A PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE PREACHER'S ETHOS IN A KOREAN CONTEXT

by

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Declaration

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

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to emphasize the importance of the preacher's ethos in preaching. There are many voices of contemporary critique against preaching. Amongst other things, the declining influence of preaching is being blamed on the preacher's own ethos.

So, what does ethos mean in relation to the preacher? This question forms part of the core of this research. Clearly, the relation between ethos and preaching is of great importance.

Chapter 2 explores the basic concept of what we call "preacher" related to five key aspects: Firstly, it is argued that the definition of "preacher" is that he/she is a servant of the Word and of God. Secondly, the significance of the preacher's occupation as being similar to that of Jesus Christ is pointed out and the confession that the preacher's words lead to the parishioners' salvation. Thirdly, some of the many practical names given to the preacher is described, such as an ambassador, prophet, witness, shepherd, steward, herald, spokesperson and messenger. Fourthly, it is argued that, in preaching, the preacher's task is that of a mediator between God and humans, an interpreter of the Bible for the parishioners, and to inspire the congregation to live a more meaningful life. Lastly, the researcher highlights the significance of preaching related to six areas: the preacher, the congregation, the church, worship, Christianity and the world.

Chapter 3 looks at preliminary research on current preaching in crisis. In a sense, some (post)modern people, such as social scientists, communication experts, theologians and those in the church pew, have a negative perception of preaching. Each party has its own angle of criticism but, whatever it may be, they all agree that something is crucially wrong with the present-day sermon.

Chapter 4 investigates the general circumstances of the church and preaching, as well as the preacher in the Korean context, focusing on the following four aspects. Firstly, the Korean church as one of the most amazing phenomena in Christianity's recent history. Unfortunately, the church's growth has actually stopped and has even shown a decline since the mid 90s. Secondly, a study of Korean preaching indicates that this theological establishment is in fact not strong, and that a form of prejudiced exegesis of the Bible is spreading. Thirdly, in the Korean context, Korean preachers have inflated authority; they have to perform many activities; and

a reasonable foundation for their authority is needed. Lastly, it is argued that within the Korean context, the preacher's "reasonable authority" should have the Word of God as its foundation.

Chapter 5 demonstrates three key aspects of the preacher's ethos by highlighting the following: firstly, three kinds of proofs for structural principles, i.e. persuasion by moral character (*ethos*); persuasion by putting the hearer into a certain emotional frame of mind (*pathos*); and persuasion by the speech itself, when the truth or apparent truth (*logos*) is established. Secondly, an important rule for the preacher's ethos, namely that listeners must trust and feel connected with the speaker. Thirdly, the attitude of the audience as an important element that influences and even constructs the speaker's character.

Chapter 6 presents four key aspects of preaching in crisis as related to the preacher's ethos by pointing out the following: firstly, preachers cannot be separated from their preaching. Secondly, a large part of preparation for preaching is the preachers' own personal preparation – the impact from the pulpit is indeed tied to their own moral character and ethos. Thirdly, the most importance aspect of the preachers' ethos in preaching is the danger of their possible inconsistent lifestyle. Preachers' talk should be supported and balanced by their walk. Lastly, the key point of the preachers' ethos related to their congregations is that, in their minds during preparation of the sermons, there should always be recognition of the reality of a listening audience.

Chapter 7 focuses on ethos related to two areas: firstly, the development of the preachers' ethos. Secondly, some suggestions for the development of their ethos concern five aspects, such as their vocation, spirituality, reading, prayer and "glory".

OPSOMMING

Die doel van hierdie studie is om die belangrikheid van predikers se etos in prediking uit te lig. Oor prediking bestaan daar baie hedendaagse kritiek. Die kwynende invloed van prediking word deur sommige aan die deur van die prediker se eie persoonlike etos gelê.

Dus, wat beteken etos met betrekking tot die prediker? Hierdie vraag vorm deel van die kern van hierdie navorsing. Die verhouding tussen etos en prediking is duidelik van groot belang.

Hoofstuk 2 ondersoek die basiese konsep van 'n prediker met betrekking tot vyf sleutel aspekte: Eerstens, die definisie van "prediker" is dat hy/sy 'n dienaar van die Woord en van God is. Tweedens, die betekenis van die prediker se roeping is soos dié van Jesus Christus en die uitgangspunt is dat die prediker woorde lei tot die gemeente se verlossing. Derdens, in die praktyk word 'n prediker dikwels as 'n ambassadeur, profeet, getuie, herder, rentmeester, boodskapper of woordvoerder beskryf. Vierdens, in prediking is die prediker se taak dié van 'n bemiddelaar tussen God en mens, 'n vertolker van die Bybel vir die gemeentelede en om hulle te inspireer om 'n meer sinvolle lewe te lei. Laastens het die navorser klem gelê op die belang van prediking met betrekking tot ses areas: die prediker, die gemeente, die kerk, aanbidding, die Christendom en die wêreld.

Hoofstuk 3 ondersoek sekere voorlopige navorsing op huidige prediking in krisis. In 'n sekere sin bejeën (post)moderne mense, soos sosiale wetenskaplikes, kommunikasie kundiges, teoloë en hulle in die kerkbanke, prediking met negatiwiteit. Elke groep het sy eie fokus van kritiek, maar wat dit ookal mag wees, hulle stem almal saam dat iets ernstigs verkeerd is met vandag se preke.

Hoofstuk 4 ondersoek die algemene omstandighede van die kerk en prediking, asook die prediker in die Koreaanse konteks, met die fokus op die volgende vier aspekte. Eerstens, die Koreaanse Kerk is een van die verstommende fenomene in die Christendom se onlangse geskiedenis. Ongelukkig het dié Kerk se groei inderdaad opgehou en het selfs 'n agteruitgang getoon sedert die middel 90s. Tweedens, 'n noukeurige studie van Koreaanse prediking het bewys dat hierdie teologiese instelling nie sterk is nie en dat 'n vorm van bevooroordeelde eksegese van die Bybel tans versprei. Derdens, in die Koreaanse konteks het Koreaanse

predikers buitensporige outoriteit; hulle is verantwoordelik vir vele aktiwiteite en 'n redelike basis vir hul outoriteit is nodig. Laastens word geargumenteer dat, binne die Koreaanse konteks, die prediker se "redelike outoriteit" die Woord van God as basis moet behou.

Hoofstuk 5 demonstreer drie sleutel aspekte van die prediker se etos deur die volgende uit te lig: eerstens, drie soorte strukturele rigsnoere, naamlik oorreding deur morele karakter (*etos*); oorreding deur die hoorder in 'n sekere emosionele gemoedstoestand (*patos*) te plaas; en oorreding deur die toespraak self, wanneer die waarheid of oënskynlike waarheid (*logos*) bepaal is. Tweedens, 'n belangrike reël vir die prediker se etos is dat luisteraars die spreker vertrou en aan hom/haar verbind voel. Derdens, houding as 'n belangrike element wat gehore beïnvloed om die spreker se karakter te beoordeel.

Hoofstuk 6 bied vier sleutel aspekte van krisisprediking met betrekking tot die prediker se etos, naamlik: eerstens, predikers kan nie van hul prediking geskei word nie. Tweedens, 'n groot deel van die voorbereiding vir prediking is die predikers se eie persoonlike voorbereiding – impak vanaf die kansel is inderdaad verbind aan hul eie morele karakter en etos. Derdens is die belangrikste aspek van die predikers se etos die gevaar van hul moontlike teenstrydige leefwyse. Predikers se woorde moet ondersteun en gebalanseer word deur hul optrede. Laastens, die sleutelpunt van die predikers se etos, wat betref hul gemeentes, is dat daar tydens die preekvoorbereiding 'n voortdurende bewussyn van die realiteit van 'n luisterende gehoor moet wees.

Hoofstuk 7 fokus op twee areas: eerstens, die ontwikkeling van predikers se etos. Tweedens, 'n paar voorstelle vir die ontwikkeling van hierdie etos met betrekking tot vyf aspekte, naamlik predikers se roeping, spiritualiteit, leeswerk, gebed en "heeklikheid".

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1.1   The pastoral background

Many contemporary Korean preachers, including the researcher, realize that (what could be called) a crisis in preaching has developed in Korea. What was once accepted without question is now being progressively criticized, as the dwindling church attendance also illustrates (cf. Lee 1997:13). In Korea and abroad, many preachers and scholars want to examine the reason for this crisis in preaching to find solutions to overcome this situation. For instance, some preachers make an effort to develop various ways of communication by also considering the situation of the congregation to whom the sermon is to be addressed (cf. Hogan & Reid 1999). They also wish to explore effective methods of delivery, such as narrative, the inductive method, and so forth (cf. Troeger 2005). Of course, all of these developments are of paramount importance for preaching. However, the researcher will focus on preachers themselves who are the mediators of the message. For this reason, he will focus his research on the *ethos of the preacher*.

In the Korean context, the authority of preachers has usually remained unquestioned, and the Korean society is still characterized as a patriarchal hierarchy.

In spite of rapid Westernization, this society retains its ancient structural hierarchy and a preacher's authority emanates from this very structure (Lee 1997:92-93). One could say that the "ethos" of Korean preachers has always been a type of *systemic ethos*, taking its cues from the ancient patriarchal hierarchy.

The Korean preacher is often still regarded as a father figure - as the head of the family. However, the researcher believes that the preacher's authority does not automatically come with the title or systemic position, but that true authority comes from a certain ethos. Of course, the question is: What does "ethos" mean? And, furthermore, can it be evaluated or developed apart from the (societal) systems in which it operates?

1.1.2   The terminological background

What does ethos mean? This term is difficult to define accurately. According to Kraus (2005:73), ethos (i.e. the speaker's character) should be regarded as an efficient means of persuasion through eloquence.

Much has been written about the classic understandings of ethos. For instance, Carey (1996:406) comments, "For Aristotle the use of ethos, moral character, as a means of persuasion consists in creating through the speech a character that will induce the required degree of trust on the part of the hearer." In the same vein, Cunningham (1991:98) argues, "According to Aristotle, one of the three means of persuasion is the moral character (ethos) of the speaker. Moral character may almost be called the most potent means of persuasion." Furthermore,

Marshall (2005:90) is of the opinion that, "When Cicero writes that the best way to persuade an audience that you are good is to be good, he notes that the character, principles, conduct, and course of life of litigants are extremely important to the success of an oration." According to Hogan and Reid (1999:30), Quintilian's definition was purposefully less complex than that of Aristotle. He defined oratory in a way that was later turned into a simple Latin dictum: *vir bonus dicendi peritus* – "the good man speaking well." Regarding the influence of the preacher's ethos on preaching, whatever the shape of the sermon, congregational responses exhibit the truth of Aristotle's observation: *Who* preaches is the most essential component for the receptivity of the Gospel. Virtue does matter (Hogan & Reid 1999:55).

Arguing from a pastoral viewpoint, Louw (2008:267) underlines the previous connection between ethos and receptivity as follows: "Building a relationship of trust and confidentiality in the pastoral relationship is essentially an ethical issue. The human dignity of the other is at stake here because it is connected to the notion of acceptance."

According to Lawrie (2005:21), ethos constitutes proof by appeal to the speaker's character. The audience's perception of the speaker's moral character would aid or hinder persuasion.

This study uses the term "ethos" as a combined meaning of character and personality. The researcher believes that this is important for preaching. Roen (1989:26) observes, "But let us narrow our vision to consider only its ethos, the manner in which the preacher expresses his own character and personality through

the words of the sermon."

So, what does ethos mean in relation to the preacher? This question forms part of the core of this study. Clearly, the relationship between ethos and preaching is of great significance. Hulse (1986:62) even states, "The practice of preaching can never be divorced from the person of the preacher." Campbell (2002:158) believes that preachers are called fundamentally to be keepers of the Word, both in the pulpit and in their lives; preaching and life are inseparable. According to him, it follows that sermons cannot be detached from their preachers. In preaching, the ethos of the preacher remains paramount.

1.2   THE MAIN PROBLEM

Earlier, the researcher referred to the so-called crisis in preaching. There are many voices of contemporary critique on preaching. According to Cilliers (2004:6-17), there are at least four kinds of contemporary critique:

1) *Critique from the social sciences*. The church no longer represents the heart of each town or city, no longer is respected as an authoritative voice in parliament, nor is it still the fountain of all truth under the sun. Preaching no longer is accepted as obvious.

2) *Critique from the communication sciences*. The culture of the image is replacing the culture of books. In fact, some state that we have entered an era in which the art of reading may become an anachronism.

3) *Critique from the theological sciences.* In the aftermath of Barth, the basic questions of many theologians have become: is the sermon really still appropriate? And, can preaching really be called the Word of God?

4) *Critique from the church pews.* Large numbers of congregants suffer in silence, or declare that preaching is, or has become, boring, irrelevant and disappointing and many church members vote with their feet by leaving the church. In fact, according to Stott (1982:50), the prophets of doom in today's church confidently predict that the day of preaching is over. As noted before, this is also a tendency in the contemporary Korean Church.

The point is that preaching now seemingly has to "compete" in a new era of communication. In this regard Mitchell (2005:156) comments:

> *Television has also contributed toward a change in how we expect to be spoken to in the public sphere. The language of television is markedly different from the language of the Victorian pulpit. It has also influenced expectations about the length, style and content of public discourse.*

This research will focus on the influence of preachers' ethos on their sermons in terms of the following two questions:

1.2.1 What is the cause of the crisis in preaching?

The researcher believes that one reason for the crisis in preaching resides in the

preachers themselves. According to Cunningham (1991:99), the audience's confidence in a preacher can be influenced in a number of different ways. As a matter of fact, listeners may form an opinion of the speaker's character even before they hear the speech. Green (1972:55) says, "Preaching is the proclamation of the Word of God to men by men anointed of God. Yet proclamation is being downgraded even though the people are still willing to listen. Much of the fault is in the sender and not in the receiver." According to Thielicke (1965:15), people are asking, "Where can I find credible witnesses?" The researcher believes that proclamation is being downgraded although the people are still willing to listen. It can be argued that much of the fault, indeed, lies in the sender, not in the receiver.

Cox (1965:122) states, "Our preaching today is powerless." The reason is the common claim that the ministers themselves do not live a courageous, i.e. ethical, life (Reid 1967:29).

1.2.2 How does the preacher's ethos relate to the overcoming of this crisis?

In his influential book, *Preacher and cross: Person and message in Theology and rhetoric,* Andre Resner (1999:45) explains Chrysostom's argument that the preacher's use of rhetoric is necessary because of human weakness, and further concludes that people need more than "the simple gospel." Rhetorical enrichment provides this "more." In fact, the Gospel is imbedded in (enriched) rhetoric, and rhetoric is principally linked to ethos.

1.2.3 Summary of research question

The main questions that this thesis wishes to ask are: What is the cause of the crisis in preaching? And, how does the preacher's ethos relate to the overcoming of this crisis? In order to support the main questions, the following subsidiary questions are required:

What are the causes of the crisis in contemporary preaching? (Chapter 3)

What is the relationship between rhetoric and preaching? (Chapter 5)

How does the preacher's ethos affect the congregation's reception of the Word? (Chapter 6)

Preaching has always been placed at the very heart of the Protestant Church. Whenever preaching made great progress, there has always been an amazing growth of the Church. On the contrary, whenever preaching deteriorated, the Church declined. Thus, many church leaders believe that the Church's growth is the product of great preaching. Actually, proclaiming the Word of God and church growth are related to each other as cause and effect. Preaching and church always progress or grind to a halt together.

In recent decades, it has often been pointed out that most churches in this world are not at all in good health today; they really are in a crisis. What is the explanation for this? One could say that there are some painful problems in the pulpit. In several ways, the analyses of experts on preaching (Wenger 2009, Cannon 2003, Cilliers 2004, Shin 2004, Jensen 1994) provide a number of reasons for this problem. However, in this thesis, one main cause will be specially emphasized among many

other causes of the preaching problem in the contemporary church. That is, the preacher's poor moral character and life, which we call the 'ethos.'

Throughout the history of homiletical theory, the efficacy problem has been at the heart of the problem of describing and understanding the nature of the preacher's person, and continues to be at the heart of the problem in contemporary homiletical theory. Stated differently, effectiveness in the pulpit is indeed tied to the life, the integrity, the Christian character of the person who interprets the Gospel. Good people are full of their message and will be heard. For this reason, preaching's number one goal is persuasion operating consciously from a rhetorical frame of reference.

It said that preaching is personal. The preacher is not an expert in religion to inform interested learners, but a person who shares some of his/her most intimate and profound experiences with others. Accordingly, the preacher should be a person of high credibility because, in this complex age, the congregation is not likely to accept the words of a preacher whose life is not trustworthy.

In regard to the preachers' lifestyle, they must be exemplary in everything, especially in speech, deed, faith and purity. In this way, they will be good leaders of their congregations. Therefore, they can establish an example of their lifestyle by supplying, helping and giving people something that they need. The most important lifestyle of the preacher is in being a model for all the members of his/her congregation for them to note and strive to follow.

1.3   THE AIM OF THE RESEARCH

The aim of this research is to confirm and explore the importance of the preacher's ethos in preaching in order to overcome the crisis in preaching. In order to achieve this aim, the following objectives must be attained:

1)   The researcher will do research on how the preacher's ethos affects the congregation's reception of the Word. It has been said that truth and personality are the fundamentals of all true preaching. Jabusch (1980:13) comments:

> Ethical proof is wrought when the speech is so spoken as to make the speaker credible … that the moral worth of the speaker contributes nothing to his persuasiveness; it might be said that almost the most authoritative of proofs is that supplied by character.

Furthermore, Ward (1992:66) states, "Effective speaking is a transaction between the speaker and an audience in which an audience comes to trust the speaker and thereby accepts the speaker's message." Therefore, preachers must not be mere machines. They must be real persons – good persons, filled with the Holy Spirit and faith. The effect of such a life and such preaching will be that many people will accept the Lord (Acts 11:24).

2)   The researcher will do research on how the *Word of God is mediated through the preacher's personality.* This relationship between human ethos and the Word of

God has formed part of the classical understanding of preaching throughout the ages. For instance, Blackwood (1948:13) argues, "What do we understand by preaching? It means divine truth through personality or the truth of God voiced by a chosen personality to meet human needs." Brooks (1969:5) also maintains, "Preaching is the communication of truth by man to men. It has in it two essential elements, truth and personality."

