiguration and intertexture echo."

More specifically speaking, the inner texture of a text deals with rhetorical devices within the text using aspects of linguistic structure such as grammar and syntax and by referring to the multiple ways the text employs language to communicate. Robbins (1996:3) indicates, "Inner texture features like repetition of particular words, the creation of beginnings and endings, alternation of speech and storytelling, particular ways in which the words present arguments, and the particular "feel" or aesthetic of the text" (Robbins 1996:3). The purpose of this inner texture is getting inside a text by gaining "an intimate knowledge of words, word patterns, voices, structures, devices, and modes in the text, which are the context for meaning and meaning-effects that an interpreter analyzes with the other readings of the text" (Robbins 1996:7). To analyze each aspect of inner texture, Robbins identifies six kinds of inner texture which can be discovered in the inner texture itself. Robbins (1996:7-37) enumerates them:

- 1) repetitive texture and pattern; 2) progressive texture, which deals with several types of linguistic patterns within a text; 3) opening-middle-ending texture; 4) narrational texture, which introduces the characters of the text; 5) argumentative texture which examines how the author of the Bible persuades his congregation; and 6) sensory-aesthetic texture and pattern, which investigates how the text evokes and embodies the range of senses like emotion, reason, intuition, imagination and feeling.

Intertexture is another crucial factor to be considered in relation to the dialogic character of the text. Whereas inner texture focuses mainly on the conversation with linguistic and

retorical structure and tools within the text, intertexture expands its scope into the conversation between the text and other and prior texts, including social cultural situations (Combrink 1999:22; Robbins 1996:40). Here the major focus of intertexture is on the conversational interaction of the inner text “with outside material and physical “objects,” historical events, texts, customs, values, roles, institution, and systems” (Robbins 1996:40).

According to O’ Day, in this intertextuality analysis, the new text and the earlier text and written text and social context exists in collaborative interaction. O’ Day (1990:259) indicates the relation of the two: “intertextuality refers to the ways a new text is created from the metaphors, images, and symbolic world of an earlier text or tradition.” Focusing his concern on Parable, Kim (1996:77) continually explains the mutual relation of them:

In comparative study, an old text or *genotext* may influence and determine a later work or *phenotext*. In this case, genotext includes both written text and social cultural context. The interaction between the new and the old brings a new textual and symbolic world into being. The dialogic approach then offers a hermeneutical way through which the new text can be approached.

Because of such a wider dialogical interaction that a text has, Robbins argues that this conversation of the intertexture is not limited to Hebrew biblical texts. Rather, it includes the Greco-Roman world. It also provides “a refinement of the analytic procedure in dealing with intertextual echoes in texts...expands it further into social and historical intertexture” (Combrink 1999:22). In summary, every biblical text cannot accomplish complete meaning in isolation, but must be read as part of a larger text and a larger social-cultural context. This means that a text is dialogical in nature and requires dialogical process for sound interpretation. The latter will be a major discussion in a following section.

6.3.2.2.3 Text with conversational process

So far not much has been said concerning the dialogical process with the Bible. In order

for the preacher to make and deliver conversational-collaborative preaching, it is a natural procedure that our major interest is moved from the dialogical character of the text itself to the dialogical procedures of the text in which the text becomes creative, subversive and scandalous and as a result, has a (trans) formative power for contemporary congregations (Jonker 1993:103; Mouton 1997:131-139). Many scholars call it the way of exegesis and interpretation. For effective exegesis or interpretation in building up collaborative preaching, I here discuss the dialectic approach to the text of Paul Ricoeur and the contemplative exegesis of Eugene Peterson.

First, it is very important to investigate Ricoeur's approach to the conversational interpretation of the text as a way of overcoming the Romanticist hermeneutical impasse (1976:71-88). As Gross (1992:116-7) has argued, the biblical sermon entails encounter with a text, regardless of the form of the sermon or how the sermon was initiated. And the encounter with the text is inevitably related to a hermeneutical process in the sense that the preacher engages the text in a procedure of interpretation, whether that process is ill or well defined. It, thus, is an apt expression that "the process of coming to an understanding of the text is an interpretative process, not a simple analytical procedure from which the preacher emerges with a singular truth statement as though that is all the text has to say" (Gross 1992:117). In this way, for effective conversational preaching, homiletics should be an extension of the hermeneutical process, rather than hermeneutics being a step in the homiletical process" (Gross 1992:27).

When we look at contemporary homiletical theories, however, we often find that a sermon does not come out of a hermeneutical encounter with the biblical text but, in many cases, becomes a step in an already determined homiletic. As already mentioned, Paul Ricoeur indicates this as the danger of romanticist hermeneutics. The most serious danger of this approach is that homiletics becomes a two-step interpretation process by the dichotomous split between understanding and explanation or exegesis and application (Lose 2000:66; Ricoeur 1976:71-88). Most contemporary preaching belongs to this Romanticist category. Even Craddock's homiletic, though he tries to overcome the dualistic trend in traditional preaching between interpretation and homiletics, or

exegesis and application, falls prey to the gap between understanding and explanation. Gross (1992:119) indicates this fact: "Craddock's homiletic actually grows out of his conviction that we must pay more attention to how sermons are prepared, hence the inductive method. Therefore, the homiletic becomes an artificial construct into which the general category of hermeneutic is squeezed."

Objecting to such a dichotomous split as a trend which governs contemporary biblical interpretation and preaching, Ricoeur emphasizes that sound interpretation happens in a conversational process where both understanding and explanation are employed in order to communicate. It is called dialectic interaction (Ricoeur 1976:71-88; Mouton 1994:373). Unlike traditional Romanticist hermeneutics which is a linear process, Ricoeur's dialectic interaction with the text constitutes a circular process where interpretative strategies of the text can be explained as "the delicate interaction between identification, alienation and reorientation, which is an ongoing process during the reading and rereading of a text" (Mouton 1994:373).⁷⁶

The first process of the dynamic interpretative reading, participation (or identification) is a naïve grasping of the meaning of the text as a whole. Lose (2000:64), quoting Schrag's writing, explains participation as an acceptance of the prejudgments operative in our communal existence. According to the expression of Ricoeur (1976:75), this is a "guessing" stage in the sense that the interpreter understands the text from only one side. This stage is absolutely necessary for conversational interpretation because there is no discernment without these prejudgments. However, if the interpretative process stops at participation which is a non-critical grasp of the meaning of the text, it becomes traditionalism or dogmatism by modernist totalities.

Because of such a danger, for a sound conversational interpretation, the preacher should move into the process of distancing which is the creative and tensive countermove

⁷⁶ From the insight of Ricoeur, many scholars adapt his dialectic interaction as creative, dynamic and adequate interpretative method to the text (Rousseau 1986:19-28). They use slightly different terms such as orientation, disorientation, and reorientation (McFague 1982:46-8; Ricoeur 1975:122-28), alienation and re-identification (Du Toit), association and disassociation (Lategan, 1993:402), or distancing and appropriation (Hartin:514-16). Though they use different terms, their basic interest is the same in that they are concerned with a (trans) formative power of the text through the method of dialectic interaction or dialectic communication process (Mouton 1997:134).

necessary to check the static and one-sided trend of participation (Gross 1992:159). This distancing stage functions critically against participation, while it does not support isolationism or relativism. For Ricoeur, this stage becomes a condition for creative, meaningful conversation to the text. Lose (2000:64) aptly indicates this fact in comparing Ricoeur with Gadamer: in contrast to Gadamer who sees participation and distancing as implacably imposed alternatives, Ricoeur understands the relation of both as a creative tension that becomes fundamental to the duty of interpreting the text (Lose 2000:64). Here, distancing takes the interpreter or the preacher from guess to validation and from explanation to comprehension.

From this creative and critical interplay of “participatory belonging” and “alienating distancing,” the interpreter arrives at the final stage, appropriation. In this stage, the interpretation becomes an event— becomes actualized. Gross (1992:168), quoting the words of Ricoeur, explains this appropriation as follows: “Appropriation is the actualization of meaning, it is the constructive end which makes the methodological distancing productive. Interpretation is completed as appropriation when reading yields something like an event.” However, it does not say that appropriation is the end of the interpretative process to the text. Rather, it means only another beginning where the participation stage again leads back to a new level of participation and distancing.

In this ongoing conversational process, the text, for Ricoeur, has a truly (trans) formative power that invites the hearers into a new way of life of an alternative world (Smit 1996:301). It is immediately clear why the ‘task’ of hermeneutical appropriation requires an integrative act of imagination. Imagination is the ability to see and taste the new world articulated by the text (Hays 1990:45-46). Explaining the importance of metaphor for appropriation process, Mouton (1994:370) emphasizes that the power of the text lies in the reinterpretation and creative contextualisation of metaphors. For Mouton, metaphor, especially metaphors of Christ, plays an important role in persuading the congregation so that they renew their identity through Him in a radically new way of thinking and doing. Mouton (1994:372) explains Christ’s role as metaphor for God particularly through Ephesians:

It is Christ who brought about the new era by destroying the 'dividing wall of hostility' through his cross (2:14-22). As the decisive element in creating the distinction between old and new, Christ in actual fact symbolizes the power of God (1:5-6, 7, 9). In this confessional pronouncement of 1:20- 23 it is explicitly stated that it was God's power which ensured Christ's position. As symbol of God's power, He is also symbol of the new community's strength and unity (2:20-22; 4:15-16). Identification with this symbol means sharing in and interacting with that which the symbol symbolizes. In this sense the many prepositional phrases identifying the reader's position *in Christ* are indeed remarkable (1:3, 10, 12, 15, 20; 2:5-7, 10, 13; 3:6, 11, 21, 4:32).