In a sense, a good preacher produces good preaching. If the Christian Church hopes to be blessed with good preaching on Sundays, it must be deeply concerned with its preachers' characters, and the quality of their lives on the other days of the week.

3)   In addition to the above-mentioned two areas of research, the researcher aims to investigate the ways in which *ethos is being formed within systems*. Here, the question is: How can a new ethos be established within changing systems (or paradigms) in Korea? In order to answer this question, the researcher must attend to some theories on cultural change, and their implications for the formation of ethos.

1.4   THE HYPOTHESIS

The researcher's hypothesis is, firstly, that one reason for the crisis in preaching, especially in the Korean context, is the understanding that preachers have of themselves or, more specifically, in the systemic-ethical role that has been imposed

upon them for many centuries. Secondly, a re-visitation and re-appropriation of the ethos of preachers can play a major role in overcoming the above-mentioned crisis in preaching. Thirdly, this transformation of preachers' ethos cannot take place without addressing the systemic understanding of preaching, i.e. without taking cognizance of hearers'/congregations' understanding of their preachers.

1.5   THE METHOD OF RESEARCH

The framework for the researcher's practical theological methodology will be based on Rick Osmer's latest book, *Practical Theology: An introduction* (2008), in which he poses four practical theological methodological questions, namely: What is happening here? Why is it happening? What should be happening? And, what are we going to do to make it happen? (cf. 13ff). Suffice it to note that these questions correspond to Dingemans's (1996:92-93) four phases: the descriptive; explanatory; normative; and strategic phases.

The researcher opted for Osmer's approach, as it seems to coincide meaningfully with the threefold aim of this research, as stated in 1.3 above. These aims could be described in three keywords, namely *situation (context), homiletics, and transformation.*

Firstly, *situation* is about the question how the hearers' perceptions of the ethos of preachers affect their listening to sermons, and coincide with the question: What is happening here (in Korea)? It also includes Osmer's second question: Why

is it happening – in other words, how is the hierarchical system affecting the listener's perception of the preaching?

Secondly, *homiletics* (the theology of preaching) is about the question how we should understand the fact (faith, mystery) that God's Word is mediated through, *inter alia,* the (ethos of) preachers. This is linked to Osmer's normative question: What should be happening here – in other words: what type of ethos is in fact presupposed within the framework of such a theological (homiletical) understanding of preaching? Moreover, in order to fulfil more effectively the central aim of this study, which focuses on assessing and reframing the preacher's ethos in a Korean context, the researcher attempts to provide an empirical survey in order that the existing ethos and authority of the Korean preachers within a Korean context can be investigated and described

Thirdly, *transformation* is about the question how ethos can be re-appropriated within changing systems. This corresponds to Osmer's fourth question: What are we going to do or set in place in order for systemic change to take place?

With these keywords in mind, the researcher will plan his homiletical study on the influence of the preachers' ethos on their preaching in such a way as to engage Osmer's four practical theological questions.

Therefore, to reach his goals, the researcher will *firstly offer* a concentrated synthetic description, especially pertaining to the understanding of the role of the preacher's ethos, and represent a combination of Osmer's first two questions.

In the *second* (normative) phase, a literature study will be undertaken

concerning the relevant aspects of homiletics being addressed here, followed by the third phase in which the theories and practices of the formation of ethos in systemic paradigms will be scrutinized (Osmer's fourth strategic question).

1.6   THE DELIMITATION

The delimitation of the study is in regard to the following two concerns: research on current preaching in crisis and the rhetorical foundation of the preacher's ethos.

Firstly, as regards the research on current preaching in crisis, there are four major criticisms. In other words, today these come from all sides, not only from social scientists and communication theorists, but also from theologians and congregations, on which the researcher will focus as a whole, especially the theologians, who play a key role in overcoming the preaching in crisis.

The second delimitation must be made in connection with the sphere of the study of the preacher's ethos. This study focuses on the importance of the preacher's ethos in preaching.

CHAPTER TWO

BASIC STUDY OF THE PREACHER

Since the present chapter examines the preachers themselves, the researcher wants to present a basic concept of them. Firstly, a definition of "preacher" is offered. Secondly, the importance of the preacher is discussed. Thirdly, the preacher's functional names are explored. Fourthly, the focus is on the role of the preacher in preaching. Finally, the researcher turns to the significance of preaching.

2.1   WHO IS THE PREACHER?

In this section, the definition of "preacher" will be established. It is obvious that the preacher's occupation cannot be carelessly entered into, nor can it be regarded simply as an option among the accessible vocations for people of any era. The preacher's standards are extraordinarily high, unusually demanding and most idealistic. Preachers find their own significance and calling only in relation to the nature of God.

Practically speaking, ministers are primarily preachers. They may be called upon to be counsellors, administrators, or hold many other vocations, but their primary task is to deliver the Word of God. Kim (1999:17) states, "A preacher is a person who has been called by God in order to proclaim the Word of God." Waznak

(1983:55) also comments, "The preacher is called to proclaim the Gospel once delivered to the saints. The preacher tells again the wonderful story of how God has always been with and for his people and how the good news still breaks through in our lives today, even in the midst of news that is very bad."

Above all, preachers are persons whom God calls to be his collaborator in spreading his Kingdom on earth. As such, they must possess those same qualities that enable an instrument to perform its duties. Jabusch (1980:14-15) observes:

> Jesus, for example, "spoke to them of the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:11). Paul would speak of "the mystery of Christ" (Col 4:3). There is a prophetic character to much of what is spoken: the word of the Lord, the word of the good news, the word of salvation and the cross, the word of grace and the Kingdom. These preachers were speakers in the name of God.

Wilson (1995:46-47) also remarks, "The preacher both represents the authority of the church, and is the one whom Christ uses in a particular way to speak Christ's authority to our lives." Stated differently, preachers are servants of the Word and academic specialists in preaching, and speech communications in ministry are servants of the servants of the Word. For this reason, one can argue that the preacher is a servant of the Word and of God.

As Coggan (1964:52,58) points out, St. Paul is an "evangelist." Although this noun is rare in the New Testament, the verb is very common in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Gospel of Luke. The cognate noun *evangelion* is also quite

common in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, with both the noun and the verb occurring frequently in the Pauline epistles. This is a word in which Paul glories more than any other, and which he claims repeatedly with strong emphasis.

In conclusion, the preacher is expected to be a person of both the Word and God to proclaim the message to the congregation. Because preaching is a noble task (Luthi & Thurneysen 1957:25), a preacher must be a noble person.

Thus far, we have briefly examined the definition of a "preacher." In the following section, the preacher's importance will be highlighted.

2.2   THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PREACHER

The previous section focused on finding a definition of "preacher" related to the current study of the preacher. This section will investigate the importance of the preacher by concentrating on two points: the preacher's work being similar to that of Jesus Christ, and his/her words leading to the congregation's salvation. As regards the importance of the preacher, Sangster (1949:14-15) explicates, "Commissioned of God to teach the word! A herald of the great King! A witness of the Eternal Gospel! Could any work be more high and holy? To this supreme task God sent His only begotten Son."

2.2.1   The preacher's work is like that of Jesus Christ

It could be argued that Jesus Himself was a preacher and that He devoted much of

his energy to preaching. Not only did Christ make preaching important in his own region, but He also commanded his disciples to preach. It is significant that, in his final meeting with his apostles, He spoke about preaching. According to White (1973:6), "Christianity began not with a book but with a preaching. Paul had of course made the point already: It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

Moreover, the persons whom God calls to proclaim the Gospel ought to stand out as being significant in the community and all that they do for Christ, and the church should heed their preaching. Sleeth (1964:19) observes, "It is quite clear that Jesus himself was a proclaimer of the gospel, a preacher of the Word of God, and an announcer of the inauguration of God's kingdom." Therefore, the church must preach because God has commissioned it to do so (Collier 1988:89).

2.2.2 The preacher's words lead to the salvation of the congregation

As important as preachers are in this process, they still remain only the channel through which God's message is delivered to the hearts of person. Willimon (2000:37) states:

> Who is more powerful than a pastor? The pastor stands as priest, as mediator between people and God. The pastor serves the body and blood of Christ at the Lord's Table, holds the keys that bind and loose sin, and is steward of the mysteries of God. We must not let those who are ignorant of themselves be in the morally demanding role of pastor.

In addition, Gossip (1968:112) remarks, "The motive of the preacher is the salvation of the hearer."

In a sense, preachers should be faithful interpreters of Scripture because they are the persons whose privilege it is to bridge the apparent gap between the Bible and the modern world by demonstrating the relevance of Scripture to parishioners' lives. Moreover, Baxter (1956:30) adds, "A graceless, inexperienced preacher is one of the most unhappy creatures upon earth." According to Jackson (1961:94), the words of the preacher are not independent of the service of worship, but are a part of its perspective-giving, appreciation-perceiving and insight-creating disciplines of the human spirit.

Consequently, the preacher's word is the Word of God in the form of the word of the contemporary church (Hill 1983:114). As has been shown, preachers are extremely important, as their work is similar to that of Jesus Christ and their words lead to the salvation of the people who attend the Sunday worship. Suffice it to note that no occupation has as high and huge potential of responsibility as that of the preacher of God's Word.

The next section will highlight the functional names of preachers – their identity.

2.3　THE FUNCTIONAL NAMES OF THE PREACHER

As Bartlett (1962:22) observes, many functional names are given to the preacher: "We call him churchman, pastor, priest, parson, man of God, or divine, each reflecting the very identities we have mentioned. They have become a part of our language. Is any of them sufficient?" Moreover, all want to be good preachers; they would like to grip and hold and move humans, and the more the better (Gossip 1968:109). It is very important that all ministers realize these names if they wish to become good preachers.
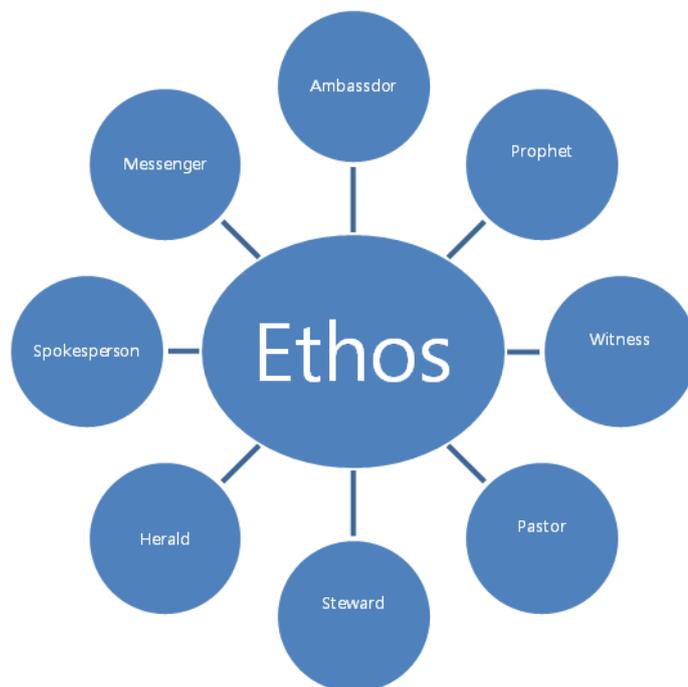
The functional names of the preacher

This research aims to explain the interaction between the preacher's ethos and his/her functional names. When we think of the preacher's ethos, there is interplay for mutual benefit. For example, "ambassador" affects the preacher's ethos. To be a

good "prophet," he/she should keep the ethos. "Witness" also affects the preacher's ethos. To become a faithful "pastor," he/she should carry on the ethos. The image of "steward" also affects the preacher's ethos. To be a good "herald," he/she should keep the ethos. "Spokesperson" also affects the preacher's ethos. To be a good "messenger," he/she should remain a preacher with ethos.

Some preliminary work toward explaining the functional names of the preacher should be done here and suggesting the role of the preaching in preaching and the significance of preaching ought to be understood as making the preachers themselves clear. This backdrop of the basic study of the preacher will prove the preachers themselves.

2.3.1   Ambassador

It would not be far-fetched to assume that the preacher of the Gospel is an ambassador for Christ. Black (1977:30) states, "God has chosen us for His ambassadors. In one sense, God has just to take us as we are. It is His glory that He can make us more than we are. If we allow the Spirit of God to work through us, even our weakness may become our strength." Ambassadors, indeed, are the official representatives of their sovereign or government. Those who sent them charge them with authority, and they have the full right to speak and act on their senders' behalf. Thus, there could be no more appropriate word to describe the preacher of Christ's Gospel.

Coggan (1964:54) also writes, "St. Paul is an ambassador. In one of his less

known books: *The Disciple*, the late Dr. T.R. Glover has a chapter entitled 'The Ambassador.' There he points out how, since the rise of the great Macedonian dynasties that succeeded to the Empire of Alexander, diplomacy has been to the fore, and the ambassador had been a figure of importance." According to Colquhoun (1979:32), as ambassadors, preachers stand in God's stead; they speak in his name; their Word is not their own but his and must be received, not as the word of man but, as it is in truth, the Word of God. For this reason, "ambassador" is the first functional name for the preacher. Tisdale (1998:7) states, "Preach with urgency and conviction." This implies that preachers should be steadfast in delivering their message.

2.3.2   Prophet

Another name for a preacher is "prophet." According to Stalker (1967:34),

> One of the commonest names of a prophet in the Old Testament is a man of God. Through constant use this term has lost its meaning for us. But it meant exactly what it said: that the prophet was not his own, but God's man; he belonged to God, who could send him wherever He wished and do with him whatever He would. It was the same idea that St. Paul expressed, when he called himself, as he loved to do, the slave of Jesus Christ."

In addition, the modern preacher should have the heart of a prophet. It goes without saying that the purpose of a sermon is to offer a certain message of the Gospel in a most imperfect world. Certainty in preaching is especially important today because of

two characteristics of the world: pluralism and relativism. Adams (1982:153) maintains, "The minister is not a parrot to repeat in attractive fashion the views and opinions held by his listeners. He is a prophet of the eternal God, to interpret all of life in terms of ultimate values."

It follows that our human words are the vehicle through which the Word of God is communicated. As Packer (1990:187) points out, the authentic authority of the pulpit is the authority, not of the preacher's eloquence, experience or expertise, but of God speaking in Scripture through what preachers say as they explain and apply a text.

2.3.3   Witness

Another functional name of the preacher can be "witness." God has commissioned the church to bear witness to the Gospel, and has promised that the divine Word of God will be heard through human proclamation. Who can be a witness? Some scholars provide good answers. Caemmerer (1959:11) describes a witness as "a person who has, himself, been present in an event and who communicates the meaning of that event to other people." According to Long (2005A:46-47), witness is a legal term - a witness appears in the courtroom as part of a trial. He/she is placed on the stand because of two credentials: this witness has seen something and is willing to tell the truth about it.

This implies that preachers are God's mouthpieces, faithful messengers who are commissioned to bear witness to what they have heard. Adams (1982:145) also

states, "It is important, then, that the pastor who wants to be a preacher knows what he believes and why he believes it, that he has a faith, and unshakeable faith in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." In connection with the concept of witness, John the Baptist was popular because he was persuasive; and the most attractive preachers today are those who are most courageous in their antagonism to existing evils. Therefore, the preacher has been caught up in the mind of a witness. It follows that true preachers are witnesses; they incessantly testify to Christ.

2.3.4   Pastor

A popular modern name for a preacher can be "pastor." Ireson (1982:21) states, "Note that the words 'pastor' and 'pastoral' refer primarily to food, pasture." According to Turnbull (1968:107), pastors need shepherds' hearts if they are to preach in our contemporary scene. The New Testament makes much of the image of Christ as the Good Shepherd who is the chief and great shepherd. In his influential book, *The witness of preaching*, Long (2005A:28-29) claims that the pastor's image moves all the way to the other end of the preaching spectrum and focuses on the listener, and on the impact of the sermon upon the hearer. In short, the pastor aims the sermon at the listener, expressly shaping the sermon so that something good might happen to, and for, the hearers.

To a certain extent, contemporary preachers must account for the congregation's social, physical, mental and moral needs while serving as pastors who seek to bring spiritual renewal and wholeness to the people. Nevertheless, the preacher

should preach to the congregation in such a way that it helps people to know how to live faithful lives in their own particular time and place in history.

It follows that "pastor" remains the most accurate term. The Lord Jesus called Himself "the Good Shepherd" (Stott 1982:117).

2.3.5 Steward

Another functional name of the preacher is "steward." It is argued that the preacher should be a steward of God's revealed mysteries, called - not to be brilliant and original - but diligent and faithful. Stott (1967:15) states:

> The Christian preacher's message, therefore, is derived neither directly from the mouth of God, as if he were a prophet or apostle, nor from his own mind, like the false prophets, nor undigested from the minds and mouths of other men, like the babbler, but from the once revealed and now recorded Word of God, of which he is a privileged steward.

This implies that preachers are to be neither speculators who invent new doctrines that please them, nor editors who excise old doctrines that displease them, but stewards, God's stewards, who faithfully dispense to God's household the truths committed to them in the Bible. In other words, to copy and to mimic is to do something destructive to one's own God-given uniqueness. Consequently, we can learn from poor, fair, good and excellent preachers, but not one of them is to be imitated. David cannot fight in Saul's armour (Craddock 1985:20).

2.3.6 Herald

Another functional name for the preacher is "herald." Coggan (1964:48-49) states:

> Saint Paul is a herald. This word is frequent, in its verbal form, in the Pauline writings. What is its meaning? The Grimm-Thayer New Testament lexicon defines it thus: 'A herald, a messenger vested with public authority, who conveyed the official messages of kings, magistrates, princes, military commanders, or who gave a public summons or demand, and performed various other duties.'

This means that, when the Word of God is read, we hear Him speaking. When this Word is proclaimed, we hear God speaking through the Holy Spirit and through a person. Collier (1988:110-111) comments, "For Barth, the preacher was a herald of God, with the incredible task of listening to a portion of the Bible, setting aside one's own presuppositions, desires and prejudices, then putting the message into clear words for the listening Church." According to Miller (1996:36), the sermon's longing is not just to speak to the quiet heart, but to quiet the noise in the busy heart.

2.3.7 Spokesperson

Another functional name for the preacher can be "spokesperson." Sleeth (1986:2) states, "The church has always claimed that in some unique way the preacher is proclaiming a Word from God and is God's spokesperson." Furthermore, the church

is called to transform society. It is a challenge for preachers to transform society as a spokespeople for the church and, at times, they may stand in judgment on social sin or, at least, bring a perspective to society.

According to Luccock (1954:146), God is the only lasting theme of Christian preaching.

2.3.8 Messenger

A final functional name for the preacher is "messenger." Roen (1989:31) states, "The preacher is the faithful messenger who delivers to God's people His judgment as well as His promise." Practically speaking, preaching was one of the crucial modes of teaching in all wings of the Reformation and teaching is preeminent in Luther's homiletics. First of all, a good preacher must be able to teach correctly and in an orderly manner. The preacher is to teach Christ and nothing else.

Holland (1980:112) believes that God speaks through preaching, which is revelation. The most significant preaching has grown out of a Word-of-God theology of preaching; it is preaching that communicates God's Word to humankind through human speech. As a closing comment, it must be mentioned that the mystery of preaching is that God uses human words to express his divine Word.

This section endeavoured to provide some functional names for the preacher. Killinger (1985:187) observes:

Preaching is an enormous responsibility. In any congregation there are dozens of people with diverse personal needs. They come in many moods,

from vastly differing backgrounds, and sit there before us. Some faces are turned up in hopelessness, others in defiance. 'Entertain us,' say some of them. 'Inform us,' say others. 'Feed us,' say all. The preacher too is human. How can he or she meet all these requirements in a single sermon of fifteen or twenty minutes?

Thus far, we have analysed functional names for a preacher. The following section will investigate the role of the preacher in preaching.

2.4   THE ROLE OF THE PREACHER IN PREACHING

To speak of "the role of the preacher" is to examine the basis for preaching. Much concern in homiletics has been for the "how," with a recent concern for the "what." However, a discussion of the role focuses on the "why" of preaching. Michonneau and Varillon (1965:43) state:

As we stand in the pulpit, certain insights, ideas, phrases and comparisons occur to us as if spontaneously. In reality, they are inspired by God, of course, but also by the listeners with whom we are fully united and perfectly sympathetic. That, too, is the state of grace for preaching.

According to Randolph (1969:44-45), a true sermon is an address to particular people at a particular time in a particular place; it is not a general word to the

universe.

Therefore, this section will investigate the role of the preacher in preaching by focusing on two points:

(1)   the preacher as a mediator between God and humans, and

(2)   the preacher as an interpreter of the Bible to the congregation.

2.4.1   The preacher as a mediator between God and humans

Preachers are partners of God in his continuing redemptive activity, sharers in his responsibility for the salvation of the world. As Bowie (1954:17) observes, "Consider the limitless significance of that fact. The preacher is not an unattached and unrelated individual, expatiating upon some amiable but perhaps unimportant ideas of his own. He is a channel of communication from the living God to the living souls who are there before him." Clearly, if preachers are to be mediators of the true God's words and deeds to their people, they must be interpreters of the one story through which God has revealed Himself – the story of the Bible. Through their words, that story must become their people's story, for in it the latter are judged, redeemed and made citizens of that kingdom of God that has become a reality in Jesus Christ.

Jones (1958:21) states, "A preacher is striving to bring about a meeting between the divine mind and human minds." In other words, as preachers, their task is to bring people into the presence of the God who has fully revealed Himself in the person of Jesus Christ. Otherwise, their proclamation will only be good advice or nice words, but fail to transform people's lives. According to Buttrick (1988:251),

most dictionaries define preaching in a bare-bones way as "religious discourse," sometimes adding that sermons are preached to "religious communities." Presumably, religious communities are people who, at a minimum, accept some sort of God-hypothesis. Therefore, we begin with two terms: God-talk and religious people. In speech, a preacher stands between the performance of some sort of mediation; that is, a preacher talks to people about God.

In a sense, some sermons are intended to confront sinners while others attempt to offer comfort and hope. Each of these varied sermons should have been based on the central theme that Jesus Christ is the answer. They vary at the point of raising the question to which He is the answer. Quayle (1979:132) defines effective preaching "as the art of bringing men into the mood of God and keeping them there." As Nichols (1987:112) points out, a good many of preachers, for instance, were no doubt taught that use of the first person pronoun is a risky business in a sermon and that whatever truth is to be had from the pulpit would come from a faithful exegesis of the text, with careful de-emphasis of the preacher's own agendas.

Furthermore, the preacher's role is to persuade, convert and to fill hearts with God's love (Watermulder 1982:60). Ireson (1982:19) asks, "What does the preacher think he is doing when he goes into the pulpit or stands in front of the altar to deliver his sermon?" The Bible is creative of sermons in every age. God's Word comes to us through biblical words, and we too are sent out to proclaim the Gospel of grace. According to Sweazey (1976:18), when ministers tell about Jesus Christ from the pulpit, they are not speaking of someone who is dead and gone, they are offering an

encounter with the living Lord. Jesus Christ is present in the church, comes down the aisle, moves along the pews, enters into the people's consciousness, is ready to reconcile them with God and with each other to give new life, joy, beauty, and strength, and is ready to make their minds like his.

In short, the biblical story becomes the preachers' story through their recalling it and it is recapitulated in their experience (Achtemeier 1980:18). Firet (1986:29) also states that, "When God comes in his word, then by that token salvation is there; then people are being healed and situated in the peace, the righteous, and the life of the Kingdom. Now pastoral role-fulfillment mediates the coming of God in his word: i.e., ministry of mediation which serves the realization of salvation." As a result, it is the preachers' prime business to present this truth to people, and it is their fundamental duty for themselves to become possessed of this truth, that they may present it to others and so save their souls. Moreover, it is the preacher's great task to show people their state as it is before God and to chase them from every refuge in which they hide. Stated differently, proclaiming faith in Christ means showing sinners how perfectly the Lord meets their needs.

Not surprisingly, for Calvin, preaching was the means of God's contemporary self-revelation and the preacher's preaching voice was God's voice - listen to his words (Buttrick 1994:22).

2.4.2   The preacher is an interpreter of the Bible for the congregation

Here, the preacher's task is viewed as that of reinterpreting the content of God's

Word based on present-day experience. According to Jabusch (1980:11), Thomas Aquinas felt that the preacher's task is to contemplate and to bring to others what has been contemplated. Browne (1976:19) also observes, "The preacher's task is to know doctrine in terms of life." As Green (1972:57) points out, a focus on the minister's calling and task points to his responsibility as a person of God who speaks the Word of the Lord. Preaching and teaching are linked in many ways, but preaching must have priority. Preaching must not be talk about Christianity; it is to be a message about God's acts.

Stated differently, the preacher's task is to close the gap between what the Bible offers and the people's needs. Bartow (1997:141) says, "God is the Agent of agents, the Creator of creators, the Rhetor of rhetors, the Performer of performers, and that what Christian preachers are called to do is to interpret responsibly – that is, under the direction of the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures." As Willimon and Lischer (1995:449) point out, the Word must first be allowed to do its transforming action in the preacher. There must be personal wrestling with the questions: What is God's word for me? What is God's Word for us? Herein lies the difference between placid, prosaic preaching and preaching with power.

Moreover, preaching that deals with texts of Scripture, not merely as documents to be reconstructed as history, but as worlds of meaning evoked and engaged in living speech, is present-tense preaching. Suffice it to note that it may deal with the past and it may look to the future. In a sense, the preacher's duty is to press the Bible home to the hearts of the congregation. As Parker (1992:45) observes, "The

preacher's immediate aim is that the message of the passage he is expounding shall be understood and accepted as truth by the congregation." Barth (1964:68) surmises that, since God wills to utter his own truth, his Word, preachers must not adulterate that truth by adding their own knowledge or art. It is argued that those 25 minutes of uninterrupted access to the minds of a crowd of listeners are the preachers' great chance to do what needs to be done (Sweazey 1976:9).

Thus, the preacher should be one who explains the Bible by laying open the text to public view in order to set forth its meaning, explain what is difficult to understand, and make an appropriate application.

2.4.3   The preacher should make the congregation live a more fruitful life

The preacher is fully aware that there are members in his congregation who have come to the worship service with a sense of guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness or despair, while others have come with inquiring minds and are concerned with the problems of life and, of course, human existence. Luccock (1928:23) states, "Our task as preachers is to make Jesus live in the minds and hearts of men." Buttrick (1988:255) observes, "Preachers do not simply address human beings in the world, but a being-saved community in the world." According to Sweazey (1976:23), the preacher's weekly task is to inspire seasoned Christians to begin to live in a new way by such familiar truths as the reality of the Holy Spirit, the joy of service, and the need to forgive.

Nevertheless, the sermon is a key moment. The worship service is the con-

gregation's largest regular gathering. Thus, the preacher has an amazing opportunity to invite people to grow in faith. Moreover, the preacher's role is to draw the Word of God out of the Bible, so that the congregation may receive his Word with joy. According to Taylor (2003:81), preaching was intended to move auditors and provoke some kind of response. As Hoekema (1989:69) points out, preachers must not merely invite their hearers to believe and repent; they must also build them up in faith.

Speaking practically, preachers are not academics lecturing on ancient history, ancient civilizations, etcetera. They are persons who speak to people who, today, are alive and confronted by the problems of life. According to Packer (1990:188), preaching is teaching plus–plus, that is, an application of truth to life. Therefore, the preacher's responsibility is to get people close to Christ, to live the Christ-like life.

It follows that one of the most fascinating of all the preacher' tasks is to explore both the emptiness of fallen humans and the fullness of Jesus Christ, in order to demonstrate how He can fill their emptiness, lighten their darkness, enrich their poverty, and bring their human aspirations to fulfilment. Edwards (1982:63) says, "Remember that a homily is not just about a thought, but about a thought that makes a difference." As a result, the preacher's task is to enable God's revealed truth to flow out of Scripture into the lives of contemporary people.

2.4.4   The role of being a preacher is the most important task

The servant of the Word must remember that it is not the preacher who preaches; it

is the Holy Spirit who proclaims God's Word in the preacher's words. Sweazey (1976:4) asserts, "The best sermons are likely to be extensions of all the church is doing. The conversation, therapies, and services to the distressed are continued in the pulpit." Furthermore, even the most gifted preachers have moments when they are terrified by the task of preaching. "Why didn't I become a clerk or a truck driver?" they may ask themselves; and, "I can never do what I ought to do as a preacher," they may say in a moment of despair. Killinger (1955:74) also asks, "Will churches open their doors to peoples of different races and backgrounds, seeking to find new life through sharing and serving?"

Moreover, the preacher's duty is to think nobly about humans and persuade them to think nobly about themselves. Almond (1980:1) comments, "Our English word 'Bible' comes from the Greek words 'Biblos' and 'Biblion,' which mean 'the book.' It is called 'Biblos' because of its preeminence over all other books. The Bible is well named. It is the book, The book of books. None other is like it." Moreover, the preacher's responsibility is to deliver the Bible as it was originally given and intended. According to Jackson (1961:94), this primacy of worship is always in preachers' minds as they enter the pulpit, for they are first of all custodians of a sacred tradition.

To a certain extent, preachers of the Gospel are spiritual doctors: they deliver the newborn baby in Christ during the preaching. The work of an obstetrician can be exciting. To watch newborn babies actually see that to which they once were blind is indeed exciting. As Walker (1988:95) points out: eventually my father would come to the evening meal. There would be a strange confidence about him. He would

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sometimes say, 'We shall have a great service tonight. People will be converted.' I discovered he was not often wrong. Once I found the courage to ask, 'How do you know what is going to happen?' I can recall the quiet ring of confidence in his voice: 'I have the assurance of faith.' Where the Word is preached clearly, simply, and compellingly to people in their current situations, there God works among his people. According to Jones (1958:47), "The gospel is man's last best hope."

It should be mentioned that the preachers' duty is not an easy one. However, their task is satisfying: satisfying to give thanks to the Lord for his Name by which He has revealed Himself to person, satisfying to declare to person His steadfast love for them in the morning and his faithfulness to them by night, and, above all, satisfying to be able to sing for joy because of gladness about the works of the Lord (Niles 1958:104). Thus, a preacher should ponder his job. Von Allmen (1962:8) states, "There is no true preaching unless God is at work in it through His Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, indeed, has as His chief ministry to make effective today." The preachers' final thought should be: What would Christ say to the people? That is what the preachers must try to say (Gossip 1968:150). It follows that long after the preaching is over, the sermon still penetrates the hearer's life and thoughts.

Thus far, the preacher's role in preaching has been observed. Therefore, preachers must urge their hearers earnestly and fervently to be converted, trusting that God will enable them to do so. And, when a conversion does occur, preachers as well as their hearers must give God all the praise (Hoekema 1989:115).

2.5   THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PREACHING

The last section of this chapter, which is about the significance of preaching, concentrates on six areas: the preacher, the congregation, the church, the worship, Christianity and the world. As regards the importance of preaching, Lloyd-Jones (1971:186) states, "I desire to emphasize what I regard as the chiefest thing of all – preaching. I cannot emphasize this too much; preaching controls everything and determines the character of everything else." According to Turnbull (1968:133), preaching is a desperate business. Baxter spoke of preaching as a dying man to dying men.

2.5.1   The significance of preaching for the preacher

As regards the significance of preaching, the minister's essential title is "the preacher." This implies that preaching is just one of the things a pastor is called upon to do, but it is a most important task. Grasso (1965:72) states, "At the very root of this mystery, of this union between the divine and human word, there is a positive act of God, who wanted His Word to be communicated by means of the human word." According to Larsen (1992:18), Chrysostom's power may be understood partly in the joy with which he exclaimed that preaching made him well; as soon as he opened his mouth to speak, his weariness was forgotten.

Suffice it to note that preaching is God's very incarnate Word expressed through human lips. If preachers come to realize that preaching is truth, actual truth, flowing through their own personality, weak and frail though it may be, they will

preach with prophetic fire. In other words, in the total life of the ministry, preaching holds the central place. Kroll (1980:15) remarks, "I only regret that I have but one life to give to my preaching." For this reason, the preachers' sermons are a most important part of their performance. Morgan (1974:11) also comments, "The supreme work of the Christian minister is the work of preaching." Therefore, preaching is the most important function in the pastor's overall work. So, the researcher is convinced that preaching is central and highly determinative of what else happens within the ministry.

2.5.2   The significance of preaching for the congregation

Preaching is as necessary for the Christian faith as breathing is for the life of humans. Without the preaching of the Gospel, there is no faith. Jones (1958:19-20) states:

> Preaching may be, should be, and at its best will be, a redemptive deed. A sermon is not a lecture, an essay, a theological dissertation, a discussion of social, political, and world affairs, or instruction in morals, but God's saving approach to the souls of men and women. This is not our human view of it, but God's conception revealed through Christ and the early church.

Runia (1983:32) also maintains, "Calvin had an equally high view of preaching. For him, too, the preachers are mouthpieces of God. He, too, regards preaching itself as a living, apocalyptic, saving event." According to Gerlach and Balge (1978:2), all the tasks that God calls a minister to perform - those of preacher, teacher, pastor,

evangelist and administrator - are important. However, one is primary, i.e. the preparation and delivery of a sermon. It is primary, not because it occupies a central place in the service of worship, but because it is the means by which ministers engages more of their people more often than in any other way. If the sermon is properly prepared and effectively delivered, it plays a more influential role in the lives of God's people than anything else that pastors do.

In a sense, the importance of preaching is still further emphasized when realizing that the very act of proclaiming the Gospel becomes an instrument of God's saving Word. Von Allmen (1962:10) observes, "To gather together His people, to call them to Him, God's chief means is preaching." Miller (1957:26) points out that preaching is not mere speaking, it is an act - it accomplishes something. Furthermore, it never leaves you where it finds you, but makes one either better or worse. In this respect, the sermon seeks to channel God's grace to believers and unbelievers. Hull (1985:48) asserts, "No wonder Ruskin described a sermon as 'thirty minutes to raise the dead.' That is our awesome assignment."

Therefore, preaching offers a Christian interpretation of life. Blackwood (1941:51) states, "Whatever the form, real preaching is vital. It lives. It moves. It leads the hearer to do the will of God." In this regard, true preaching is as indispensable as food, shelter and clothing, for no man can ever live by bread alone (Teikmanis 1964:15).

2.5.3 The significance of preaching for the church

Although the New Testament church was involved in many activities, proclamation always had priority; it was never relegated to a secondary position. According to Cox (1985:265), "Most churches put effective preaching at the top of the list of expectations." Larsen (1992:20) also maintains:

> Indeed it is undeniable that where preaching thrives, the church thrives. Any factor analysis of spiritual health and vitality among the people of God does not fail to show the importance of preaching in the equation. Strong biblical preaching correlates closely with a spiritually effective ministry and witness.

Therefore, preaching is the central, primary, decisive function of the church.

It should be mentioned that a church's health and vigour will always relate to the health and vigour of its preaching. Bonhoeffer (1991:72) avers, "Proclamation is the only means for the renewal of the church in its relationship with the world." According to Watermulder (1982:47), preaching was our Lord's premier activity in his work of salvation. Particularly in the Reformed tradition, where emphasis is put on the centrality of Jesus Christ and the authority of the Bible, preaching is the church's foremost activity.

In fact, Jesus commanded the church to preach. The successful example of apostolic preaching encourages the church to preach. According to Sloyan (1984:12), "The homily must above all be an integral part of the worship service." Holland (1980:117) points out that Jesus commanded us to preach, and preaching will

continue because people, both in- and outside the church, know its influence for good, and do not want it to stop. Rather, the urgency of preaching lies in the command and commission that our Lord gave to his apostles. White (1973:7) remarks, "The decline of preaching brought the decline of the church, as it always does: the clergy becoming indolent and ignorant, the people in their turn became ignorant and faithless."