In result, an imaginative approach becomes an appropriate way for the strange familiarity of the text that has to be brought home in such a way that the mystical experience of God's presence remains central and real (Muller 1991:132-3). Anyway, it is another crucial factor in making conversational- collaborative preaching (Long 1990:350-352).

Another exegetical process for conversational-collaborative preaching comes out of Eugene Peterson's theory. Whereas Ricoeur's concern lies in a conversational way to overcome the gap between understanding and explanation, Peterson seeks a conversational way to overcome the gap between the preacher who is prepared with scholarly exegesis and the congregations who are not accustomed to academic exegesis. While Ricoeur emphasizes "dialectic exegesis" as an alternative way, Peterson (1987:107-126) stresses the significance of "contemplative exegesis" for effectively collaborating the text to the contemporary congregation. In my opinion, the term "contemplative exegesis" is a "symbolic word" which brings relevantly and creatively the academic exegesis of the ivory tower to the changing situation of the communities of the faith. Peterson (1987:107-110) objects to the fact that the exegesis remains just a superb technique in the pure academic sphere where the text often loses its relevance for contemporary people (cf. Botha 2000:132). Rather, the pastor's exegetical duty is in service to the aliveness of the word for the congregation. However, this does not mean that contemplative exegesis denies technical exegesis. His major concern, rather, lies in finding the way of a living exegesis in the congregation in the conversational position of

“both and”(1987:110). Accordingly, the notion of contemplative exegesis by Peterson becomes an important exegetical suggestion for conversational-collaborative preaching (Kim 1999:150).

Now let's turn to his two concrete ways for contemplative exegesis. First, according to Peterson, contemplative exegesis begins with recognizing that the Bible is based on the orality of biblical communities. God's word is spoken and heard before it is written and read. The fact that God reveals himself by a spoken voice is very important for the preacher who is at work at exegesis. Following the opinion of Ong, Peterson (1987:111) indicates the importance of sound in comparison with sight: While “sight deals with surface; sound deals with interiors... Much more than in the world of sight, sound involves us in the personally alive.” Just as when God reveals himself by the word as sound the result is a living truth (revelation), so preaching should be the event of revelation (Farris 1998:13-18). The work of exegesis is not finding inanimate information and abstract ideas. Rather the aim of contemplative exegesis lies in finding a living word in the written word. For Peterson, this is possible when the preacher and the congregation listen “to the word as sound, the word that reveals out of one's interior” (1987:117).

The second way of contemplative exegesis that Peterson suggests is related with receiving the words in the form in which they are given, for what is said depends on how it is said (Pieterse 1987:118). For Peterson, the most extensive and major form of the Bible is the story. Narrative genre is the basic form of biblical speech. Even in nonnarrative genre, for example, like the Prophets, the Writings, the wisdom literature, the story or narrative is an explicit framework gathering all the parts.

Peterson mentions that there are five distinguishing factors of the basic story:

- There is a beginning and an ending to each story;
- The second element is the catastrophe;
- The third is the plot for salvation;
- The fourth element is the characters that develop;
- The final factor is the significance of the story (Peterson 1987:120-121).

This grand picture of the Bible requires of us that, when we look at the stories, we should consider two elements. The first is that every text has to be seen within the context of the entire salvation history. The second thing is that one, at the same time, needs to take into account the uniqueness of the individual story.

Thus, what the above fact says is that contemplative exegesis means an interpretative effort faithful to the form of the Bible as well as the content of the Bible. In this aspect, contemplative exegesis is “the narrative-soaked exegesis” (1987:124). Peterson continues thus:

Words are sounds that reveal. Words make stories that shape. Contemplative exegesis means opening our interiors to these revealing sounds and submitting our lives to the story these words tell in order to be shaped by them... Contemplative exegesis, then, involves these two matters: an openness to words that reveal and a submission to words that shape (Peterson 1987:125-6).

In conclusion, the sermon can be collaborative when the word truly becomes an alternative, subversive, scandalous and countercultural voice through the centrality of the text, adherence of dialogical character and sound interpretative processes (cf, Brueggemann 1997:42).

6.3.2.3 The congregation in a conversational-collaborative setting

Finally, the congregation should be a part of the formation of the conversational-collaborative preaching so that they may be strengthened as a community of faith. Here, I will mention three things: the congregation as partner in preaching, exegesis of the congregation and imaging the congregation.

6.3.2.3.1 The congregation as participant in preaching

If we define collaborative preaching in relation to the congregation, it can be a “participatory preaching” in which the hearer as community, not as individual, engages

actively with the word or the sermon (Hogan & Reid 1999; Kiser 1997:25-37).

Since preaching is proclaimed for the congregation, with the congregation as well as to the congregation, the congregation should be an essential partner within the entire sermon process. There is no preaching without those who participate actively in the word (McClure 1995:34). Swank, in his book *Dialogical Style in Preaching*, emphasizes the importance of the participation of the congregation in the sermon process: "If the one who hears will enter into the partnership and complete the story, the story will have meaning; if the hearer refuses to participate, the story will remain meaningless" (1981:29). For this, Swank suggests dialogical preaching as an alternative way. More specifically speaking, E. J. Kim (1999:11-13) explains how the congregation is related to the entire sermonic process as an active partnership. Kim identifies it into three stages: before the sermon, during the sermon, and after the sermon.

The participation of the congregation in preaching, according to many homiletics who support the conversational-collaborative model, should start before the preacher goes to the pulpit. In the preparation of the preacher's sermon, the congregation already functions as a partner in the sense that the preacher, who comes from the community of faith, can gain theological and methodological insights into and implications for the proclamation of the Gospel (E. Kim 1999:11). The life situation and faith journey of the people that participates in the pastoral relationship with the congregation are rich context-specific resources for preaching. The knowledge about congregational situations and experience helps preachers to turn preaching into a deep conversation with the local congregations (Swank 1981:57-60). As E. J. Kim (1999:12) says, "The preacher has the privilege of wrestling with the theological and existential issues raised by the congregation's experience. The preacher learns how to describe God's grace in preaching both from and to the localized expressions of their beliefs and experiences."

During the preaching proclamation, the congregation of faith engages in the spoken event as an ongoing conversational partner (Pieterse 1987:126). Without the involvement of the congregation what the preacher proclaims isn't a sermon but a soliloquy. Unlike the monological preaching based on the soliloquy of the preacher alone, the major essence of collaborative preaching or participatory preaching is that the

congregations are intended to be active partners in the witness of the church in the world (Wagley 1989:58). E. J Kim (1999:12) says:

They are not passive but active in responding to the sermon as a group, sharing common experiences in the past and present and having a common goal for the future in the promise of God. In their modes of thinking they expect to be challenged by preaching and motivated for renewal in their actions. While listening to the sermon, they bring to the hearing their personal, spiritual, and social experiences and participate in the preaching by thinking, feeling, and deciding.

After the sermon the congregation of faith are agents for accomplishing the sermon. They are not only active participants in the moment of preaching. They are also a dynamic group of believers who live with and for God's word through the entire sphere of their lives. In this aspect, in his article, *Performing the Scripture: Preaching and Jesus' "Third Way,"* Campbell (1994:21) says, preaching is not only countercultural proclamation which suggests an alternative way in a limited, finite place and time of a worshiping context, but it is also countercultural practice as an ongoing event that has to be fulfilled within the daily life situations of the congregation in the world. According to Campbell's opinion, the congregations are performers of the story of Jesus. In every place of actual practice, the congregations carry God's living word and are charged to live by and for it (1994:21). E.J. Kim (1999:13) explains this in an incarnational image:

Likewise, the congregation makes the preached Word of God become flesh and dwell in the world. Its members are a bridge connecting the Word of God proclaimed in a liturgical context to the large context of society. Therefore, the goal of preaching is accomplished not by the preacher at the preaching moment but by the congregation after the moment of preaching.

The above facts say that only when the preacher and the congregation become partners in both the communication and practice of God's Word, preaching becomes "not primarily informational, telling us things about God and ourselves, but formational, shaping us into our true being" (E. Peterson 2000:7).

6.3.2.3.2 “Exegeting the congregation”⁷⁷

In 6.3.2.3.1, I defined collaborative preaching as participatory preaching in the sense that the congregation should be an active contributor to the sermon. In order for our preaching to be proclaimed in partnership with the congregation, it is very important that we investigate two topics, namely “exegeting the congregation” and “imaging the congregation” in this chapter and in the next chapter.

Here I first mention the matter of exegeting the congregation. The vast majority of books on homiletics are concerned with the way of exegeting the text. These manuals are concerned with getting from the text to the ideas, making a sermon theme and goal, structuring the sections of the text, the use of illustrations, and the like. But, the matter of exegeting the congregation has been treated as a relatively trivial issue. This does not mean that traditional preaching theories have not considered the importance of the listeners (Zink-Sawer 1997:342-356).⁷⁸ Rather, what it means is that it has only been in recent years that preachers have reconsidered the congregational understanding in a more systematic manner.

In my opinion, Leonora Tisdale has provided the most insightful and developed suggestions for congregational study in the area of homiletics, even though her study forms a part of diverse congregational studies in the entire field of practical theology. Her basic assumption is that, as exegeting the text is an essential factor for sound

⁷⁷ I adopt these terms from Tisdale. See her book, *Preaching as Local Theology and Folk Art*, p. 56.

⁷⁸ Even over a century ago, Brooks recognized the role and significance of the congregation in the preaching process. For P. Brook, each local congregation shows a distinctive corporative character: (*The congregation*) is to the minister a unit of a wholly novel sort. There is something in the congregation which is not in the men and women as he knows them in their separate humanities, something in the aggregate which was not in the individuals, a character in the whole which was not in the parts (Philip Brooks 1877: 183).