Therefore, preaching holds a crucial place in the life of the church. Christians do not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds from God's mouth.

2.5.4   The significance of preaching for worship

It goes without saying that preaching is the ordinary way in which God speaks to us in worship. Jones (1958:19) states, "To preach is not merely to say something, but to do something." Niles (1958:115-116) also asserts, "Preaching is invitation to the Supper, one either accepts or misses the feast, and it is terribly important as to which happens." According to Piper (1990:19), God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are the beginning, middle and end in the ministry of preaching.

In a sense, the human word in preaching becomes the vehicle for the Word of God. Wietzke (1988:13) believes that Jesus clarified only one thing for us in a portion of the temptation account – life is to be rooted in God and his Word.

2.5.5   The significance of preaching for Christianity

Preaching is at the heart of Christianity because it has been the chief means of

imparting the saving truths. Brown, Clinard and Northcutt (1963:28-29) state:

> Whenever Christianity has made substantial process great preaching has led the way. In the history of Christianity, there have been five great centuries of growth and development. These same five periods are the five centuries of great preaching: the first with the apostles, the fourth with Chrysostom and Augustine, the thirteenth with Francis of Assisi and Dominic, the sixteenth with Luther and Calvin, the nineteenth with Spurgeon and Maclaren. Contrariwise, whenever preaching has declined, Christianity has become stagnant. In the Dark Ages, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in most countries preaching was weak and ineffective.

Moreover, preaching conveys and explains the saving truths, and helps Christians to continue to grow. Forsyth (1957:3) notes, "With preaching Christianity stands or falls because it is the declaration of a Gospel." According to Broadus (1944:1), preaching is characteristic of Christianity. No other religion has ever made regular and frequent assembling of masses of people to hear religious instruction and exhortation - an integral part of their divine worship.

Furthermore, the real origin of preaching is to be found in God Himself and in his nature. God is not silent, but speaks to humanity. He has made us to think, hear and speak. Larsen (1992:17) comments, "Preaching is a divinely ordained vehicle for the promulgation of the Good News. This fact does not rule out other means, but it

assures us that in all ages of church history preaching will remain a valid central form of communication." In this respect, it is clear that Jesus Himself attached primary importance to his preaching rather than to his miracles. According to Dargan (1954:8), since Christianity became an active force in human affairs, there has been upward and onward movement and one mighty factor in that progress has been preaching.

For this reason, from its beginning through the apostolic period and formation of the canon of Scripture, and during all the centuries up to and including the present century, the church has been engaged in preaching about Jesus within the ministry. Skinner (1973:19) observes, "Preaching is the heart of all Christianity, and is central to all of its evangelism, theology and spiritual life." It follows that, during the rise of the Roman church and especially during the Middle Ages, preaching was obsolete until the Reformers resurrected it.

2.5.6   The significance of preaching for the world

The researcher assumes that the work of preaching affords the most attractive opportunity for usefulness on earth today, and that sermons constitute the chief product of the minister's labours from week to week. Miller (1996:34) states, "People listen to, react to, criticize, or compliment the oral side of our lives, however. The sermon is, therefore, the most important of all speeches to be heard in any community." According to Davis (1962:4), "Preaching is absolutely necessary and completely irreplaceable. There is room for other forms of communication as

supplementary aids, but preaching is the essential way in which the Gospel message is made known to men." Preaching, then, is fundamental and indispensable for the proclamation of the Gospel.

In other words, preaching deserves the highest excellence since it is the chosen instrument of the Saviour of the world, who Himself focused on preaching. Rice (1970:26) comments, "Our experience of the weekly sermon suggests that preaching is rather out of touch with history, both holy history and our present life in the world." Dargan (1954:9) also remarks, "Preaching has profoundly and for the most part wholesomely influenced the morals and customs of mankind." Hence, preaching is the God-ordained means of spreading the Gospel.

Thus far, the significance of preaching has been examined and the argument has been presented that preaching should rank as the noblest work on earth. Hogan (1978:11) states, "The importance of preaching is seen when one consider that 'faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Rom 10:17).'"

Therefore, preaching is God's appointed means for the conversion of sinners, the awakening of the church, and the preservation of the saints. Suffice it to note that where there is true preaching, where the Word is proclaimed in the obedience of faith to the command of the Lord and in the authority of His Spirit, there, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, the most important thing that ever happens upon this earth takes place (Brunner 1947:142).

The researcher continues to believe in preaching and maintains that there is no substitute for it, and no power or sustained version or close fellowship with God in

the church without it (Packer 1986:3).

2.6   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter has been to demonstrate five key aspects of the preacher's basic study: Firstly, the definition of "preacher" is that he/she is the servant of the Word and of God. Secondly, the importance of the preachers' work is similar to that of Jesus Christ and their words lead to the salvation of the congregation. Thirdly, there are many functional names given to the preacher, such as ambassador, prophet, witness, shepherd, steward, herald, spokesperson and messenger. Fourthly, the preachers' role in preaching is that they are mediators between God and humans and interpreters of the Bible to the congregation, and they inspire the congregation to live a more fruitful life. Lastly, the significance of preaching has been highlighted related to six areas: the preacher, the congregation, the church, worship, Christianity and the world.

The next chapter will examine the preliminary research on contemporary preaching in crisis.

CHAPTER THREE

PRELIMINARY RESEARCH ON
CONTEMPORARY PREACHING IN CRISIS

The previous chapter considered the preacher's basic study concerning five aspects. This chapter will investigate preliminary research on current preaching in crisis. In a sense, modern people have a negative perception of preaching. Reid (1967:21) observes, "Preaching and preachers have been under attack for centuries. Today, however, the barrage seems to be growing in frequency and intensity." Moreover, there are those who say that the era of preaching is dead. According to Thielicke (1965:2), preaching itself has decayed and disintegrated to the point where it is close to the stage of dying.

Stated differently, there were critical voices from the past. Many people were dissatisfied with what they hear on Sundays. However, the plight of the contemporary pulpit is very serious and disturbingly real. Furthermore, the causes of this decline include many factors. Cannon (2003:54) states, "We need to make an honest critique of the present preaching situation so that we can know how to get started in the future endeavors of your preaching ministry." Reid (1967:23) also points out that the sermons that the researcher heard were frequently weak. They tended, with exceptions of course, to be long, rambling, dry, uninteresting, and remote from the current realities of life in the 20th century.

The current criticism of preaching can be divided into four major categories: social scientists, communications theorists, theologians, and ordinary people in the pew who criticize preaching. An aim of this chapter is to demonstrate that the personal approach of the preacher is also a reason for the present crisis in preaching.

3.1 CRITIQUE FROM THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

First, the critique of the social scientists. Since they investigate the place and role of the various institutions within human society, their special focus on the sermon should come as no surprise. Hill (1983:121) states, "The crisis of credibility is not really a crisis of faith but one of culture, i.e. one of communicating the Good News in a radically changing cultural context." This section examines critique from the viewpoint of social sciences. To do that, the researcher will firstly demonstrate the features of the postmodernist society and, secondly, the rebellion against holy authority will be investigated.

3.1.1 Features of the postmodernist society

This section will examine features of the postmodernist society, concentrating on two aspects: relativism and pluralism. It goes without saying that the nuances of "preaching" are unconstructive in a postmodernist society. According to Rothaar (1980:18), the verb "preach" has taken on negative connotations in our society.

3.1.1.1 The two major characteristics of postmodernism

As we all recognize today, in a sense, postmodernism of course is a notoriously slippery term that different writers use to mean different things, and sometimes it is used to mean very little. According to Hammond (2007:4), "Postmodernism is an attitude: one which rejects grand narratives purporting to explain historical reality." Budd (2009:520) also comments, "Postmodernism remains a controversial term that simultaneously suggests connection to and departure from modernity to characterize the present moment."

Mannion (2007:6) highlights three distinct eras as follows:

(1)   the classic era (from the Patristic to the Reformation era);

(2)   the modern era (from the 17th to the late 20th century - the so-called "Enlightenment age"); and

(3)   the postmodern era.

Generally speaking, the two major characteristics of post-modernism would be categorized as relativism and pluralism (Cilliers 2004:7).

3.1.1.1.1   Relativism

The premise of postmodernism is that, in our modern world, important foundational elements, such as truth, transcendence, certainty, etcetera, are relative and obsolete. Moreover, post-modernity raises enervating questions for the Christian community. For example, given the pluralism and relativity of perception in the postmodern era,

why should people take seriously the claims of Christianity? Allen (2002:30) observes:

> Post-modernists point out that scientific method does not always result in conclusions that are valid in every time and place. Pluralism results in relativity, that is, the recognition that no single way of thinking about the world is absolute or universally accepted and that all worldviews are partial.

Lim (2002:70) poses the following question: What is postmodernism? It is a movement that began about 50 years ago in architecture and later spread to philosophy and literature. Essentially, it is an (over-) reaction against modernity. It seeks to describe an eclectic world where boundaries are uncertain and things are diverse, shifting and relative. In the world of a postmodernist, "I have my truth, you have your truth but none of us have the absolute truth." Since human experiences are disconcerting and chaotic, there is no appeal for the "grand narrative" of a spiritual or moral nature. To put it differently, everything is possible but nothing is certain.

Today, many ideas, groups and movements exist side by side in the world, each offering good things to those who follow in its way and each competing with the others for loyalty. At the same time, there is no single, commonly accepted external authority by which one movement can be judged as true and another as false. Moreover, there is no such thing as a truth that is absolute and therefore universal in the era of relativism. On the contrary, everything is relative and subjective. Carson (2005:31) observes, "Relativism was the theory of aesthetics that denied absolutism

and insisted that aesthetics is relative to the people holding particular stances regarding what constitutes beauty. Nowadays, relativism dominates the fields of religion and morality as well." Horne (1975:20) points out that the pulpit has often dealt with absolutes, both theological and ethical. Theologically, it has been said that there is no way to God except through Jesus Christ and that no other name has been given by which man can be saved. Ethically, it has often been said that the Ten Commandments are binding on all humans everywhere and at all times, or that love is an ethical absolute. The spirit of relativism challenges these claims.

3.1.1.1.2   Pluralism

With regard to religious pluralism, there is a question of the nature of the relationship between Christianity and the increasing religious pluralism within Europe – especially in view of the growth of Islam in Europe (Jeanrond 2006:183). Moreover, the future of Christianity in Europe will be characterized by religious plurality. Jews, Christians, Muslims and an increasing number of other religious movements and traditions together will shape the religious fabric of an integrated Europe. In his recent article, "The idea of political pluralism," Galston (2009:96) comments that an understanding of social life that comprises multiple sources of authority – individuals, parents, civil associations, faith-based institutions and the state, among others – not one of which is dominant in all purposes, on all occasions. According to Carson (2005:31), pluralism denies that any system offers a complete explanation.

In particular, the truth is multi-faceted and relational, and pluralism in the era

of postmodernism and preaching also appears to be more and more an absolute impossibility (Cilliers 2004:7). Fretheim (2007:46) remarks, "An important factor here is religious pluralism; the Bible's authority competes with other authorities among our increasingly diverse neighbors." As a consequence of this influence, one can deduce that, in a culture of pluralism and relativity, what is the basis for the preacher's claims? Why should people accept a pastor's Christian witness as a point of reference? (Allen, Blaisdell & Johnston 1997:35).

3.1.1.2 The main characteristics of the current society

This subsection will consider the main characteristics of the current society while focusing on four areas: digital, complicated, scientific and personal.

3.1.1.2.1 The present society is digital

We live in a different world today. In a word, we are in a digital age. This world has experienced great cultural changes, such as fast-food chains, the quick-fix mentality of modern consumers, a digitalized mindset, play stations, cellular telephones with wireless application protocols, the internet, etcetera, becoming very common. Howe (1967:11) states:

> The explosion of technology has produced so many changes in our society that none of us is able fully to keep up with them. As a result of technological advance, we have a whole new set of tools that we never had before. We have also not only new materials, new methods, and new machines, but new

levels of education, new standards of living, and new ways of thinking as well. These changes have reached into every department of our individual lives and into every manner of social organization, the church not excepted.

According to Lim (2002:69), we have moved from an audio to a visual generation. The past was an auditory generation; ours is a visual generation digitally connected globally. Today, televisions are more popular than radios. This visual replacement of the oral audio has great implications for contemporary preaching.

Furthermore, there has been a tremendous shift in our culture itself. According to Runia (1983:4), "A very definite change set in with the arrival of the industrial revolution. This was the more so, because it was accompanied by the steadily increasing impact of the Enlightenment, with its strong emphasis on the autonomy of man." Craddock (1979:2) points out that it is the sober opinion of many concerned Christians, some who present the sermon and some who hear it, that preaching is an anachronism. Ford (1969:6) comments, "A feature is the modern use of the visual image." In a sense, speed, which is characteristic of the age, has a bearing on preaching.

3.1.1.2.2   The present society is complicated

Modern life has become far too complicated for a sermon that one single individual has prepared. In the pre-industrial society, the minister probably knew all his parishioners and was acquainted with their overall situations. Unfortunately, the situation is

different today. Runia (1983:6) observes, "Even a husband and wife often find it difficult to have a clear idea of what the partner is doing at his or her job. For a minister it is simply impossible to be acquainted with all these circles."

Stated differently, contemporary humans seem to suffer from deafness when it comes to their perception of God's Word because of the information overload. People do not hear the Word of God because the medium has changed. Worley (1967:139) observes, "Our culture is described by most observers as a secular culture, meaning among other things that the dominant carriers of meaning are secular."

3.1.1.2.3   The present society is scientific

It is said that, in this scientific era, there are other and more effective means of propagating the Christian message than preaching. Radio, television, films and literature in general are now the recognized media of communication, and preaching is out-dated, old-fashioned, little more than a rather quaint ecclesiastical anachro-nism. Horne (1975:16) states:

> As God was being edged out more and more, man was being pushed more and more to the center of life. Bonhoeffer spoke of man having come of age. Just as a child grows up and becomes independent of his parents, so modern man has grown up. He must not depend on a fatherly God. He must assume full responsibility for himself, his word and his destiny. Therefore, Bonhoeffer saw man becoming progressively irreligious.

Furthermore, the loss of God has cast a shadow of doubt over other tenets of human faith, as traditionally understood. Jesus Christ is often reduced to an ethical image.

The scientific era is an age of questioning. More than that, it is an age that insists on asking its own questions; that is to say, what is demanded is not only the liberty of free inquiry, but the liberty of independent inquiry. Obviously, this mood of independent inquiry militates against this because preaching involves the exercise of authority. Kroll (1980:5) poses the question, "Can a religion which developed its tradition in a mythological age still make its voice heard in an age of scientific realism?" As a final word, the researcher would say that, in the presence of the popular lordship of science, the objection to preaching is that it is unscientific (Ford 1969:11).

3.1.1.2.4   The present society is personal

Since young people can no longer rely on the parish, the school, or the neighbourhood, they are left with the mass-media culture to shape their minds and ethics. Allen, Blaisdell and Johnston (1997:37) observe, "Every act of observation or logical deduction is filtered through the lenses of one's own preconceptions, values and practices."

At this point, it is appropriate to comment on the characteristics of the post-modernist human being. Van Rensburg (2003:11-18) describes them as follows:

(1)   the postmodernist human being is uncertain;

(2)   the postmodernist human being is vital;

(3)   the postmodernist human being is critical;

(4)   the postmodernist human being is globalistic-holistic and neverthe-
        less contextually individualistic;

(5)   the postmodernist human being is whole-brain orientated;

(6)   the postmodernist human being is obsessed with demolishing all
        forms of power; and

(7)   the post-modernist human being is sexually unfettered.

Thus far, certain features of current society have been examined. As concluded, preaching is a serious practical problem in modern society. Most observers regard it to be in a wretched state at present, and the inadequacy of preachers is not viewed as the only reason for the current crisis in preaching. The modern world has put our hearers in a new situation. In various ways, it has caused disaffection towards preaching. According to Van Rensburg (2003:19), in a postmodernist era, preaching is a difficult task that carries a huge responsibility. It necessitates a thorough knowledge of the listener and a true understanding of the needs and struggles of humans in the postmodernist society.

Suffice it to note that it will be almost impossible to retain a book-authority mentality in the 21st century. Such a shift may seem to threaten our modern-day Protestantism - particularly Reformed Protestantism - with its strong cry of *sola sriptura* (Buttrick 1994:31).

At this point, the second problem of modern society, i.e. rebellion against holy

authority, will be addressed.

3.1.2 The rebellion against holy authority

Generally speaking, one of the sad features of modern society is its rebellion against holy authority. In a sense, it is anti-authoritarianism, anti-signification, relativism, eclecticism, parody and pastiche. Horne (1975:19) comments:

> Rebellion against authority runs the full length of our cultural spectrum. There is obvious rebellion against authority in all our institutions – government, the home, the school and the church. This is one of the marks of our times. Since the church is not being spared, the pulpit cannot be spared either.

This section will investigate rebellion against holy authority related to four areas: the Bible, church, preaching and the preacher.

3.1.2.1 The Bible

It goes without saying that the Bible should be respected and be authoritative. According to Cooper and McClure (2003:21), "There are four different ways the church conceives the Bible's authority. We can call them the way of verbal inspiration, the way of God's uniquely revealed word, the way of universal principles and the way of God's fresh address." However, modern people pass judgment on the Bible from the standpoint of contemporary perceptions and they criticize contemporary Christian theology from the standpoint of tradition. Lose (2003:27) asserts, "To some

postmodernists, the very notion of 'truth' is entirely suspect. At its best, the claim to 'truth' represents the collective values of particular communities." Cameron (1986:29) also states, "The question of the authority of the Bible has been at the centre of the crisis of belief which has enveloped the church for more than a century, since that which holds the most central place in the practice of the Church's faith has become the object of the most serious doubt." According to Richardson (1983:12), with reference to the Bible, a scholar has remarked that "authorities have to prove themselves" these days. Of course, authorities remain, but power is usually exercised more subtly and indirectly. Consultation, arbitration and dialogue are more familiar, even though they are not always as fair or democratic as they sound.