However, according to Tisdale, for Brooks “the primary value of that corporate congregational character is its ability to provide the preacher with a glimpse of humanity as a whole.” For him, the concern for the congregation is necessary for avoiding the “parochialism” which comes with preaching week-to-week in the same community of faith. Tisdale goes on to state the importance of his consideration concerning the congregation: “Yet Brooks also recognized that the pastor “who would bear fruit everywhere for humanity should root himself into some special plot of human life and draw out the richness of the earth by which he is to live at some one special point” (Brooks, 190). It is toward the goal of such local “rooting” that authors in the emerging field of congregational studies encourage pastors to attend more closely to congregations in their particularity.” Though his argument is positive contribution for congregational study, it provides just an embryonic form for this study.

preaching, so exegeting the congregation is also an indispensable condition (1997:56). In order to investigate her argument more clearly, we should first mention the distinctive mark of Christian preaching. For Tisdale, Christian preaching can be defined as a particular and incarnational word-event. As such, it should be carefully aimed toward contextual preaching which “not only gives serious attention to the interpretation of biblical texts, but which gives equally serious attention to the interpretation of congregation and their sociocultural contexts: Preaching which not only aims toward greater “faithfulness” to the gospel of Jesus Christ, but which also aims toward greater “fittingness” (in content, form and style) for a particular congregational gathering of hearers” (Tisdale 1997:32-33). To borrow Robert Schreiter’s sentence, preaching is an expression of the relation between God and such congregations of faithful, seeking people.

In this regard, contextual preaching is not just speaking to the congregation with exegetical information and moralistic lessons. It also should speak for the congregation so that God’s word should be incarnated into the mind and life of the congregation (Craddock 1985:26). Because of such a characteristic of Christian preaching which is distinguished from other speech, a sermon is not a talk addressed to whom it may concern” but a proclamation for a particular group at one particular time, place, and situation (E. Kim 1999:11). Congregations never hear the message of the gospel in abstract circumstances or apart from their socio, political, and cultural context and the place of the personal life. As E J Kim (1999:11) says, “their needs are related to issues of the society to which they belong; personal concerns are related to regional, national, and global issues and problems.”

Therefore, Tisdale’s understanding of contextual preaching now challenges the preacher to seriously consider the social and personal setting of the congregation, in other words, “exegeting the congregation”. Adapting Hopewell’s term, Tisdale defines “the congregation as substructure, each with its own particular idiom, worldview, ethos, and values.” Such a definition emphasizes the role of the local preacher in discerning and interpreting the “text” of congregation. According to Tisdale (1997:56), preachers should be “amateur cultural anthropologists (or ethnographers),” observing and

interpreting the symbols of congregational life in order to get better understanding of congregational subcultural identity (Tisdale 1997:57). For the effective interpretation of congregational subcultures, preachers as ethnographers have investigated “1) some of the signs and symbols of congregational life which hold particular promise for subcultural exegesis” and have examined 2) categories and frameworks through which the pastor, as symbolic exegete, can begin to assess and interpret the various dimensions of the congregational identity (worldview, values, and ethos)” (Tisdale 1997:90). The task of such congregational exegesis is not limited to considering heightened cultural understanding of a general nature that exists in congregational life. It also includes investigating greater awareness of previous local theologies that exist in congregational life.

However, for effective Christian preaching based on such “local theology”, congregations should be dealt with not only with anthropological concern but also with theological concern. When the preacher as ethnographer analyzes congregations anthropologically, and the preacher as theologian understands congregations theologically, Christian preaching becomes a medium for congregational transformation in light of the worldview, values, and ethos of the Christian gospel (Tisdale 1997:79, 90).

Now, lest the above discussion seem too abstract, it is necessary that we move from theoretical explanation to a more concrete example which shows the way how “exegeting the congregation” functions as a main ingredient for contextual preaching. In *Preaching the Presence of God*, E J Kim (1999:150-158), as a student of professor Tisdale, suggests an apt illustration based on serious congregational study. Of many things to be considered in her sermon, our concern lies in the way that she appropriately connects the biblical text to particular circumstances of the congregation who are embedded in their particular ethnic and cultural ethos.

In her sermon (“Thanksgiving”, based on Deuteronomy 26:1-11) which was preached on Thanksgiving day at the Korean church at New Jersey, the congregation is a group of first-generation immigrants who have lived in America for more than twenty years on

average, the majority of whom have successfully overcome their difficult situations in the strange new land of the United States. Her major sermonic methodology is analogical interpretation as a tool to shorten the gap between the text and the congregation through which the biblical story becomes a communal story for the contemporary audience. As Kim (1999:153) reveals, the goal of her sermon is not to explain what the text meant in a historical context or to analyze it, but to describe the present circumstance of the congregation who are gathering for the annual Thanksgiving service from the perspective of the biblical text. Starting with the American Pilgrim history, Kim poetically describes the particular experience of a Korean American immigrant as an extensional experience of the Native American pilgrim. In this process, she integrates the biblical text into the situation of the particular Korean immigrant congregation. She (1999:155) describes this:

About three hundred years ago,

Across the Pacific Ocean, there were one hundred and one people who got on an American merchant ship heading toward Honolulu harbor, Hawaii.

They were Korean Christians newly converted by American missionaries. They started their journey of pilgrimage searching for God's promised land.

Arriving in January 1903 as laborers in the sugar and pineapple plantations, they became the first Korean settlers in America. As soon as they landed in the new land, they built a church where they could worship God.

Their hardship in this new land was no less than that of the English Pilgrims.

They suffered not from cold weather but from cold manners, brutal racial discrimination, and violent prejudice.

However, they believed that this land was God's promised land given to them and their children as well as to the former European settlers and their offspring. The faithful conviction and adventurous courage of the first Korean pilgrims became our spiritual foundation.

After this, she interprets the present circumstance of the Korean Immigrant congregation and reminds them of who they are in relation to the celebration of Thanksgiving. Finally, her sermon ends with their responsibility as Thanksgiving community and with a prayer that yearns for the fulfillment of God's eschatological promise in the world. Though her sermon is not focused on "exegeting the text"

historically and exegetically, it shows us how powerfully exegeting the congregation can influence the entire sermon formation where the message effectively engages a particular congregation who are embedded in a particular time, place, and situation.

6.3.2.3.3 Imaging the congregation

In order for our preaching to be collaborative preaching in which the congregation becomes deeply involved in the word of God, it is necessary to examine the topic of “imaging the congregation.” When congregations participate in the preaching process, they do not listen to the sermon in a vacuum. They listen to the sermon with many pre-understandings and many images in their minds, whether good or bad. The fact is that our sermons are inevitably faced with or working together with pre-existing understandings or images (Shiraishi 2000:200). To borrow Troeger’s expression, every congregation has the “landscape of the heart,” which can be defined “as the world of meaning that is constructed from the stories, experiences, rituals, symbols, beliefs and values of the community in which we live” (Troeger 1999:86).

As already suggested, by emphasizing the significance of a congregation’s situation and their imagination, Tisdale argues that preaching as local theology should be “*seriously imaginable*” to a particular people in particular time and place. The term “*seriously imaginable*” involves possibilities that are both “real”- as opposed to mere fantasy- and “for us”- that is, imaginable within the particular social world a people inhabit” (1997:43). Thus, an effective proclamation of our preaching depends on how the preacher is well versed in re-imaging the “landscape of the heart” that audiences have.

When it fails, a word delivered through preaching becomes a relic or lifeless document of the past. Unfortunately, today many preachers in the name of “preaching the Bible” make of the Bible an ancient museum or they turn the biblical truth into tools for systematic theology where the word appeals to reason at the expense of poetic imagination (Shoemaker 1985:164). Baumer (1985:83-4) indicates a common example of imageless method and movement. Apart from the congregation’s imagination, many sermons are developed as three steps: principle, application, and exhortation:

1. Today's Scripture tells us... (reduction of the meaning of the event described in the Scripture to a principle or truth).
2. This applies to our lives by... (Prescriptive application of truth to people's lives)
3. Therefore we ought... (exhortation to new behavior).

Though we cannot say that these kinds of sermons are wrong, they may fail to invite the congregation, who already have their pre-supposed images, into new alternative images of the text. As Muller (1991:132) indicates, such sermons lose the dynamic and creative meaning that the text speaks about for today's congregation. If it happens, it will be not a trivial matter but a fatal mistake in our preaching ministry.

For this reason, imaging or inviting the congregation into God's alternative world is a crucial duty that the contemporary preacher should seriously consider. In his book, *Retelling the Biblical Story*, Shoemaker (1985:165) supports this fact: the aim of preaching is to keep the image and world of the text vivid and accessible to the congregation who are captured by various images. By using the text of the book of Revelation 12:10-12, Muller (1991:136) argues the task of preaching in similar perspective. To him, the duty of preaching is to keep the impact of imagination in a text alive in present congregations. Also, to Garret Green, since preaching is "an appeal to the imagination of the hearers through the image of scripture," the primary task of the preacher is to employ his or her own imagination in the task of mediating and facilitating the link between Scripture and congregation. (1989:149).

More specifically, I explain Troeger's three concrete conditions for the task of imaging the congregation in relation to three classical theological understandings (1999:93-94):

1. For winning human imagination of God, our preaching should be incarnational. Incarnation is an apt sermonic model of imaging the congregation in a sense that God's image (Logos) enters into the image of the world (Flesh). "Thus, when preachers enter the imagined worlds of their listeners, they are replicating in spirit the dynamic pattern of Christ's incarnation" (Troeger 1999:93).
2. For winning human imagination of God, our preaching should reinterpret tradition newly. In the Gospels, Jesus reinterprets religious traditions. The

Sabbath debate is a representative example. "Jesus uses a dynamic understanding of tradition to correct the distortions of tradition, to correct what is too narrow and constricted in the conventional imagination" (Troeger 1999:94).

3. For winning human imagination of God, our preaching should breathe the power of resurrection and Pentecost. Resurrection and Pentecost invite congregations into a new hopeful boundary from the boundary of death and despair. So, Troeger (1999:94) says, "The power of the resurrection and the power of Pentecost reveal that our human existence has dimensions and possibilities far greater than the landscapes of any of our hearts."

When our preaching is rooted in these three conditions, it can "transform the landscape of the heart and capture the human imagination for the purpose of God" (1999:95).

6.4 The Importance of pneumatology for collaborative preaching

So far, we have observed three factors for collaborative preaching: the preacher, the text, and the congregation. There, we have suggested various ways or methods necessary in building up effectively the conversational-collaborative sermon. The impact of collaborative preaching occurs as its three component horizons fuse together in the sermon process. However, this is not all that is to be investigated. There is another crucial factor in the effectiveness of collaborative preaching. That is about the role and place of Holy Spirit in relation to the above methods (Cilliers 2002:32). Though we can mention various issues, as Cilliers (1994:251) indicates, a crucial matter raised in the pneumatological approach to collaborative preaching is the relationship between the Holy Spirit and homiletical methodology. Through this section, the question that we should solve is, in what relation does pneumatology stand to methodology?

For this, this section will be focused on 1) the two extreme opinions, which are “pneumatology without methodology” and “methodology without pneumatology” and, as a alternative way, 2) Bohren’s “theonomic reciprocity.” After this, I will briefly mention 3) “a pneumatological approach to the congregation.”

6.4.1 Two extreme opinions

6.4.1.1 Pneumatology without methodology

One extreme way of understanding how the Holy Spirit works in relation to the methodology of the preacher is by a onesided emphasis of the Holy Spirit at the expense of the methodology. In this position, the Holy Spirit is in charge of the preaching event in an exclusive meaning. Since the primary task rests with the Holy Spirit, the methodology or role of the preacher is ignored. Here the preacher is no more than a neutral, lifeless channel for the Holy Spirit’s work (Yoder 1991:62).

For a developed argument of this position, it is important to briefly investigate Barth’s view of the Pneumatology in relation to the function of the preacher. Though we cannot deny Barth’s positive contribution in explaining the divine aspect of homiletic by emphasizing that preaching is a witness to Jesus Christ, nevertheless, his approach tends to assume a one-sided position in the sense that it ignores the fact that the preaching also is a human witness to Jesus Christ (Runia 2001:34). Many scholars indicate this matter as a dilemma caused by “paradoxical tension” (Runia 2002:30; Jung 1995:183-186; Cilliers 1994:251).

Jung (1995:183-184) explains this Barthian dilemma appropriately. God, to Barth, is the “wholly other” who is transcendent, as totally different to human existence and expectations (Green 1989:17). Because of the separateness or distance between God and human, it, on the one hand, is impossible for the preacher to preach the word of God (Jung 1995:183). However, his dilemma of paradoxical tension lies in the fact that nevertheless the preacher should proclaim God. Barth (1957:186) states this fact;

As ministers we ought to speak of God. We are human, however, and so cannot speak of God. We ought therefore to recognize both our obligation and our inability and by that very recognition give God the glory.

In result, what Barth sacrifices in this “paradoxical tension” is the task and activity of the preacher. To him, the preacher is an instrument which just repeats (German: *nachsagen*) what he had heard in the text of Scripture (Runia 2001:30). There is no room in which the methodology and creativity of the preacher can be utilized. In concert with J. Firet, Runia (2001:35-36) describes it as “instrumentalism.” Runia says:

Here man is no more than an instrument in the hands of the Spirit. One cannot speak here of “an active and creative participation of human beings in the work of God” but man is totally passive. In arithmetical terminology one could say: the Spirit does 100%, man 0% (:35-36).

6.4.1.2 Methodology without pneumatology

Another extreme way of understanding how the Holy Spirit works in relation to the methodology of the preacher is by methodology without pneumatology. In this opposite view, the human preacher is in charge of the preaching event. The primary task rests with the methodology and skill of the human preacher, and not the Holy Spirit. Yoder (1991:61) depicts this position as the notion of “the Spirit of the gaps.” Yoder (1991:61-62) states;

The preacher does whatever he or she can do and the Holy Spirit is expected to fill in the gaps. The Holy Spirit becomes “an expectation for the x-factor...which is not covered by human efforts.” Whatever the preacher can do the Holy Spirit does not have to do, and the better the preacher is the less frequently the Holy Spirit will have to be called upon and the less the Spirit will be asked to do.

In contrast to the above view of pneumatology without methodology, what happens in this view is the opposite result. While the former excludes the preacher, the latter excludes the Holy Spirit. Here, since the major impact of preaching to change the congregation resides in the methodology of the preacher, the function of the Holy Spirit

is merely to make up for the gaps created by the inadequacy of the preacher. As Bohren (1965:102) indicates, to those who stand this view point, the Holy Spirit has been introduced as “an emergency expedient” to fill intellectual incapacity or to solve unsolved problems.

An extreme tendency of this opinion is found in Charles Finney, one of the American revivalists. Since it is beyond our intention to investigate his entire theology and its content, I will focus on only the place of the Holy Spirit in his entire theological scheme and its homiletical implication. The major scheme of Finney’s theology lies in the fact that “man is quite able to save himself and in point of fact actually does, in every instance of his salvation, save himself” (Jay Smith 1992:92). In short, Smith (1992:61-93) defines Finney’s theological keystone as one of self-reformation from which God might be eliminated. Within such a theological basic presupposition, the human side becomes more important than the divine side by which the work of Holy Spirit is severely damaged. In his article *The theology of Charles Finney: A System of Self-Reformation*, J. Smith (1992:80) aptly indicates this fact:

The work of the Holy Spirit is not that of creating new life in the sinner; rather the Spirit’s efforts are confined exclusively to persuasion. Finney believed that the Holy Spirit’s function was to persuade individuals to make right choices... Since Finney does not permit the Spirit to go beyond persuasion and motivation in securing a person’s salvation, the real agent...is the individual.

In Finney’s approach based on self-reformation theology, the preaching depends largely on the innovative revivalistic techniques that are designed to compel congregations to repent and accept God’s word (Smith 1992:89). In this process, the methodology of the preacher replaces the work of the Holy Spirit. If the former extreme trend is “instrumentalism,” Runia (2001:35-36), in concert with J. Firet, calls the latter extreme trend “synergism.” Runia (2001:36) says:

In a synergistic conception man’s work is a preparation for or an addition to the work of the Spirit. In arithmetical terms one can speak of 50%-50% or 90%-10% or 99%-o.1%. But however carefully and sparingly we may formulate this co-operation

between the Spirit and man, the result is always that man has to add something to the work of the Spirit and to play his own independent and indispensable role.

6.4.2 Bohren's "theonomic reciprocity"

From considering both opposite poles, our concern now is to examine an alternative way that harmonizes the methodology of the human being and the work of Holy Spirit. A homiletician who from the very start emphasized the collaborative relationship between pneumatology and homiletical methods or the Holy Spirit and the human agency in preaching was Rudolf Bohren (De Wet & Venter 1998:132-137; Cilliers 1994:252; Runia 2001:31).

Focusing on the vision of "both-and," Bohren expresses the relationship of both in terms of "theonomic reciprocity" which Bohren adapted from A.A. van Ruler (Bohren 1979:79, from Korean Translation of "*Predigtlehre*"). The word "theonomic reciprocity," which consists of both "theonomous" and "reciprocity" means that our preaching holds the nature of both in balance. Preaching is "theonomous" in the sense that the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the human agent is initiated and sustained by God (Cilliers 1994:252). As Runia (2001:37) says, "No human being can ever have control of the Spirit. Human work always remains work in the service of the Spirit and it also remains dependent on the sovereign activity of the Spirit."

At the same time, our preaching should not miss the nature of "reciprocity" in the sense that it is also a genuine relationship where the human share is a crucial factor (Cilliers 1994:252). As Runia (2001:37) says, "The Holy Spirit works through human beings. Human beings do their work in the service of the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit does not only work in us, but also with us. He involves us with his actions. He activates us through his own activeness (De Wet & Venter 1998:132-137).

Again, to use arithmetical terminology, the divine element by the Holy Spirit is 100% and the human element by the preacher is 100% as well. The result is not 200% but remains 100%, just as Jesus, as 100% God (divine) and 100% human (humanity), is not 200% but 100% God-human (Runia 2001:36). Because of the mysterious relation

between the divine factor and human factor, Bohren calls preaching a miracle (Bohren 1979:92, Korean Translation).

Thus, in his concept of “theonomic reciprocity” the Holy Spirit and the methodology of the preacher as the human agency are considered as two interrelating factors rather than two mutually excluding factors or two mutually preventing factors (Cilliers 1994: 252; Jung 1995:187-188).⁷⁹ The Holy Spirit works through methods, not in a legalistic and mechanical way, but in , methods becoming a living instrument. Such an approach of Bohren, in result, offers us room to use all kinds of methods and creativity of the preacher in a theonome relation (Cilliers 1994:252-253).

In summary, three factors of preaching cannot be collaborated without the work of the Holy Spirit. As Jung (1995:199) says:

By his work of empowering, the Holy Spirit is related to and overpowers the three basic constituencies of preaching, viz. the text, the preacher, and the audience (*congregation*). All three are the fundamental elements in which the Holy Spirit works for the communication. Therefore the pneumatological approach brings about the right attitude towards the text, the preacher, and the audience (*congregation*).