Furthermore, just a few years ago, the most radical expression of the crisis of faith has appeared in radical theology, popularly known as the God-is-dead theology, which completely lost the vertical dimension of faith. Troeger (2005:118) comments, "What it means to live in this postmodern age of ours: no accepted authority gains automatic acceptance." Fretheim (2007:46) also remarks:

> At the least, the range of its authority seems to be more and more constricted as life around us develops at ever-increasing speeds. How can the Bible be authoritative in ever-new contexts in which the particularities of people's lives differ so radically from those in biblical times? Christians today are faced with an unprecedented challenge to biblical authority.

In this respect, preachers can no longer rely on their authority to carry the day. In a

postmodernist society, people tend not to grant authority to the Bible, especially if it seems to run contrary to what they perceive as their self-interest.

3.1.2.2   The church

The institutional church also experiences a crisis. Many say they find an increasing attraction in Jesus, but a growing alienation from the church. Since preaching is one of the basic functions of the church, the pulpit suffers proportionately during this crisis. Horne (1975:18-19) states:

> But why is this loss of faith in the integrity of the church? Several reasons are evident: First, some say that the church is introverted, that it turns in upon its own life, and that it is more concerned with serving itself than serving the world. Second, the charge of irrelevance is leveled at the church. It is not in touch with real life and its crucial issues. It has been tethered too closely to sacred building and holy hours. It has not freed itself to be the church in the world. It has often preached a theology that is abstract and withdrawn from life. It has been more concerned about saving souls than the redemption of the whole life and society.

As we all know today, there has been a tremendous shift in the church's position within society. Until the industrial revolution, the church was at the centre of society. This appeared not only from the fact that the church building stood in the centre of each village and town, but even more from the fact that the whole particular group

was centred around the church, which functioned as the guardian of religion. Runia (1983:4-5) remarks, "In the meantime the church itself has largely become a typical middle class institution, the impact of which upon society as a whole has become minimal. In addition, due to changes in the rhythm of life, Sunday is no longer the important day of rest and worship." This implies that churches occupy a lower place in society than they once did. Moreover, values and standards of behaviour have shifted.

At present, European Christianity faces an immediate challenge. There is the uncertain role of Christianity in the process of European integration (Jeanrond 2006:183). It follows that all accepted authorities, such as family, school and church, are being challenged. According to Cilliers (2004:7-8), the church no longer represents the heart of each town or city, and is no longer respected as an authoritative voice in parliament, or the fountain of all truth under the sun.

3.1.2.3 Preaching

It is argued that preaching takes place within the context of faith. It declares God's saving action, especially in Jesus Christ, to which men respond with faith and trust. A crisis of faith, of necessity, produces a crisis in the pulpit. Such a crisis is upon us. This is the most fundamental of the four crises with which we are concerned here. Compare Horne's (1975:20) remark in this regard:

There are two basic reasons for a rebellion against authority in the pulpit. The first is modern man's claim for his freedom. He considers this an inalienable

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birthright. He feels capable of finding truth for himself, establishing his values, ordering his own life, and locating authority within himself. The second reason for rebellion against authority in the pulpit is relativism. Secular man no longer believes in absolutes. Everything is relative. Everything is conditioned and fashioned by its time and place. What is true in one situation may not be true in another. What is right in one situation may not be right in another.

Practically speaking, preaching is now faced with the greatest challenge to its validity. Hull (1985:42) states, "Let us candidly confront this chilling claim that the pulpit is no longer the prow of the church." Furthermore, Brueggemann (1989:1) asserts, "The gospel is thus a truth widely held, but a truth greatly reduced. It is a truth that has been flattened, trivialized, and rendered inane. Partly, the gospel is simply an old habit among us, neither valued nor questioned." Teikmanis (1964:13) points out that, at some or other time, all have probably heard the expression, "Don't you preach at me! I know what is right and what is wrong!" Inescapably, this implies an ignorant concept of preaching.

Therefore, the preacher must examine some of the features of the contemporary historical setting in order to see what makes preaching objectionable. Fant (1975:3) remarks:

During the Middle Ages the sermon was attacked as mechanical, dull and usually nothing more than a poor plagiarism of earlier works. In the sixteenth

century preaching was the butt of ridicule by the laity who found it to be incredibly boring and who passed the time away by sleeping, chattering or playing simple games.

According to White (1973:5), a sermon has been defined as a monstrous monologue by a moron to mutes!

In other words, there is hardly any place left for our traditional Protestant form of monologue preaching. Bonhoeffer (1991:66) observes strongly, "Does the world continue to need preaching?" Reid (1967:32) also states, "Even Theodore Wedel has admitted that the idolization of the sermon as possessing monopoly rights in the communication of the Christian faith needs dethronement." Cannon (2003:55) points out that, today, most people do not normally take preaching seriously. Thus, now, preaching is no longer in the limelight as it once was, but it is often more or less a sidelight in the church.

Strictly speaking, many churchgoers think of a sermon simply as a part of the service. It was good if it interested them; it was poor if they got nothing out of it or found it dull. Garrison (1954:17) states, "Preaching has entered upon a period of hard times." Larsen (1992:12) asks, "Is preaching petering out in our television age?"

Consequently, preaching is in the shadows. The world does not believe in it. In a sense, the influence of the sermon has been generally challenged. According to Rice (1970:43), the very word "preaching" connotes negative, judgmental speech.

3.1.2.4 The preacher

It is said that the preacher no longer enjoys such prominence or influence in society today. The preacher is just one among many outstanding, highly educated professional speakers. Stated differently, gone are the days when the preacher was an authoritative figure within the community who lived somewhat on the side of normal human events. Runia (1983:5) states, "According to the social scientists this has far-reaching consequences for the sermon too. H.D. Bastian once put it thus: man not only has an ear, but a tongue as well. Instead of being at the receiving end only he wants to join in the discussion." According to Mitchell (2005:158), the preacher today is normally only an amateur in a world of professional communicators and no longer the only educated voice in the village or town.

This implies that, in the postmodern era, a critical issue for preachers will be the issue of authority. Preachers need to resolve questions such as, "Why should my message be accepted?" and "What right do I have to be heard?" Forsyth (1957:28) comments, "The authority of the preacher was once supreme. He bearded king, and bent senates to his word. He determined politics, ruled fashions, and prescribed thought." However, nowadays, the preacher is associated largely with middle-class respectability.

Thus far, we have investigated four rebellions against holy authority in modern society. The conclusion to be drawn from this section is that people are attacking holy authority and will never stop accusing it. However, we believe in God and the Word. As Fretheim (2007:47) points out, the Bible is the Word of God, and

thus has authority.

The aim of this section has been to demonstrate modern preaching in crisis related to critique from social sciences. Craddock (1979:14) states, "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." According to Stott (1982:50), the prophets of doom in today's church confidently predict that the day of preaching is over.

As a conclusion to this section, the researcher would like to mention that, in some churches, the sermon has been reduced to an apologetic five minutes; in others it has been replaced by either a dialogue or a happening.

The following section will investigate modern preaching in crisis related to the communication sciences.

3.2   CRITIQUE FROM THE COMMUNICATION SCIENCES

The previous section examined modern preaching in crisis, and concentrated on the social sciences. This section will consider modern preaching in crisis related to the communication sciences.   Modern communication experts are naturally interested in the sermon, as it still is one of the most common means of communication. Wilson (1995:46) comments, "One further dimension of our language used in the service of God is essential in framing our approach. God's Word is spoken. Preaching is an oral event." Tillich (1964:201) also observes, "We are concerned here with the

question: How can the Gospel be communicated? To communicate the Gospel means putting it before the people so that they are able to decide for or against it." According to Shin (2004:47), effective sermons can be delivered when preachers realize the relationship between preaching and communication.

However, the communication sciences' evaluation and assessment are largely negative. Falling asleep during preaching is a symptom of failure in communication, for which the preacher as well as the listener may be responsible.

This section will approach the communication sciences, concentrated on four points:

(1)   the advent of the mass media,

(2)   the expectation of the congregation,

(3)   the form of the sermon, and

(4)   the language of the sermon.

3.2.1   The advent of the mass media

It goes without saying that preachers cannot afford to ignore our audio-visual context. Runia (1983:7-8) observes, "Communication experts point to the great changes that in recent years have taken place and that are still taking place in the whole structure of communication. All kinds of new media have been introduced and each medium exerts its own influence upon its user." Mitchell (2005:155) also comments:

On average the British adult watches well over 20 hours of television a week. The precise psychological and social effects of such regular television

viewing are an area of considerable scholarly debate. Television clearly has the potential to nurture beliefs, influence opinions and subtly transform our understanding of the world we live in.

Preaching depends on verbal communication at a time when visual communication seems to be in ascendancy in our culture. Strictly speaking, people are affected by visual images on every side that make most effective use of visual communication. Verbal communication often seems dull, prosaic and unimaginative.

Moreover, in our day, the new mass media, such as modern popular news-papers, advertising and television, have become dominant in the Western culture and, at tremendous speed; the same is happening in non-Western cultures. According to Runia (1983:9), "It is no wonder that communication theorists who believe that this development will continue and even be speeded up by the new electronic technology, have a rather low appreciation of the traditional sermon."

The advent of the printing press, telegraph, wireless, cinema, television and the computer have brought both radical, revolutionary changes and also gradual, imperceptible shifts in how people communicate. In front of the television, the average viewers switch from one channel to another immediately they feel bored; faced with a sermon from the pulpit, they still drift around in their minds, letting it wander wherever it will. As Jensen (1994:45-46) points out, the root of the crisis in the church is its failure to recognize and adapt to the quickly dawning world of electronic communication whose media is changing people. In order to speak to

changed people, the church must speak in changed ways. However, this kind of change comes very slowly to the church.

As has already been stated, television and visual versioning of the past are increasingly influential in a package of historical fact and a creation of history as leisure activity (De Groot 2009:147). In this regard, television makes it harder for people to listen attentively and responsively to a sermon, and for preachers to capture a congregation's attention, let alone to secure an appropriate response. In a sense, the advent of electronic audio-visual stimuli could be feared as dealing a fatal blow to preaching. Preachers have to reckon with a television-conditioned congregation. According to Stewart (1946:180), the preacher's method must be adapted to the needs of the present age.

Furthermore, in the capacity of the sermon to hold the attention of the modern listener, the media's spectacular productions have eroded some ministers' confidence. Stott (1982:75) remarks, "When the sermon begins, they switch off." It follows that, at the heart of these arguments, is the belief that the mass-media has reduced the parishioner's capacity to listen. Reader (2008:59) argues that worship is now wholly under the influence of external forces. Now, the media has so shaped people's tastes and habits that all forms of worship are inevitably forced to adopt their characteristics and to become subject to the commercial forces that influence them. Not surprisingly, discussions about the role of television abound.

3.2.2 The expectation of the congregation

In every way, the media continuously shapes the present-day congregation, which therefore is a highly visual generation. Video games, computers, the ever-present and ever-watched television and books shape their perceptions. In this respect, they are a tough audience because they already have been brainwashed with sophisticated, glossy, secular images. According to Horne (1975:21):

> The crisis of communication runs the full spectrum of our culture. We hear much about the generation gap existing between adults and young people. There is a communication gap often between parent and child, teacher and pupil, government and citizen. And there is a communication gap between the pulpit and pew. The pulpit is especially sensitive to the communication crisis since preaching is a basic form of communication within the church. Preaching, by its very nature, is communication.

In a sense, most preaching is irrelevant. The charge is often heard that, today, preaching does not meet the needs of modern person.

Rather, preaching today is no different from preaching in any other age. Preaching does not communicate. Personal encounters such as these lend credence to the constant claim that preaching does not adequately communicate the content of the Gospel. Preaching fails to change people. Closely related to this is the charge, heard with some regularity, that preaching does not change persons. According to Bausch (1996:37), people are used to one repetitive commercial message with the

company's logo or telephone number being repeated endlessly.

For this reason, people who attend church and hear sermons have developed different expectations, influenced by the multimedia environment. So much of what they hear and see is entertainment-oriented that, even at church, they expect something that entertains, or resembles entertainment.

Moreover, there are almost as many sets of expectations as there are members in the different congregations. People are not nourished by their traditions. They are amazingly ignorant about the Bible, church doctrine, sacramental mystery, denonational history - everything that once provided cohesion and direction for local churches. Reid (1967:31) observes, "Preaching does not change persons, it is disturbingly suggestive. If it makes no difference to be a Christian, then why go to church?" According to Killinger (1955:76), congregations are no longer monolithic in membership, with all the members growing up in the same traditions and having the same expectations about ministry.

Furthermore, an increasing amount of communication takes place through technological systems: print, radio, tape recordings, television, computers, automated bank tellers and undisguised computer-generated letters. In this setting, it is easy for people to feel passive, insignificant and even alien. As Nel (1998:106) points out, communication succeeds or fails to the extent to which the audience or readers assents to the authors/speakers and their message.

Consequently, the preacher should choose vivid imagery because, nowadays, the congregation thinks through imaging. The homiletic method has to change

because, surprisingly enough, the congregation has changed.

3.2.3　The form of the sermon

The form of the sermon has been questioned. In its present form, can the sermon communicate? Today, preachers face a highly competitive communicative environment. On Sundays, many parishioners will already have glanced at a weekend paper, listened to the radio, or caught sight of an advertising board before entering the church. Runia (1983:9) comments strongly, "There is, according to the communication experts, still another inherent weakness in the traditional sermon. It belongs to the very structure of the sermon that it is a monologue, a one-way communication." According to Nida (1984:3), The message itself consists of two essential elements. First, the message has a form; and if it is a verbal message, it consists primarily of words in a particular arrangement. But there is also the meaning of any verbal message, its sense.

Today, a common refrain is that television has undermined our ability to listen. Moreover, it has been said that only the preachers choose the Sunday texts, decide exactly how long they will speak, determine the context of the sermons, choose the method of presentation, and speak with authority, which they have not directly received from the audience. This sounds like a very one-sided show. Kroll (1980:9) observes, "Is preaching out of harmony with a democratic society? This objection to preaching is probably the most popular today. Someone has said that a sermon is the last place in the modern world where a fool can speak for 30 minutes without

someone interrupting him."

It is presumed that preaching is too long and too dull in this age of television. Stott (1982:75) states, "When they are accustomed to the swiftly moving images of the screen, how can we expect them to give their attention to one person talking, with no frills, no light relief and nothing else to look at?" Bausch (1996:25) also comments:

> They are not used to listening, not much tuned in to lectures, debates and homilies. They want action. Teachers all over the land lament the shorter and shorter attention span of children and the need to constantly entertain them. Thus, we must make the most of our short time with them.

Furthermore, preachers have been preaching three-point, linear, logical, and analytical sermons for a long time. However, what they have often failed to do, is to understand that this form of preaching emanates from writing and printing as modes of communication. According to Brueggemann (1989:3), "The task and possibility of preaching is to open out the good news of the gospel with alternative modes of speech – speech that is dramatic, artistic, capable of inviting persons to join in another conversation." As preachers move from a literate to a post-literate era, they must become cognizant of the impact of the media on their preaching and ask how their electronic forms of communication might shape preaching today.

In the postmodern age, the preacher must therefore translate the biblical message into one that awakens all the senses, into words that cause a congregation

also to see, feel, smell and taste. Colquhoun (1979:77) comments, "The preacher's message remains unchanged from age to age. The preacher who is true to his calling and stands in the apostolic tradition proclaims a Gospel which is as much good news for the twentieth century as it was for the first." Mitchell (2005:154) also observes, "If preachers want to be heard today, they need to take seriously their communicative environment."

Rather, as the media changes, and as the media changes people, preaching must undergo a significant change in order to communicate effectively. Mitchell (1991:23) states, "Every sermon needs a carefully chosen introduction, designed to raise compelling questions and whet the hearer's curiosity or appetite for truth." Wegner (2009:104) also maintains, "A good introduction captures the interest of your listeners." According to Jensen (1994:53), it should not be difficult to understand why people, who watch television during 80% of their non-working, non-sleeping hours, find the pace of the average worship service boring. They are not bored with Jesus, but with the services that they attend.

This implies that preaching seems to be out of tune with the times. Because of technology, humans have turned their backs on it. In other words, early radio featured serial dramas and required listeners to use their imaginations, create images of what they heard and fill in details that otherwise could only be provided in a book or visual presentation. Such use of the imagination is not required in the television age. Preaching seems strangely out of date - like a 1940s radio drama!

The critical voice from the perspective of the communication sciences states

that the time has come for the format of preaching to be changed drastically, especially in an imaginative fashion (Cilliers 2004:14).

3.2.4   The language of the sermon

It is certain that the preacher must avoid the use of jargon in the pulpit. Theological terms like ontology, hermeneutic, eschatology and existential may be familiar to the preacher, but they are complex terms to the congregation. However, preaching deals with realities that seem strange to secular, empirical and scientific humans. This implies that the congregation finds the sermon's language difficult as it speaks about the supernatural, spiritual and intangible, which no scientific method nor any test in the laboratory can prove. Reid (1967:25) states at length:

> Preachers tend to use complex, archaic language that the average person does not understand. This is one of the most common complaints against preaching today. When the minister speaks of the 'anthropomorphic God' or the 'glory of redemption', he may have in mind some very powerful ideas. If these mental images or concepts are not shared by those to whom he is preaching, then communication has failed and he has repeated the great words in vain.

It goes without saying that preachers must not be cruel, leaving the message in such shadowy uncertainty that the hearers are frustrated and feel deceived (Craddock 1985:195).

It is evident that no sermon could be prepared adequately without taking into consideration the real persons who will hear the sermon (Long 2005B:14). Furthermore, the language used to communicate the message is important. It should be clear, understandable, picturesque and most of all, biblical. It is reasonable to assume that preachers are responsible for choosing their words and preparing their sermon carefully. According to Horne (1975:21), "There seem to be at least three things that contribute to the communication crisis of the pulpit. First its language often seems strange, abstract and complex. Laymen do not understand the technical theological language frequently used." Mitchell (2005:156) believes that television, amongst many other media, has also contributed toward a change in how we expect to be addressed in the public sphere. The language of television is markedly different from the language of the Victorian pulpit. It has also influenced expectations about the length, style and content of public discourse.

Indeed, in our age, the preachers' language must be so fashioned that the very act of hearing regains credibility, for they are addressing a generation accustomed to acting primarily on visual stimuli. The picture on the billboard, the image on television, the visual effects of the newest movie – these are symbols that capture modern imagination. It is reasonable to say that the preacher's task is to translate the Word of God faithfully into contemporary language and thought-categories, and to make it present in our day. As Barth (1991:39) points out, the Word must be directed to contemporaries. Here, the focus is on the need for sermons to be relevant and up to date. In fact, preachers should avoid technical

words in their preaching. It would be as unwise for them to use technical theological terminology in a sermon, as it would be for a physician to describe a patient's illness to a preacher in medical language.

As a result, once they step into pulpit, the preachers' primary tools are words. Therefore, choosing the right words assumes critical importance in the homiletical situation, and such a choice must be guided by the preachers' precise goals (Logan 1986:160). According to Kooienga (1989:63-64), precision is essential in many disciplines. Carpenters, engineers and parachutists must all be exact in their work. Since this is also true of preachers, it is imperative that their language is precise. There is no substitute for using the right word at the right time.

Thus far, we have analyzed the crisis in modern preaching related to the communication sciences. The conclusion that may be drawn from this discussion is that preaching is the most complicated of the crafts. This is so because it is a first-hand dealing with the souls of humanity with reference to those aspects where per-suasion is most difficult (Quayle 1979:131). Adams (1982:105) also comments, "Nor am I advocating the scholastic, technical, super-sophisticated bookish styles that other preachers develop. When they preach, they sound like the latest theological treatise. Technical language has its place, but not in the pulpit."

The afore-mentioned discussion indicated that our generation has been trained to think in pictures. Children are taught to read by means of visual aids. Motion pictures and television have further trained the modern mind to think in pictures. Minds so trained will not listen throughout a sermon wholly dependent upon

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logical thought to convey its meaning. People also need word-pictures in preaching. According to Vos (2007:24), artists are imaginative and creative people and theologians can learn from them. Theology must consider artists' words, their images and sculptures in a serious light. Imagination and creativity are not reserved only for artists, they are open to all. The concept of a sermon as an open work of art leaves space for creativity, which is a homiletic necessity.

The following section will examine the crisis in modern preaching in respect of the theological sciences.

3.3   CRITIQUE FROM THE THEOLOGICAL SCIENCES

In addition to social scientists and communication theorists, a third group severely criticizes the *sermon*. Perhaps they are the most unlikely members of the critical groups, for they are theologians, i.e., preachers themselves. In fact, the *preacher* of the sermon has also been criticized. This implies that the declining influence of preaching is being laid at the personal approach of the preachers themselves. Craddock (1979:1) states, "Most preachers are quite skilled at translating such criticism into crosses to be borne."

Nowadays, preaching is being downgraded although the people are still willing to listen. Rather, the preacher assumes much of the responsibility, not the congregation. In a sense, preachers should ask themselves the following questions: Why does our preaching not reflect the power of the Word? Why does the congrega-

tion not feel the power of the Word? Why is it that the hearers ignore the Word? Why is the congregation so unresponsive to the Word? According to Bartlett (1962:17), in every generation, preachers seem to have struggled with their own experience of the Fall – the sense that in their day, preaching is not what it once was.

The next section will examine the critique from the preachers themselves in respect of both internal and external factors.

3.3.1   Internal factors

The problems of the preachers themselves with regard to the internal factors can be elucidated in terms of the following three reasons: the loss of identity, the loss of passion and the loss of confidence.

3.3.1.1   The loss of identity

Today, preachers are experiencing an identity crisis - they no longer understand their true role. The fact that they see themselves as counsellors, administrators and public relations people, but not as ambassadors of Christ and servants of the Word, bears witness to this. According to Macleod (1987:19):

> The crisis in preaching today is not merely a matter of a sermon having or not having three points and a conclusion. It is bound up with who the preacher is, with what this enterprise is in which the preacher is engaged and involved, and why, that is, for whose sake it is done anyway. Who, what and why are inseparable in any discussion of preaching, for each of them incorporates the

matter of identity so important to defining both our understanding and our strategy in our Christian witness in this day and to our generation.

It is reasonably certain that, if preachers do not take their preaching seriously, their hearers are not likely to do so either. They know well enough whether the preachers' hearts are in the business, whether they enter the pulpit because they have something to say, or simply because they have to say something. The hearers are very alert to recognize a lack of sacred ministry or a lack of sincerity. Markquart (1985:39) states, "Preaching is the same old thing, Sunday after Sunday, and most preachers don't expect much change in anyone or anything. Kierkegaard compares preachers to swimming coaches, who shout instructions to their swimmers, but don't actually think anyone will jump in."

In a sense, it is hard to admit that most preachers have failed to live up to their high and noble calling. Pennington (1976:29) states, "In each generation, there are a significant number of persons who have been persuaded that preaching is not an important aspect of the ministry." Almond (1980:6) also comments, "The preacher's personal credo and his whole schema of Christian ideas lie behind the points he tried to make in his sermons." Moreover, Jesus' authority was based on what He was, rather than on what He appeared to be, on his inner disposition, not his external appearance. According to Robertson (1967:67), preachers are often tempted to hide their own person and weaknesses out of sight in order to concentrate attention on what they are saying.

3.3.1.2   The loss of passion

In addition to the above, in our day, there seems to be a tendency for preachers to strive towards casualness in the pulpit. If preachers do not preach with passion, the congregation is not likely to be persuaded. As Thielicke (1965:9) remarks, "Behind all the obvious and superficial criticisms – such as that the sermon is boring, remote from life, irrelevant – there is, I am convinced, this ultimate reservation, namely, that the man who bores others must also be boring himself." Van Cleave (1943:83) maintains that a salesman will have little success trying to sell a product about which he is apathetic. We, too, by prayer and devotion, must maintain a love for the Word, a passion for souls, and an enthusiasm for our ministry if our preaching is to persuade people. Colquhoun (1979:35) also comments, "Half the sermons today – may I be forgiven if I am cruel – are failing because they lack the note of passion."

It would not be far-fetched to assume that preaching is a test and a demonstration of preachers' sincerity. It reveals how much the truth they preach means to them; how far they are not simply master of their subject but are mastered by it. Suffice it to note that there is no great preaching without passion. Demaray (1974:25-26) observes,

> Is it just possible that the weak-kneed, spineless situation ethics of our time, embraced by many a minister, is to blame for tiny voices and pretty essays from the pulpit? Could it be that not a few gathered Christian communities no longer excite the preacher to proclaim the Word with power because he

himself has lost his enthusiasm?

As Baxter (1956:34) points out that, if you then are cold, how are you likely to warm the hearts of the hearers? Therefore go then specially to God for life and read some rousing, awakening book, or meditate on the weight of the subject that you are to speak of and on the great necessity of your people's souls, that you may go in the zeal of the Lord into his house.

In this vein, a bored and unenthusiastic tour guide in the Alps contradicts and dishonours the majesty of the mountains. Preachers cannot flash love unless they themselves are on fire. As regards passion, it is said that preaching without passion is no preaching at all. Markquart (1985:39) states, "The loss of passion may be at the heart of the problem of preaching." It goes without saying that, today, most people have so little experience of deep, earnest, reverent, powerful encounters with God in preaching that the only associations that come to mind when this notion is mentioned are that the preacher is morose, boring, dismal, sullen, gloomy, surly or unfriendly. Wilson (2001:74) comments, "Many preachers wish they had more passion. Passion in preaching is not so much an emotional issue as it is a theological one. It arises out of a preacher's strong awareness of the power of God and that God wants to accomplish something through the sermon."

It is a fact that passion of manner is one of the surest ways of arousing and holding the congregation's attention. Not all of this is to call for fiery styles or a return to the ways of anxious preachers. It simply means that there is a passion appropriate

to the importance and pressure of the Gospel, and there is no suitable reason for concealing that passion. Furthermore, the church has no greater need than preachers with a full declaration of passion who continue year after year strengthening their hearers' faith. This means that preachers must always create the impression that they themselves have been enthralled by what they are saying. If the preachers have not been gripped, nobody else will be. They must impress the congregation by the fact that they are taken up and absorbed by what they are doing. As people who are full of ideas, they should be anxious to communicate their ideas, which move and thrill by them so that they want everybody else to share in them.

Consequently, Peterson (1992:45) describes his view of passion as follows: "God and passion were the essentials for living. That is why I was a pastor, that is why I came to God's place: to live in his presence, to live with passion – and to gather others in his presence, introducing them into the possibilities of a passionate life."

3.3.1.3 The loss of confidence

It could be argued that preaching is not courageous today. This may simply be an extension of the charge that preaching is not relevant. As Nouwen (2001:18-19) observes, "One of the main sufferings experienced in the ministry is that of low self-esteem. Many priests and ministers today increasingly perceive themselves as having very little impact." In a sense, this implies that this occurs among preachers who have lost faith in preaching, which has failed because somewhere the preachers

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have failed. In addition, their failure has gone hand in hand with a misunderstanding of what the ministry of preaching means and involves. Reid (1967:28) asserts:

A common charge is the claim that the minister himself does not live a courageous life. Because he does not open himself to risk, his preaching cannot be genuinely courageous either. His actions do not communicate the realities of which he speaks on Sunday morning and actions speak louder than words.

According to Markquart (1985:39), a pastor asked the laity present what the difference is between a prophet and a preacher. As reported in the sermon, the answer was, "Preachers tell people what they want to hear; prophets tell people what they need to hear, even if it hurts and causes rejection of the pastor." During the discussion, the preacher challenged the laity about their perception of their pastors. In that group discussion the laity was persistent that their pastors lacked courage and were afraid to tell people what they needed to hear.

In other words, the current slump in the pulpit is the preacher's loss of confidence and increase of tentativeness. It is said that the congregation, indeed, notices a lack of courage in their pastors; thus, the preacher stands in a magnificent position. Furthermore, when there is injustice or unrighteousness, sin of any sort - personal or social - the preacher must have the courage to speak the truth. Allen (1995:19) comments, "After surveying changes in preaching among northern Presbyterians during the last several decades, John McClure concludes, what

seems to be missing in Presbyterian preaching now is a consistent and assertive theological message." According to Stott (1986:227), it is impossible to read the New Testament without being impressed by the atmosphere of joyful confidence that pervades it, and which stands out in relief against the rather jejune religion that often passes for Christianity today. There was no defeatism about the early Christians; they spoke rather of victory.

In this regard, it has already been suggested that many preachers are quite uncertain whether preaching really has any value. Rather, urgency in preaching demands that preachers have a precise conviction of what they believe. Lischer (1981:87) observes, "Preachers, who in earlier generations had identified them-selves as bearers of the eternal gospel for a changing world." Cilliers (2004:15) points out that the sermon, ultimately, is sometimes reduced to a short postscript at the end of the worship service. Today, many people ask this basic question: Is the sermon still appropriate?

The contemporary preacher's loss of confidence in the Gospel is the most basic of all hindrances to preaching. Moreover, this loss of confidence makes many preachers both unwilling and unable to proclaim the Word of God. According to Miller (1957:23), one of America's leading preachers who influences the preaching of a great many others, published a sermon not long ago that illustrates the point at issue. He had taken a trip to Japan, where he saw repeatedly the artistic motif of three trees – the pine, the bamboo and the plum. The answer to his inquiry for an explana-tion of this motif gave him the substance of a sermon. The structure of the sermon

was as follows: one, strength: the pine, because it lives a long time, represents strength. Two, resiliency: the bamboo represents resiliency for, when a storm bends it low, it does not break, but straightens up again. Three, courage: the plum represents courage, for it is the first to put forth its blooms in the spring and is sometimes brave enough to show its flowers even before the snow has quite gone.

It follows that preachers should never presume to occupy a pulpit unless they believe in God. Furthermore, they need a fundamental conviction about this living, redeeming and self-revealing God. No doubt, preachers cannot handle Scripture adequately in the pulpit if their doctrine of Scripture is inadequate.

The next subsection will focus on the external factors of the preachers themselves.

3.3.2   External factors

In addition to the internal factors, external factors that lead to criticism of the preacher must be established. This subsection will investigate these external factors by concentrating on two points:

(1)   the lack of proper training, and

(2)   a very busy schedule.

3.3.2.1   The lack of proper training

Generally speaking, the lack of proper training helps to account for the troubles of many a preacher today. More than a few local ministers have never learned how to

preach, or else they have forgotten what they once knew. At the seminary, students may pass a number of courses but never master homiletics and public speaking and, in the parish, they may continue to flounder as preachers. Markquart (1985:46) explains, "Young pastors learn the proper work habits early in their ministry because the way in which they form themselves in the earliest years of his ministry tend to rule him with almost despotic power to the end."

Moreover, preachers should not be an embarrassment. They must have basic skills of public address, know how to write and speak clearly and vividly, how to maintain attention and how to persuade. As Wedel (1956:3) points out, ministers sit at their study desks. The next Sunday's sermons loom. They wrestle with the "how" and the "what" of preaching.

3.3.2.2 The very busy schedule

It is argued, at times, that preachers do not take quality study time. However, the loss of preparation time concerns many preachers. They are already over-burdened with parish business and the tears of the brokenhearted. Not surprisingly, some preachers often claim that there are never enough hours in a day for the work of the Lord. Markquart (1985:45) states: "Brooks is devastating in his impatience towards clergy who prepare sermons on Saturday nights. He calls Saturday night preparation 'the crowning disgrace of a man's ministry.'" In a sense, many pastors are essentially administrators, whose symbols of ministry are the office rather than the study, and the telephone, rather than the Bible. According to Hunt (1982:1), a modern clergy-

man plays many roles: administrator, counsellor, teacher, worship leader, community leader and preacher; but among all the roles given a pastor today, one of the most demanding is that of being an effective preacher. Compare also the remark of Schlafer (1992:6) in this regard:

> There are doubtless many factors that contribute to the unsatisfied hunger and lack of appetite felt simultaneously on both sides of the pulpit. Ever-increasing demands on a pastor's life do compete for the time it takes to prepare for preaching. The administrative, physical and pastoral responsibilities of a parish minister can be overwhelming. Maybe preaching sometimes fails to satisfy because preachers are poorly equipped to undertake their task: they may not be too busy to preach well, they may just not know how!

Moreover, preaching too often consists of "Saturday night notions." Far too often, preachers try to prepare Sunday's sermon on a Saturday night. Frequently, the pastor is the first person to whom people turn in time of need, the only one who will come in a time of emergency, and the only one many can afford. Erickson and Heflin (1997:86) state, "The pastor has little time for creativity and innovation because of a crowded schedule and incessant demands to perform pastoral duties." Furthermore, many pastors have allowed other aspects of the work to loom larger than their preaching, but the people who come to church believe in the primacy of the pulpit. Preachers are under immense pressure from their congregations to become counsellors, managers of an important community enterprise, administrators of a

highly organized and going concern dedicated to the spiritual, social and cultural improvement and welfare of humanity, both locally and nationally. According to Runia (1983:7), "The problem is aggravated still more by the fact that the life of the minister himself is becoming so complex that there is hardly any time left for preaching and the preparation required for it."

The typical Christian minister is called upon to be many things: counsellor, educator, pastor, administrator, custodian, carpenter and preacher. It is sometimes difficult to insist that the primary responsibility is that of preaching and interpreting the Word.

Thus far, the preacher's external factors have been examined. Based on the discussion of the internal and external factors, it can be concluded that the problem of preaching often is the preacher. Ministers are derelict in their responsibility unless they enter the pulpit and speak with a purpose. Baxter (1956:35) states, "It is a palpable error in those ministers that make such a disproportion between their preaching and their living; that they will study hard to preach exactly, and study little or not at all to live exactly." It follows that one can be confident that eventually they will be brought to say, "My Lord and my God!" If one does not believe that this is true, then one had better admit that Christianity is false from the start; and one had better stop preaching it altogether (Pittenger 1962:89).

As a result, when preachers preach, they should become even more conscious of *God* seeing and hearing than of the *congregation* seeing and hearing. It is this awareness that will inspire them to do the Lord's work.

The following section will demonstrate the final critique from the church pew.

3.4   CRITIQUE FROM THE CHURCH PEW

So far, the focus has been on three categories of critics, namely the social scientists, communication experts and theologians. However, the main category has not yet been mentioned - the congregation in the pew. They are the people who more than anyone else are involved in, and affected by, preaching. Green (1972:56) states:

> The church for years was able to maintain its position in society with a minimum effort toward sermon excellence because laymen were reluctant to criticize. This has caused many clergymen to drift through the week riding on a crest of compliments and prestige and neglecting adequate sermon preparation.

Moreover, it goes without saying that the sermon must be judged operationally by its effect on the hearers. According to Luthi and Thurneysen (1957:27), preaching is not only under attack by unbelievers outside the church, but those of little faith within the church also assail the preaching.

Hence, this section is to establish thoroughly the critique from the church pew in respect of five areas:

(1)   The sermon is boring and uninteresting;

(2)   The sermon is difficult and abstract;

(3)   The sermon is far away from the needs of our day;

(4)   The sermon is plain and predictable; and

(5)   The sermon is a one-sided dialogue.

3.4.1   Sermons are boring and uninteresting

Through the centuries, the word "boring" has occurred in every book on preaching and in the universal reaction to sermons. Not surprisingly, Reid (1967:26) observes, "Most sermons today are boring, dull and uninteresting." Runia (1983:14) also states, "We should not underestimate the fact that many church people are deeply dissatisfied with the preaching of their minister. Apart from unbelief, boredom is the greatest enemy of the sermon." Furthermore, for whatever reasons, whether we like to admit it or not, many people feel that preaching today fails to capture their imagination. We must take this charge seriously. According to Macleod (1987:17), there are only three kinds of sermons: those that are dull, those that are duller, and those that are inconceivably dull! Indeed, a Methodist bishop once said of a preacher in his district, "He is supernaturally dull! No one could be that dull without divine aid!"