It is the Spirit who inspires the text, uses the preacher and illuminates the congregation (Paul Windsor 1997:227)

6.4.3 Pneumatological approach for the congregation

Finally, a question we should ask is, in which direction does Bohren’s “Theonomic Reciprocity” ultimately head? Bohren’s reply is simple. It is toward forming or building

⁷⁹ Indicating the danger of the notion of co-relation between the two to be misused, Jung proposes the term “Spirit overpowering co-relationship.” He (1995:189) says “The Holy Spirit and the preacher are clearly correlated in their preaching ministry. But the relationship is never one of equality in the sense of the respective partners depending equally upon one another to co-operate in performing each one’s separate function” (1995:189). Rather, the nature of the relationship between the two is aptly expressed by “spirit-empowering co-relationship” in the sense that “By this empowering of the Holy Spirit, the human instrument is elevated into God’s hand. Thus the limited human instrument is used as an instrument of God Almighty and becomes God’s fellow worker (2 Co. 6:1)” (1995:190). The most

up the congregation as God's people (De Wet & Venter 1998:129-141). The answer is clearly found in the logical order of his homiletical thought. According to Runia (2001:31-32) and Cilliers (1994:253-254), Bohren's homiletical theories are moving from the speechlessness of preaching through the pneumatological approach to the ecclesiological approach. In his *Predigtehre* (1971, Korean translation, 1978) Bohren, in the first part, indicates speechlessness as the most serious problem of contemporary preaching which plagues the church in the Western world. In order to overcome this serious problem, Bohren (1978: 80, *Korean translation*), in the second part of the book, proposes that Christian homiletics should begin with pneumatology. Furthermore, in his homiletical structure, pneumatology as the starting point of homiletics is closely related to the ecclesiology. Bohren's pneumatology is given as the most effective way for equipping and building up the people of faith. As Cilliers (1994:253) indicates, one of the main characteristics of his homiletics is that the congregation is a fundamental feeding basis for preaching.

In this aspect, we can call his approach "pneumatological-ecclesiological homiletics." Bohren's "pneumatological-ecclesiological homiletics," in my opinion, can be an alternative way to the listener-oriented preaching of Craddock and Lowry and christological-ecclesiological preaching of Campbell. It first overcomes the limit of the individual-experiential homiletic of Lowry and Craddock by replacing the individual experience and technique-centered preaching with a corporate aspect and pneumatological significance in Christian preaching. Also, Bohren's emphasis challenges the "Christological-ecclesiological homiletics" of Campbell, the postliberal theologian, by arguing that a christological basis is not enough for building up God's people (Runia 2001:32). For this, Koopman's argument is very helpful. Although Koopman (2001:1-10) limits his study to the role of pneumatology in the *ethics* of Postliberal theology, especially that of Hauerwas, I believe that it can be applied to our homiletic discussion. According to him, postliberal theology has a strong advantage in emphasizing the Christological identity and ecclesiological identity of the congregation. But, unfortunately, it has ignored the significance of pneumatology in forming the character and ethic of the individual and community (Koopman 2001:1-2). According to

appropriate image to explain a "Spirit-empowering co-relationship" is that of "covenantal relationship"

Koopman (2001:7), therefore, postliberal theology can be strengthened by an emphasis on the Holy Spirit. This is also true of Campbell's homiletics. An adequate pneumatology might help Campbell to consider incarnational theology and its homiletical implication more seriously.

It can also be mentioned that Bohren's pneumatological-ecclesiological emphasis will help ensure that the postliberal homiletics of Campbell has a trinitarian basis with all the advantages it brings. A trinitarian emphasis would open up richer ways for edifying and building up the congregation than the exclusive accent on Christology (De Wet & Venter 1998:129-141).

From the above discussion, we can say that the pneumatological thinking of Bohren prevents Christological thinking from becoming impoverished. Only when Christological thinking is supplemented by pneumatological thinking, can our sermons be true congregation-oriented preaching. For, only the Holy Spirit leads the congregation to be a true partner of preaching by the collaborative relation between the Holy Spirit and human (the preacher and congregation).

6.5 Conclusive remarks: Transformation as the goal of collaborative preaching

In these conclusive remarks, I, in the light of the above discussions, will briefly mention some characteristics of transformation (transformative preaching) as the goal of collaborative preaching (Feltman 1996; Harris 1995). The aim of preaching in collaborative relation is "to bring about transformation in the life of the listener and in the community of faith (Feltman 1996:3). Then, how does preaching as collaborative relation become transformative? Let us look at four characteristics of transformative preaching.

(Jung 1995:191).

1. Preaching as collaborative relation becomes transformative when preacher and congregation actively participate in the text.

Participatory preaching means a sermon that engages the congregation in union, identity, vision, and value of covenant community so that they become one in the story of Yahweh and Jesus (cf, D.J Smit 1991:39-59). Willimon (1981:54) argues that participatory preaching can be maximized when both the preacher, who comes out of community, and the congregation as God's people become equal participants in the preaching or word.⁸⁰ There the text is the primary source for bringing about transformation. The word as subversive text challenges the dominant cultural values the preacher and the congregation live out. In quoting Brueggeman's sentence, Feltman

⁸⁰ In his book, *Integrative Preaching: The Pulpit at the Center*, Willimon (1981:54-60) enumerates six results that happen when the congregation become active participants of the preaching or word:

a) Common sense of identity for congregational unity: When we say that the preaching should be participatory preaching, it says more than sharing a funny story or common human experience. It, rather, means a sermon that leads congregations to find their identity revealed in Christian stories or narratives and in the identity of Jesus of Nazareth where congregation can be one (Stroup 1973:14-15).

B) Common authority: A sermon in collaborative partnership rejects both traditional sermonic model, putting the power of preaching into the preacher, and listener-centered preaching model, moving the authority of a sermon into the individual audience. Preaching truly has authority when both the preacher and the congregation seek to hear to the Bible in communal mode (Williamson 1994:64-70). In this structure, both preacher and the congregation are united through truth.

c) Common memory: In an outstanding book *The Promise of Narrative Theology*, G. Stroup (1973:133) defines Christian community as the community of memory. He (1973:133, 135) says;

What distinguishes a community from a crowd or a mob is a community is a common memory which expresses itself in living traditions and institutions...It is more accurate to say that a community is constituted by a common memory in which the past is remembered and interpreted. Consequently it is not enough to say that a community is a collection of people who point to the same series of events in history.

Likewise, the unified congregation by mutual partnership is closely tied with a shared story of the past where she renews her identity as God's people. Thus, where they become active participation of the word, they are bound with the past God worked for his people.

D) Common vision for congregational unity. Though to be "remembering community" is important in forming particular identity of God's people, it is not sufficient. The church, at the same time, should be the community of vision (Willimon 1981:57). "Christianity has long been an eschatological, end-of-time faith...the church to be content to oil today's ecclesiastical machinery is not enough. It must strain forward into God's future, seeing things as they can be and as God is making them" (Willimon 1981:57). In result, in the participatory relation, the congregation can be one in the eschatological hope and vision.

E) Common shared life together of congregation: When our preaching is truly participatory, the congregation can "share the intimacy, mutual feeling, and fellowship that is the sign of the presence of God's kingdom in our midst" (Willimon 1981: 58).

F) Common shared life in the world for congregational unity: That the congregation has common shared life together does not mean that she is called to be more than "an isolated enclave of like-minded friends" (William 1981:59). Congregation is also to be a witness for entire world. These facts are not an antithetic notion. Rather, a concern for congregational identity and unity becomes a basic prerequisite for common shared life in the world. Without the former, the latter cannot be fulfilled. Further, Willimon says, "Congregational involvement in ministry to the world can be a source of congregational unity and vitality" (1981:59).

(1996:67) says, “a principle of transformative preaching is that its texts seek to subvert the assumed world and to provide an alternative vision (1996:67).

2. Preaching as collaborative approach becomes transformative when it offers counter-cultural image.

People change when their old imagination is renewed by “the pieces, materials, and resources out of which a new world can be imagined’ (Brueggeman 1993:20). For, transformation is the movement from the deadly and unhealthy imagination of the dominant culture to an alternative image in the kingdom (Brueggeman1991:161).

In this way, Christian preaching has closely to do with the task of evoking transformation. Quoting Garret Green’s sentence (1989:149), Tisdale says, preaching is “an appeal to the imagination of the hearers through the images of scripture” and “the preacher’s primary task is to employ his or her own imagination in the task of mediating and facilitating the link between Scripture and congregation” (Tisdale 1997:47). More specifically, in his book, *Finally Comes the Poet*, Brueggemann (1989:4) seeks to define preaching as “a poetic construal of an alternative world.” Brueggeman believes that poetic speech is the most effective way of evoking the imagination in the mind of the hearers.

Thus, as Green (1989:149) declares provocatively, “To save sinners, God seizes them by the imagination.” When the preacher trusts in God’s ability to seize the imagination of sinners through the preaching and suggests an alternative image by the poetic speech, our preaching can be an event in transformed imagination (Jensen 1993:76).⁸¹

⁸¹ In his thesis, *Preaching for Transformation*, Feltman (1996:60-61) explains ‘the Parable of the Good Samaritan’ as an illustration of preaching changing the imagination of hearers: “The question which incites the telling, “And who is my neighbor?”, invites an interpretation of the law concerning relationship to neighbor found in Leviticus 19:16. The lawyer anticipates that Jesus will respond with the “community rule.” That is, he expects that Jesus will reinterpret the ancient law for the present circumstance. The parable, though, provides not community rule, but a vision counter to the dominant values of the culture. The dominant value represented by the lawyer is strict sectarianism which seeks to draw sharp communal boundaries. Jesus counters with a new image of life in the kingdom- a life where compassion is not limited by fixed communal boundaries, but by compassion based on common humanity. It is not known whether the lawyer was “transformed” by this encounter. Jesus asks the lawyer to tell who the neighbor is. His answer, “The one who showed him mercy,” indicates that at least he got the point. *What is clear is that what Jesus gave was a “piece” out of which a new world could be imagined.*”

3. Preaching as collaborative relation becomes transformative when it becomes the incarnational word-event in the changing world.