Generally, preachers should try to catch the attention of parishioners in the first five minutes. If preachers fail to grip them then, they will not have much chance afterwards. For this reason, nowadays, the introduction of the sermon is very important to the congregation. Abbey (1967:37) adds, "Most of my friends consider the Protestant pulpit to be irrelevant, fearful, and not very scholarly; many in our parish regard the pulpit as harmless and boring." Larsen (1992:11-12) points out that

Webster's third international dictionary gives one definition of preaching: "exhorting in an officious and tiresome manner." Such a definition is reflected in popular culture, as Madonna sings, "Papa, don't preach." Even churchgoers echo this secular disdain by saying, "Now, don't start preaching to me!" The negative connotation of the term is clear and painfully cutting.

As a result, most hearers have never been taught to expect much from sermons, and their habit is to relax during sermon time while waiting to see if the preacher will say anything of interest to them. For this reason, one can conclude that preachers must not be boring. Parishioners often think that they have already heard what is being said in the pulpit. Moreover, they are convinced that they themselves have long since already known this. The fault certainly does not lie with them alone.

3.4.2   Sermons are difficult and abstract

Sermons contain too many ideas that are too complex and come at the listener too fast. Not only are sermons perceived as too abstract, they are also accused of having too many abstractions. If you have a three-point sermon, each with three sub-points, then you have a nine-point sermon. Alternatively, the simple three-point out-line may be three different sermons. Markquart (1985:22) comments, "Most prea-ching is too abstract and academic, too theoretical and theological." Furthermore, every author in the field of homiletics has emphasized the need for a central theme because most sermons tend to be far too complex. Thus, sermons usually need to have one fundamental theme that is reinforced by a story, an illustration, an

anecdote, a parable and a quotation.

Markquart (1985:23) states:

Thielicke entitles a chapter 'Abstract Man: The Wrong Man to Address.' He says that preachers may talk abstractly and eloquently about human nature, human existence and our existential situation but no longer gear into real life as men live it and only make men say, 'There is nothing there for me' or 'This never touched me at all.'

As a Korean author, Rhee (1998:88-89) points out that unity is the life of a sermon from a homiletical perspective. Unity is not a kind of academic element, but a functional character of effective communication. Therefore, a sermon must have one subject and one proposition. A sermon should be like a living tree, a living organism. As a tree has one trunk, a sermon should have one subject and one proposition. As, in a tree, many branches and leaves are linked to one trunk, an outline and many words are linked to one subject and a proposition to form the introduction and conclusion of a sermon. According to the homiletical principle, a well-organized sermon has unity. Although text, subject, proposition, outline and application are considered the fundamental elements of a good sermon, many Korean preachers unfortunately do not have a clear understanding of them. As preachers, we must listen to the audience when they complain about that which they cannot grasp concerning the central thought of our sermons.

In a sense, a sermon should experience the restraint of a single idea.

Richardson (1983:15) observes, "Every preacher must face squarely and honestly the great cultural gap between the world of the Bible and the present day."

3.4.3   Sermons are far removed from contemporary needs

Generally speaking, congregations often feel that sermons are similar to theological essays – unrelated to the issues of everyday life. Macleod (1987:17) observes:

> Common honesty among us indicates that what many congregations are receiving or are forced to listen to on Sunday morning is irrelevant. In many instances it consists of heavy biblical or theological materials gleaned from commentaries, but not sorted out and digested by the preacher, and, hence, fails to come to grips with the critical issues of our common life.

Suffice it to note that preachers tend to forget that the Gospel itself is, for the most part, a simple narrative of persons, places, occurrences and conversations. Despite the fact that the Gospel is not a verbal exposition of general ideas, preaching consists mostly of verbal explanations and arguments. Its ideas are mainly in the form of a story. It could be argued that preaching today shows too little concern for people's needs. As simple and as obvious as this may sound, the fact is that most preaching in all cultures today ignores people's deepest human needs.

Since the congregation focuses naturally on the preacher who addresses their needs, he/she should pay attention to their genuine needs and address those needs during the sermon. Willimon (1981:15) remarks, "Lay respondents listed one

characteristic of their preaching over and over again: they preach as if they were preaching to individual listeners and their problems." In this era, one criticism of contemporary preaching is that it often is more concerned about religious truths than God's truth for people in their needs. Moreover, many people leave the church because, for them, the language flowing from the pulpit is meaningless; it has no connection with their own lives and simply bypasses many threatening and unavoidable issues. According to Almond (1980:8), true preaching is not done to satisfy only the need for a sermon or simply to retell ancient truths. It addresses some contemporary issue and need. Authentic preaching does not seem long ago and far away, but wrestles with vital issues relevant to the 21st century. Effective sermons address urgent needs in real life.

One of the criticisms sometimes levelled against expository preaching is that it sets forth endless details about people and situations of ancient history, but lacks application to the needs of our day. Howe (1967:19) remarks, "There will have to be recognition that communication requires partnership between pulpit and pew." All biblical preaching done properly is more than a lecture - it strives for decisions and actions. In fact, the Bible, being God's inspired Word for all ages, is as relevant today as it was when prophets and apostles first penned it.

It should be noted that there is a practical relation of Christianity to daily living and business affairs. It is not only applicable to life in its entirety, but is also relevant to real life situations and all of human daily encounters. Christianity is a vital, working, day-to-day, practical religion that provides not only eternal benefits, but also here-

and-now benefits. In this respect, preaching must be relevant, with the qualification that by "relevant" is meant relevance to the personal circumstances of one's hearers. In other words, preaching must be addressed to individuals and must be aimed at meeting their personal needs. Of course, these individuals are members of communities – of churches, nations, families and the like.

It follows that there should be a meeting or correlation between the preacher's message and the people's experience. As Randolph (1969:44) observes, "Seeing the text in relation to our lives and the lives of our contemporaries is part of the process of understanding the text. This contemporary reference contributes to our primary grasp of the text at the level of discovering the concern of the sermon." Moreover, congregational members are concerned about practical matters - doctrine is abstract, theoretical, and "does not really matter." Practicality is a primary consideration in almost every area of life. Wilson (1989:211) states, "Jesus' stories could not be more ordinary. They record ordinary events he saw around him as he traveled. They are of the sort that we see around us everywhere." The most obvious aspect lacking in sermons is an awareness of the congregation's everyday needs and circumstances.

For this reason, the greatness of preaching lies in the fact that each person in the congregation thinks the preacher is preaching to him/her. Mitchell (1991:23) states, "Sermons are expected to help hearers apply the affirmations of their faith to needs in the real world." Furthermore, preaching has to be as old as God's ways with humans, and as new as the morning paper. It must change to match the thought

patterns and vocabulary of every generation. As Worley (1967:144) remarks, "Interpretation is to say what something means today in terms of a present context, present modes of reason, and present languages."

Consequently, sermons are not preached in general, but to a particular group of people with particular needs in particular places. Thus, preparation for preaching must include not only basic homiletic skills, but also knowledge of, and a concern for, the elements in society that affect the listeners.

3.4.4   Sermons are plain and predictable

Contrary to 3.4.2, many people in the pew feel that the contemporary sermon is plain and predictable. Most of them do not object so much to the fact the preaching is still an integral part of the worship service, but to the quality of what they hear. Moreover, the most common complaint is that sermons are like Sunday school lessons: a simple repetition of the Scriptures without depth of understanding or breadth of application. Parishioners claim they return home from Sunday worship services without being edified or challenged. Markquart (1985:38) states, "Sermons are often too predictable and passionless. Craddock and Fant both have sections describing the 'fairly high degree of predictability of sermons': the whole occasion has the dead air of familiarity."

In a sense, most sermons lack impact because of their absolute predictability. It begins and ends the same, and its volume level is the same. Furthermore, it is always flat. As a result, preaching becomes a kind of conversation at a table, a help-

ful word among friends in Christ. According to Fant (1975:9), the content of the sermon has been sharply criticized. Harvey Cox says that preaching is weak because it does not confront people with the new reality that has occurred and because the summons is issued in general rather than in specific terms.

3.4.5   Sermons are monologues

It goes without saying that preaching should be a conversation. The hearers, as well as the speaker, should reveal their thoughts, even if only one is vocal. It is important to remember that much of the sermons' force depends upon the preachers' sharing what their congregation already knows. Brown, Clinard and Northcutt (1963:169) state, "Every principle of sermon delivery, whether pertaining to vocal production, use of the body, or delivery style, is to be judged by a more important concept – let the minister be himself. Let him be his improved self, to be sure."

In a sense, narratives help to provide, or to develop, common ground between speaker and audience. According to Mitchell (2005:154), given these diverse and often rich media experiences, it is not surprising that listening to one voice, while seated on a wooden church pew or plastic chair, can compare unfavourably. Not only visitors, but also regular attendees, may find that it difficult to concentrate upon a pulpit monologue.

As regards the preachers' speech, the layman's most frequent criticism of ministers is that they do not speak naturally. They assume a "preacher's tone" - a false piety and affectation in the pulpit. It follows that the delivery of a sermon and

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the preacher's voice should be natural. Moreover, the traditional sermon is far too introverted in character; it concentrates almost exclusively on the religious needs of the individual member of the congregation. Oman (1963:152) observes, "To be made ready by conversation, you must first be ready enough to start it and keep it up to the mark of mutual interest." Hunter (1988:111) remarks, "To preach dialogically and with integrity was extremely important to me." Consequently, sermons attempt to speak to particular local congregations. Preaching congregationally is an important maxim for the practice of preaching (Gunton 2001:16-17).

3.4.6 The congregation's final decision

Since the congregation has no real say in the matter, they can make their disappointment and dissatisfaction heard in only one way: by staying away. Allen (1995:17) remarks, "Why do they leave the church? They do not find the message and life of the church significant enough to justify their thought, loyalty, time and money." Dull, powerless, unedifying and aimless preaching turns away especially young people from Christ and his church. As Cilliers (2004:16) points out, large numbers of congregants suffer in silence or declare that preaching is, or has become, boring, irrelevant and disappointing and many church members vote with their feet by leaving the church.

Thus far, the critique from the pew has been analysed. According to Cox (1965:122), "Our preaching today is powerless because it does not confront people with the new reality which has occurred and because the summons is issued in

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general rather than in specific terms." In particular, preachers are aware of the appeal of children's sermons that usually have one dominant idea, use vivid images or objects, tell a story, employ ordinary language, relate to everyday life, and are easily remembered. Those same characteristics must be found in adults' sermons. Moorehead (1961:75) states, "If the preacher is free to speak, the layman is free not to listen. In a strict sense the layman has the freedom to deny the pulpit's freedom by refusing to listen." It should be mentioned that for three centuries - from the Elizabethan to the Victorian - the sermon in published form might well be a best seller, but in the 20th century it scarcely sells at all (Ford 1969:1-2).

3.5   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter has investigated critique from four major categories: social scientists, communication experts, theologians and the church pew. Each party has its own kind of criticism but, whatever the critique may be, they all agree that there is something seriously wrong with the present-day sermon. Horne (1975:22) maintains:

> Foolish is the preacher who is not aware of the crisis of the pulpit. He should take it most seriously. Yet, he should not despair. While this may be the most serious crisis in preaching so far, it is not the first and will not be the last. Preaching has survived other crises and it will survive this one. Preaching proclaims God's saving action, and man cannot live without hearing this good news.

Abbey (1963:155) also comments, "But it is more – a call to the confident hope enshrined in the heart of the gospel: 'Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away' (Mark 13:31)." As Rust (1982:15) points out, only those for whom Christ is a real and living Presence can effectively proclaim the Gospel of God's undeserved pardon and amazing grace in Jesus of Nazareth. Every sermon must end by pointing to Him.

We have seen that preaching is facing a crisis. Yet, effective preaching has always been possible amidst difficult conditions. Furthermore, the church has been commanded to preach the Gospel, no matter how challenging the situation may be. God promised that such proclamations will not return empty, but will prosper and accomplish their intended work. Erdahl (1976:20) states, "I will approach the task with confidence that God can use my sermons as he has used the preaching of others."

As a conclusion to this chapter, the researcher would like to mention that in the Chinese language, the word for *crisis* is composed of two characters, namely *dangers* and *opportunity* (Newell 1984:170).

The next chapter will examine the general circumstances of Korean Christianity.

CHAPTER FOUR

GENERAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF
THE KOREAN CHURCH, PREACHING AND PREACHERS

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the general circumstances of Korean Christianity. To achieve this objective, a brief survey of the Korean Church will first be explored. Secondly, a concise study of Korean preaching will be conducted. Thirdly, a brief discussion of Korean preachers will also be offered and, lastly, a reasonable authority of the preacher within a Korean context will be proposed.

4.1   A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE KOREAN CHURCH

This section will concentrate on two issues:

> (1)   the rapid growth of the Korean Church, and
>
> (2)   the red light of the Korean Church.

4.1.1   The rapid growth of the Korean Church

It is said that South Korea is indeed one of the most Christianized countries in the non-Western world. Grayson (2002:168) states, "By the final decade of the twentieth century, the Christian churches, especially the Protestant churches, were the predominant religious facts of modern Korean history. Numerically, Christians of all groups constituted more than one quarter of the South Korean population."

According to Park (2003:13), the growth of Protestantism in Korea was exceptional –
to some observers a miracle. Recent statistics show that more than 25% of the
population in South Korea is Protestant. The Protestant Church is still growing
rapidly: according to some observers, in the 1980s, six churches were established
every day in South Korea!

One of the most remarkable achievements of Christianity in recent history
has been its rapid spread in Korea. Altogether, the Christian population in South
Korea now exceeds 25%, almost rivalling the number of Buddhists. In 1984, Korea
celebrated the centenary of the Protestant missionary movement. Although precise
statistical data are unavailable, one estimate is that, by June 1994, there were nearly
3300 Korean missionaries in 119 countries around the world (Chung 1997:36).

4.1.2   The red light of the Korean Church

In September 1884, the first Protestant missionary began working officially in Korea.
In 1884, Su-Jung Lee (who was in Tokyo, Japan, while translating the Bible into
Korean) asked the American Presbyterian Church to send missionaries to Korea. As
a result, On September 22, 1884, Horace N. Allen (1858-1931) (a 26 year-old
medical missionary who belonged to the Northern Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A)
arrived in Seoul. Thus, the centennial of Protestant missionary work in Korea was
celebrated in 1984.

We can say for sure that the number of churches and congregations kept
growing until the mid-1990s, although the rate of growth had changed. Since then,

the Korean Church has experienced a decline in growth. As Kim (2003:119) observes, "Many people have noticed a red signal light in the way of church growth in Korea. The Korea church has had minus growth since the mid 90's."

Referring to the past history of the Western Church, we learn that contemporary values of secularism, materialism and Epicureanism rapidly entered the Church while they enjoyed prosperity with a GNP of over $10,000. The same thing is also happening in Korea. As a result, the Korean society has lost its trust in the church. Moreover, numerous pathological symptoms, due to unqualified pastors and an overwhelming number of financially dependent churches, have caused secular people to lose the good image of the church. Eventually, more people spoke negatively about religious groups in Korea and expressed much more criticism than appreciation. This shows the current crisis of the Korean Church.

4.2   A CONCISE STUDY OF KOREAN PREACHING

This section will focus on two major aspects:

(1)   The theological foundation is weak, and

(2)   Subjective exegesis of the Bible.

4.2.1   The theological foundation is weak

It is reasonable to assert that Korean Protestant preaching needs a theology that will draw its life from an informed understanding of the Gospel. Only then will it be able to

rid itself of unbiblical and pagan elements. Van der Geest (1981:148) states, "Procla-mation often leads to one-sidedness and exaggerations not allowed in theology." According to Kay (1990:11-12), another reason for the exclusion of theology from Korean preaching is the growing influence of a charismatic movement. The pheno-menal Korean Movement of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues has reinforced both the anti-intellectual and anti-theological tendency of Korean Protestant Churches. Theology is being regarded as an obstacle to a full and immediate experi-ence of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. The leading charismatic leader, Yong-gi Cho, defines liberal theology as the modern equivalent of the devil. According to Cho, Satan, who tempted Adam and Eve in Eden concerning the authority of the Word of God, is still trying to tempt us with liberal theology.

The researcher argues that the teaching of preaching deserves a significant place in the curriculum of a theological school. Kay (1990:10-11) observes, "Unfortunately, in Korea one can easily find preachers who like to boast; 'I am an evangelist. I don't preach theology. I only preach the Bible.' This is like a medical doctor insisting; I don't believe in all this anatomy and physiology. I am a quack." It follows that the function of theology is to help the preacher distinguish between important and trivial matters. Too many sermons seem to focus not on the issue of truth, but on small issues or topics.

4.2.2 Subjective exegesis of the Bible

It is reasonable to comment that fragmentary exposition is very common among

Korean preachers. It concerns discussion about one fragment of the text without any connection to, or regard for, the unity of the one redemptive history, thereby losing God's special revelation in that text. Craddock (1985:20) remarks, "The moment persons set out on the path leading to the pulpit, they need to give attention to increasing their capacities for oralizing." According to Rhee (1998:73), exegesis is the most important task in the delivery of God's Word. A wrong exegesis of the text can lead to an incorrect or improper interpretation.

Some problems are to be highlighted in the sermons of past Korean preachers. First, the selected text does not match the sermon based on it. Preachers must choose the text and build the sermon around it in accordance with the author's intention. Secondly, their sermons lack background data. The audience needs an explanation of the historical background and cultural milieu in which the Gospel was written. Thirdly, Korean pastors lack an understanding of typology. Misunderstanding of typology often results in wrong exposition-allegorizing, spiritualizing, accommodating, and so on.

This implies that most theological errors that occur in interpreting a text take place because one tries to make the text mean what one wants it to mean, rather than allowing the text to speak for itself. Preachers must resist the strong temptation to twist the text according to what *they* want to say. As Rhee (1998:83) points out, What is moralistic preaching? What is the blind spot in moralizing interpretation? Moralizing exposition places too much emphasis on human activities while reducing the grace of Christ. At the same time, one should not go to the other extreme, and

reduce human response. One must not preach about Peter or Mary per se, but about Jesus Christ. The sermon must not be anthropocentric, but Christocentric. Moses has meaning only in his own particular place in the redemptive history. Obligation to imitate some historical persons and emphasize the human side too much at the expense of God's grace, leads to a moralistic sermon.