Preaching is closely related to the construction of the meaning of the Word. In order to find and proclaim true meaning, we should be careful that preaching not only “strive toward greater faithfulness to the gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scripture” but also becomes “more fitting, seriously imaginable and transformative for local congregations” (Tisdale 1997:55).

In his recent book, *Preaching in a Context of Poverty*, Pieterse (2001:17) also stresses the significance of both text and context (or congregation) at the same time, for creating effective meaning:

We have noted that preaching is commissioned in the Bible and that its substance is a glad message which also appears in the Bible. But this message needs to be alive, relevant, and directed at the circumstances of the listeners. They should be able to recognize themselves and their situation in the message that is proclaimed.

Unfortunately, however, many preachers lack adequate consideration of both. Here we find the absence of incarnational theology by choosing one-side extremely. In the Incarnation, Jesus Christ, God incarnate, became human, entered into human history and culture, and used human language. In the incarnational model, Word, as the divine side of the incarnation equation, became flesh, as the human side of the incarnation equation (Loscalzo 1993:103). The incarnation model emphasizes the true meeting of the divine factor and the human factor in balance.

Today, the failure of many preachers lies in choosing one side at the expense of the other side. As John Stott (1988:137-144) indicates, conservatives are biblical but not contemporary while liberals and radicals are contemporary but not biblical. We also find a similar trend in the listener-centered preaching by Craddock and Lowry and postliberal homiletic by Campbell. The former focuses on the human side of preaching,

while the latter emphasizes the divine side of preaching in a exclusive way (Hogan 1999:10-11).

In order for our preaching to be transformative preaching, Word (text) should be incarnated or reincarnated into changing situations (Syreeni 2001:554). To borrow McCurley's writing, the Word of God essentially has an incarnational characteristic in the sense that God's Word is so intimately bound up with people's historical situation:

The dynamic diversity of God's expression of will and action...demonstrates that the word is always directed to the changing situations that people experience...in the word God meets people in ways that are relevant to the needs of the moment (McCurley 1996:7).

4. Preaching as collaborative relation becomes transformative when it is empowered by the intercession of the Holy Spirit.

Ultimately, transformative preaching will be incomplete without considering the significance of the work of the Holy Spirit. It is empowered by the Holy Spirit who involves both the preacher and the congregation. In quoting Kellerman, Carstens (1997:46) states this fact:

In the final analysis the preacher does not have a free hand in the use of the intermediary role of the sermon. Preachers can exert a tremendous (positive or negative) influence on listeners, but ultimately the Spirit of God has the final say. He is the real mediator of the sermon because it is his word that he applies in his own way in the life-stories of human beings.

Only when the Holy Spirit works in preaching, as Bohren (1965:126) suggests, it is accomplished that "I (*preacher*) participate in the lives of my brethren and allow them to participate in me. The Holy Spirit established ties between the preacher and the congregation so that they are mutually collaborated in the word of God" (Kellerman 1997:29). As already indicated, however, in Bohren's pneumatological structure that is defined as "theonomic reciprocity," the collaborative preaching for transformation of

the congregation should be not only totally the work of the Holy Spirit but also totally the work of man/woman. It is the fruit of the partnership between God and human, which is best expressed in covenantal relation. In summary, to allow preaching to effect the transformation of the congregation, the Holy Spirit plays the central role. Nevertheless, the preacher and the congregation should do their work for this. Kellerman (1997:29) aptly explains the responsibility of the preacher and the congregation:

In his communion with the Word, the preacher must search for guidance of the Holy Spirit in faith and through prayer. The listener, in his turn, must come to the worship service in the expectation that God will help to direct his life story through his word and Spirit and through the mediation of the sermon according to the divine purpose for his life.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

In this dissertation I set out to 1) investigate the AOP theories by Craddock and Lowry, 2) evaluate the positive benefits and weaknesses of their homiletical direction, and finally 3) suggest an alternative way beyond AOP. Before scrutinizing these on a full scale, I began by surveying the relation of the text and the listener through the issue of contextualization and rhetoric. This preliminary study offered important pre-knowledge concerning how and with what kind of influence hearer-driven theorists move from a text-oriented focus to a hearer-oriented focus. This chapter also provided a rough map for all the chapters by briefly suggesting the way of a true audience- oriented approach that can honor the text and the listener (context) at the same time. To satisfy the above two purposes, I developed this preliminary chapter by introducing two extreme opinions that present an alternative way. In the issue of contextuality, both traditional conservatism and radical postmodern theology failed to consider the relation of the text and context in an appropriate balance. Traditional conservatism emphasized the text at the expense of the context while, in an extreme reaction, radical postmodern theology primarily focused on the listener (context) at the expense of the text. Neither the traditional model nor the postmodern model is sufficient for true contextual interpretation. For a truly contextual sermon, this chapter suggested an integrated approach through which preaching gives serious attention not only to the biblical text but also the congregation. In the issue of rhetoric, the relation between the text and the context has also lost its balance. Andre Resner (1999:81) describes this as a swing of the pendulum between hearer-driven rhetoric and message-driven rhetoric. Following the same pattern, I presented Paul's notion of a reverse-ethos based on the cross-event-proclaimed as an alternative way through which text-driven rhetoric and audience-driven rhetoric, in other words, theology and rhetoric could be integrated.

After the preliminary study, this dissertation moved from the summary of the AOP theories by Fred Craddock and Eugene Lowry, through the evaluation of AOP in both a

positive and negative perspective, to alternative ways of preaching called conversational-collaborative preaching through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

1. The summary of AOP by Craddock and Lowry

The evaluation of alternative ways of preaching cannot be completed without introducing the theories and techniques of the AOP theories. Since their theories did not take place in a vacuum, and came out of the paradigm shift of theology and hermeneutic, it, first of all, is important to know the background of AOP. In the theological and hermeneutical view, AOP rejected the historical-critical method and maintained that traditional preaching, under the influence of this method, was largely a propositional, informative, discursive message. Instead, AOP accepted the new hermeneutic by Ebeling and Fuchs and literary criticism supported by many recent scholars, assuring that these make a new hearing of the word of God possible. In the perspective of a changing situation, AOP was the reflection of a specifically historical and cultural context in American church and society during 1960-1970.

From theological-hermeneutical and socio-cultural background, Craddock and Lowry devised inductive and narrative preaching, although this did not comprise totally new methods found only by them. As the title of our dissertation implies, the major concern of their new homiletics was to make a sermon for active participation of the audience which has so far been neglected in traditional preaching. In this aspect, while traditional sovereign preaching was preacher-based where preachers tend to use the biblical text primarily to support their own agenda or meaning, 'the New Homiletics' of Craddock and Lowry was listener-based preaching where the audiences decide their own message. As a way of AOP, Craddock supported inductive preaching based on an inductive communication method that begins with the particulars of human experience and moves toward the often surprising conclusion of the gospel (Kim 1999:208). Craddock firmly believed that the audience participates actively in the whole sermon process when one preaches the Gospel inductively, not deductively. In a similar context, Lowry suggested narrative preaching as the most effective way that the audience could "participate" in the sermon. The narrative preaching that Lowry supported was different from mere

story sermon and storytelling in the sense that narrative preaching by Lowry meant the plot-shaped move involving a strategic delay of the preacher's meaning (Lowry 1995:342). As a result, their theories were intended to make listener-oriented sermons in the rediscovery of "how" which is compared to the primary focus on "what" in the traditional homiletics.

2. The Evaluation of AOP in Campbell's homiletic

The extensive sketch of AOP by Craddock and Lowry gave us some clues with which to evaluate their theories positively and negatively. First, this dissertation considered four positive contributions of AOP. 1) AOP reminded us of the significance of the listener in the preaching process. More specifically speaking, AOP argued that our preaching could not be fulfilled without the participation of the congregation. Preaching is not a one-man/woman show by the preacher alone. Rather, preaching comprehends a two-way communication in which the preacher and the listener become equal partners. Also, the second contribution in relation to the significance of the audience was that it reminded us that preaching should appeal to the whole person. As Richard (1995:23-24) argues, effective preaching deals with intellectual, affective, and volitional components of Christian experience. Our preaching should inform the mind of the audience, instruct the heart of the audience, and influence the behavior of the audience simultaneously (Richard 1995:23-24). 2) AOP reminded us of the significance of the sermon form in the preaching process. AOP argued that the sermon form is an essential factor in creating meaning, not just the ancillary tool of sermon text. Since "form is integral to meaning," as Long (1989:93) puts it, it is apt to use "the form of the content." 3) The AOP us of the significance of sermon movement for effective participation of the audience. Finally, 4) AOP reminded us of the importance of story or story preaching in creating the human experience of the audience. As L. Peterson (1984:108) says, story or storytelling is one of most powerful modes of human communication in creating the experience of the audience.

Next, this dissertation indicated some crucial problems of AOP according to the postliberal homiletic of Campbell, although our criticisms were not limited to Campbell's perspective. Campbell defined AOP as "the individual experiential event." When we evaluate AOP in Brueggeman's view, we find that it has succumbed to the values and images of dominant western culture, which are rooted in individualism, isolation, and acquisition rather than appealing to the claims and values of the gospel which are rooted in covenant and community (Brueggeman 1993:30-31). AOP succeeded in reflecting the voices of secular cultures through biblical message, but failed to build up the community based on the particular story and identity of Jesus Christ. In the area of recent homiletics, Campbell's Christological-ecclesiological approach has been one of the most important theological arguments against the AOP as individual-experiential event. Though the Christological-ecclesiological approach held the danger of flowing toward another extreme trend, nevertheless Campbell's approach was important in the sense that he understands a sermon as alternative speech in the world which is full of false images and values. Preaching as alternative speech had to do with "the specific gospel narratives that render the identity of Jesus of Nazareth"(Campbell 1997:190). For Campbell, as for Frei, "narrative is important because it is the vehicle through which the gospels render the identity of Jesus of Nazareth, who has been raised from the dead and seeks today to form a people who follow his way" (Campbell 1997:190). Likewise, the Christological approach formed the basis for the formation of people, for Campbell believed that God's people have been built by the peculiar identity of Jesus of Nazareth. Thus, the sermon should move from the identity of Jesus Christ to the "upbuilding" of the church (Campbell 1997:222). For Campbell, the serious problem of AOP was the loss of the Christological identity and the loss of communal identity of the church.

3. The alternative ways of congregation-oriented preaching

The Christological-ecclesiological approach contributed towards overcoming the danger of the individualistic trend of AOP based on secular audience images. But Campbell's perspective was insufficient in forming truly congregation-oriented preaching because of two decisive problems. One is the either-or trend of Campbell's homiletic and the

other is the absence of a pneumatological approach. These were significant issues that should be solved to pave the way of alternative preaching beyond AOP. The final concern of this dissertation, therefore, was to suggest a theoretical basis for an alternative preaching in which the “both-and” direction can be honored, and the role of the Holy Spirit can be emphasized as the starting point for preaching. I discussed the way of the alternative sermon as conversational-collaborative preaching under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In conversational-collaborative preaching theories, the distinctive benefits of text-oriented preaching (Campbell) and the listener-oriented direction (Craddock and Lowry) can meet together in creative conversation. There, our preaching can complete the incarnational vision.

However, in my dissertation, conversational-collaborative preaching should include more than the matter of how we put the preacher, the text, and the congregation in a conversational or collaborative relation. That consideration was ultimately connected to the role of the Holy Spirit. The issue raised was the relation between the role of the Holy Spirit and the method of human agency in collaborative preaching. Bohren’s “theonomic reciprocity” was used as a balanced notion in solving the delicate relation between the Holy Spirit and the methodology of the human agency. In his logic, collaborative preaching is ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit. But this work of the Holy Spirit is performed in us with us, and through us. Because of such a mysterious relationship, Bohren understands preaching as a miracle (1980:74, 77). Furthermore, the pneumatological homiletic of Bohren was intended for building up the congregation of faith just as the Christological approach of Campbell was the basis for communal ecclesiology. In this regard, we refer to Bohren’s alternative approach as pneumatological-ecclesiological homiletic. Though Bohren’s pneumatological-ecclesiological homiletic does not negate Campbell’s Christological-ecclesiological homiletic, we also claim that it offers a way to overcome the limitation of Campbell’s christological-ecclesiological homiletic. While Campbell’s approach teaches us what the nature of the sermon is, by emphasizing only the divine side of sermon, Bohren’s approach teaches us how the congregation actually participates in the effectiveness of the sermon, which emphasizes a partnership between the divine side and the human side (cf. Runia 2001:32; 34).

In conclusion, when Campbell's Christological-ecclesiological approach is supplemented by Bohren's pneumatological-ecclesiological homiletic, our preaching can become truly congregation-oriented preaching.

APPENDIX 1

Sermon Title: Praying through Clenched Teeth by Fred B. Craddock

Sermon Text: Galatians 1:11-24 (From, *How to Preach a Parable*, pp 142-8)

I am going to say a word, and the moment I say the word I want you to see a face, to recall a face and a name, someone who comes to your mind when I say the word. Are you ready? The word is “bitter.” Bitter. Do you see a face? I see a face. I see the face of a farmer in western Oklahoma, riding a mortgaged tractor, burning gasoline purchased on credit moving across rented land, rearranging the dust. Bitter.

Do you see a face? I see the face of a woman forty-seven years old. She sits out on a hillside, drawn and confused under a green canopy furnished by the mortuary. She is banked on all sides by flowers sprinkled with cards” You have our condolences.” Bitter.

Do you see a face? I see the face of a man who runs a small grocery store. His father ran the store in that neighborhood for twenty years, and he is now in his twelfth year there. The grocery doesn’t make much profit, but it keeps the family together. It’s a business. There are no customers in the store now, and the grocer stands in the doorway with his apron rolled up around his waist, looking across the street where workmen are completing a supermarket. Bitter.

I see the face of a young couple. They seem to be about nineteen. They are standing in the airport terminal, holding hands so tight their knuckles are white. She’s pregnant; he’s dressed in military green. They are not talking, just standing and looking at each other. The loudspeaker comes on:”Flight 392 now loading at Gate22, yellow concourse, all aboard for San Francisco.” He slowly moves toward the gate; she stands there alone. Bitter.

Do you see a face? A young minister in a small town, in a cracker box of a house they call a parsonage. He lives there with ? His name is Saul, Saul of Tarsus. We call him Paul. He was young and intelligent, committed to the traditions of this fathers, strong

and zealous for his nation and for his religion, outstripping, he says, all of his classmates in his zeal for his people. While he pursues his own convictions, there develops within the bosom of Judaism a new group called Nazarenes, followers of Jesus. They seemed at first to pose no threat; after all, Judaism had long been broadly liberal and had tolerated within her house of faith a number of groups such as Pharisees and Sadducees and Essences and Zealots, so why not Nazarenes? As long as they continue in the temple and in the synagogue, there's no problem.

But before long, among these new Christians a different sound is heard. Some of the young radicals are beginning to say that Christianity is not just for the Jews but for anyone who believes in Jesus Christ. Such was the preaching of Stephen and Philip and others; it doesn't really matter if your background is Jewish as long as you trust in God and believe in Jesus Christ. This startling word strikes the ear of young Saul. "What do they mean, it doesn't matter? It does matter! It is the most important matter. No young preacher can stand up and say that thousands of years of mistreatment and exile and burden, of trying to be true to God, of struggling to be his people and keep the candle of faith burning in a dark and pagan world mean nothing. What does he mean, it doesn't matter to have your gabardine spat upon, and to be made fun of because you are different? Of course, it matters!"

Imagine yourself the only child of your parents, but when you are seventeen years old, they adopt a seventeen-year-old brother for you. When you are both eighteen, your father says at breakfast one morning: "I have just had the lawyer draw up the papers. I am leaving the family business to our two sons." How do you feel? "This other fellow just got here. He's not really a true son. Where was he when I was mowing the lawn, cleaning the room, trying to pass the ninth grade, and being refused the family car on Friday nights? And now that I'm eighteen, I suddenly have this brother out of nowhere, and he is to share equally?" How would you feel? Would you be saying, "Isn't my father generous?" Not likely.

Then imagine how the young Saul feels. Generations and generations and generations of being the people of God, and now someone in the name of Jesus of Nazareth gets this strange opinion that it doesn't matter anymore, that Jews and Gentiles are alike. Your

must sense how Saul feels. All your family and national traditions, all that you have ever known and believed, now erased completely from the board? Every moment in school, every belief held dear, every job toward which your life is pointed, now meaningless? Everything that grandfather and father and now you believed, gone? Of course, he resolves to stop it. The dark cloud of his brooding bitterness forms a tornado funnel over that small church, and he strikes it, seeking to end it. In the name of his fathers, in the name of his country, in the name of God, yes.

Now, why does he do this? Why is he so bitter at this announcement of the universal embrace of all people in the name of God? Do you know what I believe? I believe he is bitter and disturbed because he is at war with himself over this very matter. And anyone at war with himself will make casualties even out of friends and loved ones. He is himself uncertain, and it is the uncertain person who becomes a persecutor, until like a wounded animal he lies in the sand near Damascus, waiting for the uplifted stroke of a God whom he thinks he serves.

But Paul knows his is a God who loves all creation. He knows; surely he knows. Saul has read his Bible. He has read that marvelous book of Ruth, in which the ancestress of David is shamelessly presented as a Moabite woman. Certainly, God loves other peoples. He has read the book of Jonah and the expressed love of God for people that Jonah himself does not love. Paul has read the book of Isaiah and the marvelous vision of the house of God into which all nations flow. It is in his Bible. Then what's his problem? His problem is the same problem you and I have had sometimes. It's one thing to know something; it's another thing to know it. He knows it and he does not know it, and the battle that is fought between knowing and really knowing is fierce. It is sometimes called the struggle from head to heart. I know that the longest trip we ever make is the trip from head to heart, from knowing to knowing, and until that trip is complete, we are in great pain. We might even lash out at others.

Do you know anyone bitter like this; bitter that what they are fighting is what they know is right? Trapped in that impossible battle of trying to stop the inevitable triumph of the truth? Do you know anyone lashing out in criticism and hatred and violence against a person or against a group that represents the humane and caring and Christian way? If

you do, how do you response? Hopefully you do not reach to bitterness with bitterness. We certainly have learned that such is a futile and fruitless endeavor, just as I hope we have learned we do not fight prejudice with prejudice. A few years ago, many of us found ourselves more prejudice against prejudiced people than the prejudiced people were prejudiced. Then how do we response?

Let me tell you a story. A family is out for a drive on a Sunday afternoon. It is a pleasant afternoon, and they relax at a leisurely pace down the highway. Suddenly the two children begin to beat their father in the back: "Daddy, Daddy, stop the car! There's a kitten back there on the side of the road!" The father says, "So there's a kitten on the side of the road. We're having a drive." "But Daddy, you must stop and pick it up." "I don't have to stop and pick it up." "But Daddy, if you don't, it will die." "Well, then it will have to die. We don't have room for another animal. We have a zoo already at the house. No more animals." "But Daddy, are you going to just let it die?" "Be quiet, children; we're trying to have a pleasant drive." "We never thought our Daddy would be so mean and cruel as to let a kitten die." Finally the mother turns to her husband and says, "Dear, you'll have to stop." He turns the car around, returns to the spot and pulls off to the side of the road. "You kids stay in the car. I'll see about it." He goes out to pick up the little kitten. The poor creature is just skin and bones, sore-eyed, and full of fleas; but when he reaches down to pick it up, with its last bit of energy the kitten bristles, baring tooth and claw. Sssst! He picks up the kitten by the loose skin at the neck, brings it over to the car and says, "Don't touch it; it's probably got leprosy." Back home they go. When they get to the house the children give the kitten several baths, about a gallon of warm milk, and intercede: "Come we let it stay in the house just tonight? Tomorrow we'll fix a place in the garage." The father says, "Sure, take my bedroom; the whole house is already a zoo." They fix a comfortable bed, fit for a pharaoh. Several weeks pass. Then one day the father walks in, feels something rub against his leg, looks down, and there is a cat. He reaches down toward the cat, carefully checking to see that no one is watching. When the cat sees his hand, it does not bare its claws and hiss; instead it arches its back to receive a caress. Is that the same cat? Is that the same cat? No. It's not the same as that frightened, hurt, hissing kitten on the side of the road. Of course not. And you know as well as I what makes the difference.

Not too long ago God reaches out his hand to bless me and my family. When he did, I looked at his hand; it was covered with scratches. Such is the hand of love, extended to those who are bitter.

APPENDIX 2

Strangers in the Night by Eugene Lowry

Text: John 3;1-9 (Robinson's Journeys toward narrative preaching)

The streets were dark and deserted.

Not a soul could be seen-at least he hoped not.

There was one lonely figure- jumping from shadow to shadow-

Never using the major streets of the town, traveling only in out of the way places, hoping not to be seen.

So, what's he doing, jumping from shadow to shadow in the middle of the night?

He is going to pay a call on Jesus who is staying with friends in the village. He doesn't want anybody to know that he, one of the leaders of the community, would be going to see this itinerant preacher.

Jesus is roused from his sleep, I presume, and meets Nicodemus. Strangers in the night.

"Rabbi, you must come from God," Nicodemus says,

"because nobody could do the signs you do except God be with them."

To which Jesus respond, "Truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, one cannot even see the Kingdom of God"

-and right away it strikes me that we have a communication problem here.

Did you sense the opening greeting and the response do not quite compute?... Let's go through it again.

"Rabbi, you must come from God, because nobody could do the signs you do except God be with them."

Strangers all right; strangers missing in the night.

And I must say I am a bit shocked at Jesus.

Wouldn't you expect Jesus to respond to Nicodemus's compliment with at least a gracious "Well, thank you"?

I mean, the minister is greeted by a parishioner on a Sunday morning with , “Preacher, you must have been inspired today, for nobody can preach the way you preached except God be with them.”

I hope the preacher will respond, “Well, thank you so much,” or, at least, “how long did it take to figure that out?”

I presume the preacher will not respond with, “Well, it is almost two hundred miles from Des Moines to Kansas City”

-which is the truth of course-but what does that have to do with the previous comment?

Actually the opening greeting and response are not quite as unrelated as they first appear. And were we Jews in the days of Jesus, we probably would have understood.

For centuries there was a set of norms by which would-be prophets were judged. One had to have had some visionary-type experience, have engaged in prophetic proclamation.

What Nicodemus was saying was that he had added up the score, and concluded that, indeed, Jesus was a genuine, A-1, guaranteed prophet of the Lord.

Jesus’ response I simply, “No, you can’t get here from there.”

One does not add up the score of understanding and arrive at the conclusion of faith.

No, it is the other way around., Only those

within the circle of faith are able to discern the evidence.

Of course we know that from our own personal experience. Have you ever tried to argue someone into the Christian faith? Just answer one argument and three more will follow.

The Sunday school teacher was trying to be creative on Easter Sunday morning, and said to the class, “What do you suppose is the first thing Jesus did once he was raised from the dead?”

To which one of the class members responded, “I’ll bet he really told Pilate off.”

No, he didn’t tell Pilate off-he appeared only to those already within the circle of faith.

“Rabbi, you must come from God because...”

“No, unless you have been born again you cannot even see the Kingdom.”

Well, unfortunately, Nicodemus was not much of a poet-couldn't get the hang of the metaphor-and with literalist blinders on said,

"But, I am old. How can an old man reenter a mother's womb?"

(Or as Roderick Buechner has put it, "At my age I have trouble getting into a cab-let alone a womb!")

Poor Nicodemus.. But it's not a bad question.

"You must be born again." I never did like the phrase myself-and I remember it all too well from my childhood.

Our family often traveled across western Kansas to see the grand folks. I would peer out the rear, side window-with nothing to see. Absolutely dull out there except when, all of a sudden, a set of Burma-Shave signs would break in with a message of cheer.

But then we would come upon one of those large billboards-obviously the work of amateurs-and it would declare,

"Ye must be born again."

Seemed kind of pushy to me.

Why didn't they mind their own business?

"You must be born again?"

I never like the phrase and, for that matter, never really understood what it meant-until several years ago when I ran into Fred again.

Actually, Fred is not his real name, but his name for today. Fred is a close friend of mine, but across many miles. I don't get to see him often, but we always pick up where our last sentence left off.

Fred is a minister, too.

He didn't go to the same seminary as I did.

Quite a bit younger than I: too young to be my brother, and too old to be my son.

Now, Fred is a winner-
the sort of person who could sell anything to anybody.

Looks like a young corporate executive.

By this time probably drives a BMW, with a bumper sticker on it that says, "Go for it."
He always has- and always wins the prize.

After seminary Fred moved to a state where United Methodists abound. He moved
right into a suburban setting, and in only a few years in that church he
Doubled the membership,
Tripled the budget,
And was a terrific success-except around the house.

I remember how his first wife used to wait until he was a few steps away. She'd lean
over toward me and say,
"I know you have a lot of influence with Fred.
Do you suppose you could get him to relax?
Maybe take a half-day off each week?
He does nothing but work."
Of course I tried-gave it my best shot-even asked him what he wanted me to say at his
funeral-but without result.

Things went so poorly at home that finally Fred and his wife went their separate ways.
Their divorce got the attention of the cabinet right away. The bishop decided he would
take care of Fred.

He fixed him all right: sent him to a much smaller congregation where there was little
chance for the kind of success he'd had before.
And of course, a great reduction of salary.

So, when we happened onto each other at a meeting, Fred suggested that we have lunch together. And we did-the three of us: Fred, his new wife, and I.

Right away Fred told me about all the wonderful success he was having at the new church-success beyond the fact that there he had met the woman who would become his new wife.

The budge had already nearly doubled, attendance had more than doubled, a dig building campaign was being considered.

Then Fred told me how unhappy he was. Not anything wrong with the congregation-they had been very responsive to his leadership.

"I'm just restless," he said.

While we were eating, Fred spotted someone he hadn't seen in a while, and excused himself to go say hello-which left me sitting with his new wife. She leaned across the table and said:

"I know you have a lot of influence with Fred. Could you do me a favor?

Could you get him to read?"

Well, it was almost the same request as his first wife had made-perhaps more on target.

Apparently, she sensed something lacking inside.. and thought that reading might help.

I don't mean intellectually-Fred is very bright;

I don't mean lacking in devotion-he is committed;

No, it is another kind of 'lack.'

It was while driving home from that meeting and lunch that I realized precisely what was amiss.

It is an existential emptiness...and with a different kind of guilt. Guilty-not of anything he has done or failed to do-yet somehow guilty of never being who he really is.

It was Nicodemus who came to mind as I drove home that day. Somehow Fred revealed exactly what was Nicodemus's problem.. or was it that Nicodemus revealed exactly what was Fred's problem"

Do you remember when Jesus started talking about being born anew? Do you remember Nicodemus's response?

He started asking what he had to do.

"How can an old person climb back into a mother's womb?"

"what do I have to do?" That's his question.

"What do I have to do?" "That's Fred's question.

"How much success is required?"

You have to be born again, Jesus said-which is precisely that which one can never do,

No matter how committed,

Ho hard working,

How bright.

The one thing no one can ever do is to birth oneself.

Birth is always a gift of another.

Poor Nicodemus,

Jumping from shadow to shadow to get the last word on precisely what he had to do to make it right.

Poor John Wesley,

Riding on his weary horse from campaign to campaign, hoping to achieve that peace he had sought for so long.

And all along, that which is sought so desperately is available without price,

Without achievement.

You must be born anew, said Jesus, and announced the good news of the gift by declaring that:

The wind blows where it will.

You can't control it.

You can't work for it.

You don't even know when or where or how.

The wind blows where it will,

And you can hear the sound of it,

Fell its breeze against your face....

Unless, of course,

You are running so fast,

And with the jaw set so desperately

That you can't hear anything,

Fell anything,....

Not even the grace of God's spirit.

Which is to say:

Nicodemus, give it up; stop trying so hard.

Fred, give it up; success will never secure it for you.

Sharon, give it up....

Allen, give it up....

Martha, give it up....

Gene, give it up....

The wind blows where it will,

The gentle breeze of God's unconditional love.

And that's a promise,

A promise made to every stranger in the night.

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