4.3   A BRIEF STUDY ON KOREAN PREACHERS

This section will explore Korean preachers while concentrating on three points:

> (1)   Korean preachers have excessive authority;
>
> (2)   Korean preachers have a heavy workload; and
>
> (3)   The reasonable foundation of the preacher's authority.
>
> (4)   An empirical research on preachers in Korea

4.3.1   Korean preachers have excessive authority

In referring to the preacher's authority, the following religious and social background should be understood. It is clear that the preacher's authority should be rooted in Jesus Christ and God, the Sender of the preacher, and is deeply connected with the Word of God, and is coupled with the ministering of God's Word.

Paul is the servant of Jesus Christ, the Lord. He never thought of this authority as emanating from his own mental excellence, still less from his own moral virtue. It is with the authority of God or Christ that he speaks. The person who preaches the

Gospel of Christ or teaches the message (if he/she is truly dedicated) does not speak about his/her own opinions or offer his/her own conclusions. The preacher comes with Christ's message and with God's Word.

Therefore, preachers naturally do not have their own authority. The preachers never think of their authority as emanating from their own mental excellence, still less from their own moral virtue. It is with the authority of God or Christ that they speak. In short, the preacher's authority is not situated in the person of the preacher him-/herself, but in the Word of the Lord. We need the reciprocal enrichment, but also correction of our interpretation of the Bible by other members of Christ's Body (the church).

It is said that a preacher's authority comes from the very structure of the Korean society. If the father is the most powerful person in the family and the family is the foundation of society, then a father figure is the most powerful person in this community. The Korean preacher is often regarded as the father figure - the head of the family. Allen (1988:38) surmises, "The preacher is clearly not above the congregation, but in solidarity with them. This is also theologically correct." Lueking (1985:55) also states, "The authority of the Word keeps the preacher on center and enables the preacher to keep house-keeping details in perspective and in other, more capable hands." According to Lee (1997:110), The Korean preacher begins to realize that the authority of preaching and teaching comes not only from knowing the text, but also from finding a meaningful interpretation of the text in the context of our time.

In a sense, preaching is a special type of communication because it carries an authority of tradition and because it is framed in a worship service. Stott (1967:26) asserts, "Indeed, I am persuaded that the more the preacher has trembled at God's Word himself, and felt its authority upon his conscience and in his life, the more he will be able to preach it with authority to others." Stuempfle (1978:16) also says, "God speaks as both the God of wrath and the God of mercy, and so sharp is the tension between these two roles that he often seems to be two gods rather than the one God." As Willimon and Lischer (1995:23) point out, the authority of preaching is a dangerous gift, easily exploited for personal aggrandizement or self-congratulation. It is also a necessary gift, based on the promise that the Spirit works through the words of Scripture, through the words that interpret them, and, most amazingly, through those women and men who seek to preach faithfully.

4.3.1.1   The religious background of the preacher's authority

To understand fully the excessive authority of the preacher in Korea, one must consider the religious environment of the country. Kim (1995:81) observes, "In Korean Protestantism, the prevailing theological trend is to put the Christian faith against Korean culture and religion, especially Buddhism and shamanism." Adams (1995:95) states, "Indeed, there are actually two levels of participation in the rites – the Confucian, or more precisely Neo-Confucian, and that of Shamanism; the prevailing folk religion of Korea." According to Chung (1999:24-25), the variety of religions in Korea furnishes clues for understanding the religious background of

Koreans. Prior to the 19th century, the people's religious life manifested in three faiths. Historically, and in terms of influence on the common people of Korea today, Shamanism must be considered. The other two major religions of Korea are Buddhism and Confucianism.

4.3.1.1.1   Shamanism

Shamanism is a folk religion centred on a belief in good and evil spirits who can only be influenced by shamans who are professional spiritual mediators who perform rites. *Mudang*, in Korean, usually refers to female shamans, while male shamans are called *paksu-mudang*. Kim (2005:10) comments, "Although Shamanism could be regarded as the most ancient and ubiquitous religious phenomena in both East and West, it is not easy to verify whether it is valid to give the name *Shamanism*." During the Choson Dynasty, Shamanism was severely oppressed and marginalized in Korea. However, Korean Shamanism is not extinct and still survives as a living religious phenomenon revivified in the form of folklore even in modern Korean society, and profoundly impacting upon the formation of Christian as well as other faiths at the grass-root level in a positive and negative sense.

Moreover, for centuries, Korea has been "plowed" by Shamanistic efforts to communicate with higher beings and, when the seeds of Christianity were sown in this rich, plowed soil, they flourished and produced the fruits of Christian disciples. It should be mentioned that Shamanism has traditionally retained the most powerful religious influence on the population as a whole. In Korea's Shamanistic pantheon,

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the concept of a hierarchy of the gods developed. Kim (2004:121) says, "Shamanism is a religious phenomenon that has the longest history of any religion in Korea." Chung (1999:25) points out:

Shamanism has no known founder or even any scripture of its own. It is a religion of the masses with no definite form or system. The common people of Korea almost universally hold to its superstitious practices. Their worship expresses fear; they pray for personal gain and for relief from trouble but they develop little concern for moral character.

In a sense, from remote antiquity, Shamanism has had deep roots in folk beliefs. It is closely related to the primitive cult of communal worship rites offered to the gods of heaven and is infused with the Buddhist tradition. In ancient times, these heavenly rites doubled as agricultural rites in prayers for a good harvest. Passing through the Silla and Koryo Dynasty (918-1392), they thrived and were diversified into rites for the mountains and heavens and rites to pray for rain. Even in the staunch Confucian society of the Choson Dynasty (1392-1910), these communal rites were allowed to continue. Furthermore, a trait that is unique to Korean Shamanism is that it seeks to solve human problems through a meeting of humans and the spirits, mediated by the shaman. This characteristic is clearly seen in the various types of shamanistic rites that are still widely observed today.

It goes without saying that the shaman communicates directly with the spirits and displays supernatural strength and knowledge as their mouthpiece. The shaman

plays the role of an intermediary between human beings and delivers their wishes and implores spirits to reveal their will. Kim (2004:122) observes:

> A shaman is a mediator between the spiritual world and the human world. She/he can function as a priest. As a priest she/he can conduct religious rites, oversee the shrine, run the place, serve the spirits and counsel the people. And a shaman can tell or predict weal or woe. And she/he can function as a judge in a dispute in a small village. In regard to Shamanism's impact upon the formation of Christian faith explains on the basis of his grafting process theory.

Moreover, the shaman's extraordinary gifts allow him/her to be naturally distinguished from others in the Korean society. The belief that the shaman communicates with spirits gives that person authority. In ancient societies, probably from the time of tribal states, the shaman assumed the role of a leader as his/her supernatural powers contributed to the community's common interest.

In other words, Shamanism constitutes the Korean people's innate religiosity at an unconscious level. In this sense, Shamanism is merely a primitive religion, superstition, or a lower type of religion, but has its own salvation paradigm with its own structure and function. In this respect, the shaman must be recognized as a religious leader with the ability to satisfy the spiritual requirements of the community. Korean Shamanism that displays a strong tendency to pursue blessings, could be regarded as the substratum of the belief system, spirituality and religious experience

of all Koreans.

4.3.1.1.2   Buddhism

Even though Buddhism may have lost some of its ancient glory, it is still the largest single religion in Korea with some 11 million lay adherents - a fourth of the population. Chung (1999:27) asserts, "In fact, Buddhist priests were powerful manipulators of the Korean government in the Koryo Dynasty." Kim (1995:82) also observes, "One of the striking features of the relationship between Christianity and Buddhism during the Koryo Dynasty (918-1392) is the Christians' active use of Buddhist vocabulary and images in their explication of the Christian faith."

This implies that Buddhism has ruled over Koreans' minds for the longest period. It was introduced in 372 during the time of the three kingdoms by way of China. At first, it received royal support and soon became well established in the three kingdoms, reaching its peak during the Koryo Dynasty (918-1392). Buddhism gave Koreans added resources in religion, philosophy and the fine arts. It promised salvation through reliance on the mercy of Buddha. Its greatest contribution to Korean religions thought is in its teaching about immortal life.

4.3.1.1.3   Confucianism

In 1392, the Choson Dynasty brought Confucianism to the forefront. Confucius was a rationalist who favoured practical conservatism. Although his high ethical system has deeply influenced Korean culture, Koreans regarded Confucianism as more educa-

tional than religious by nature. According to Chung (1999:23), Korea's modern history dates back from the beginning of the Choson Dynasty in 1392 - just a century before Columbus discovered the New World. The Choson Dynasty commenced with new reforms that drove out the corrupt Buddhists, and established Confucianism. In order to establish the Choson Dynasty on the foundation of Neo-Confucianism, the Choson rulers had to oppose and criticize the Koryo leaders who had ruled the people according to Buddhist teachings.

Generally speaking, Korea was always susceptible to influence from China, its big neighbour, and this includes the influence of Confucianism that brought about profound changes and exerted considerable influence on the Korean people and has been an indispensable component of the Korean moral system, way of life and law, including Christianity. According to Kim (1995:82), "Buddhism was persecuted during the Choson Dynasty (1392-1910), after Choson rulers overthrew the Buddhist Koryo Dynasty." Furthermore, the most important Korean Confucian ceremonies were those that marked the coming of the New Year, marriage, death and the anniversary of an ancestor's death, and among these, funerals had the greatest effect on people's lives.

Consequently, it could be argued that Korean Christianity should be placed in the same social and historical location in which Korean traditional religions situated themselves in the history of the Korean people. Furthermore, an important factor in Christianity's entry into Korea was that foreign countries had introduced all three predominant religions. For this reason, it might have been expected that once initial

suspicion had been broken down, Christianity could become indigenous to Korea more quickly than to some of her Far Eastern counterparts.

Non-Christians in Korea may regard the preacher of Christianity as a compound image of a shaman in Shamanism, a monk in Buddhism and a scholar in Confucianism. It should be mentioned that these religious images also affect the authority of the preacher in Korea.

4.3.1.2 The social background of the preacher's authority

The English term "authority" can be translated into the Korean *Kwon-Yui,* which means literally *powerful dignity* or *powerful position*. It is said that the governing class of the Choson Dynasty (1392-1910) was known as *Yangban* (high class people). Originally, the *Yangban* were civilians and military bureaucrats who gradually became the ruling class. Suffice it to note that they enjoyed many privileges. Among the *Yangban*, civilians were given preferential treatment over military men. Also within the *Yangban* class, children of illegitimate birth were discriminated against and restricted from advancing in society. The *Yangban* did not engage in productive labour. They read the Confucian classics or history books and lived their lives according to Confucian rites.

During The Choson Dynasty, Confucianism affected the patriarchal system of the Korean society. The relationship between husband and wife confirmed the subordinate status of women. In this way, Confucianism emphasized male superiority.

Consequently, the authority of the preachers' message is the authority of

Christ who pleads through them (Rust 1982:5). At this point, it should be noted that authoritative preaching does not have to be authoritarian. Authoritarian preaching places the word of Scripture and the preacher's words over against the listeners. However, authoritative preaching may place the preacher with the listener - sometimes under the Word of Scripture, sometimes alongside the Word, and sometimes after it (Willimon & Lischer 1995:22).

4.3.2 Korean preachers have a heavy workload

It is commonly known that many preachers spend more time while lamenting the lack of study time than on actual study. According to Campbell (2002:172), "Preachers, like the members of their congregation, stay busy with many important activities. There are sermons to prepare, people to visit, meetings to attend and classes to lead; on and on it goes. Being the pastor of a church is, after all, a full-time job."

Erickson and Heflin (1997:85) state:

The changing pastoral role is also a major factor. The pastor as spiritual teacher and helper/healer is being replaced by the pastor as chief executive officer of a business, the local church. Success is measured less by changes in human lives than by numbers. Planning, leading and managing take a higher priority than does study for sermons.

In other words, the numerous hats that pastors are forced to wear may create or intensify uncertainty about their role. Church congregations expect the minister to

serve as an administrator, counsellor, pastor, family person, community person, moderator and role model for discipleship in addition to being the master communicator of God's Word.

In this respect, the unparallelled growth of churches and the demands of a materialistic society have forced preachers in Korea to relegate study and sermon preparation to a secondary activity while the roles of administrator, pastor, organizer, counsellor and teacher superseded that of a preacher. According to Brown, Clinard and Northcutt (1963:10-11), Samuel W. Blizzard discovered some interesting facts concerning the roles of ministers. Attempting to find the preacher's image of himself, he asked 1300 ministers to arrange six roles or functions – preacher, pastor, priest, teacher, organizer and administrator - in the order of importance according to their conception of an ideal pattern. Those who replied (over 700) felt that the minister is: (1) a preacher, (2) a pastor, (3) a priest, (4) a teacher, (5) an organizer and (6) an administrator. Blizzard also asked them to arrange the same six roles functionally according to the amount of time they spent performing these roles. The results were: (1) administrator, (2) pastor, (3) priest, (4) organizer, (5) preacher and (6) teacher. These men declared that preaching ought to be their primary function, but they had reduced it to a very weak fifth-rate role in actual performance.

4.3.3   A reasonable foundation for the preacher's authority

Some say that the preacher has authority because the Bible undergirds proclamation. Others point to the fact that the preacher has been ordained and, therefore, is

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authorized to speak of, and for, God. Still others suggest that preachers speak with authority because they understand the needs, context and history of their congregation. Demaray (1979:109) states, "It is an undeniable principle that the authority of preaching is the result of the Spirit of God present and active. In the preaching itself and in the hearing of the Word. The spiritually alert preacher has some sense of the living Lord in the spoken word." Willimon and Lischer (1995:22-23) assert that most preachers and congregations acknowledge some combinations of authority for preaching:

1.   The sermon has authority because it interprets Scripture.

2.   The sermon has authority because it represents a pastoral word suited to the real needs of the listeners.

3.   The sermon has authority because of its place in the liturgy. It is not in the sermon alone but in worship, including Word and sacrament, that the promise of God's presence is fulfilled.

4.   The sermon has authority because it is intellectually compelling. The preacher is not only an interpreter of Scripture, but commentator on the dilemmas and puzzles of contemporary life.

5.   The sermon has authority because of the preacher's integrity. The preacher is present in the congregation as a spiritual guide, as an exemplar of God's amazing grace, as a fellow pilgrim, or as one who seeks to live the ethics of a faithful life.

6.   The sermon has authority because of the preachers' rhetorical power. They

tell the story that illuminates each congregant's story or the story of the congregation itself.

Moreover, the basis of ministers' authority is the Holy Scriptures, and if they do not preach out of them, they should not be preaching at all. In the Christian ministry, one has to do with God; all else is of secondary concern. One deals with his relationship with us and the consequences of that relationship for human life in the world. Among all professions, ours alone uniquely confesses that persons and the universe cannot be understood fully except in their relationship with God. Affairs of the pulpit and church are God-centred or else they are of the devil. Allen, Blaisdell and Johnston (1997:54) observe, "When we say that a preacher speaks with authority; we are referring to the exercise of power by a person called by Jesus Christ to proclaim the gospel to a particular communication." As Sleeth (1986:4) points out, the preachers' authority for preaching the Word is that this Word has come to them. Historically, we have affirmed that God is revealed in creation, Scripture, Jesus Christ, sacraments, the church, the apostles and the preachers' mouths.

It could be argued that preachers have the authority over the church. When they stand in the pulpit to preach, they are not alone, i.e. the whole church speaks through them. Lueking (1985:53) observes, "The authority of the Word punctures and exposes authoritarianism in those who preach." This implies that a Christian cannot speak meaningfully about the preachers' authority without the vocation of Jesus Christ, because Jesus and church gave authority to them over the power of

the world.

Consequently, the authority of preachers, unlike that of speakers, is not in themselves - they are heralds. Their words are not their own, but come from above. Stated differently, the tremendous claim of this theological foundation is that the Word of God is the basis of the preacher's authority. The over 700 who replied felt that the minister is: (1) a preacher, (2) a pastor, (3) a priest, and (4) a teacher. To the question: Who is the minister? Johnson (1988:83) responds as follows: a Christ-bearer; an image of God; a symbol of the sacred - all of these. Being a symbolic presence includes the whole of the minister's life, not just the preaching role or the spiritual aspect. In the role of the symbol of the sacred, the minister must point beyond self to Christ, always guarding against becoming the object of devotion, making the symbol synonymous with that which it represents.

Certainly, there are differences of office and ministry in the Christian Church, but these do not affect the basic equality of all Christian people. It is ridiculous for one Christian to claim a father's authority over a fellow Christian and demand his/her subordination as though a child if, in reality, the two are brothers. The Pharisees loved making the common people kowtow to them. Christian preachers must do nothing of the sort.

4.3.4   An empirical research on preachers in Korea

By doing an empirical survey, the researcher attempted to assess some existing tendencies in Korean preaching. This survey is undertaken in order to help answer the main research problem in this study, and with the following specific purposes in

mind:

■ To verify the reality of an *excessive authority* of some Korean preachers, and to illustrate that one of the reasons for this excessive authority is based on a patriarchal hierarchy.

■ To verify the reality of a *father figure image* as pertaining to Korean preachers and how this affects the congregation that still exists within the context of a patriarchal hierarchy.

■ To verify the importance of the *preacher's ethos* in the Korean context and how the congregation considers this as being of decisive importance for the identity and function of a preacher.

In order to fulfill this goal, an empirical survey was carried out in some selected churches in Korea by using a questionnaire. The researcher sent a template of the questionnaire by e-mail to a contact person (Nan-Kyung Hyung, Sang-Hee Park and Choon-Taek Oh) with instructions to distribute and collect the questionnaire within three selected churches. The researcher collected the results of the questionnaire one month later. The names of the three churches, as well as those of the three co-workers in these three churches are as follows: the Sarang (Mrs N. K. Hyung / clarinet@hanmail.net), the Myungji (Rev. S. H. Park / oneway8@hanmail.net), the Smyran (Mr. C. T. Oh / oct0567@hanmail.net)

The empirical survey of this study has been limited to three churches (the Sarang,

the Myungji and the Smyrna Churches). Using the results of the questionnaires, the researcher was able to enrich and verify the findings of his thesis. There were 100 respondents from each church, so the total respondents were 300 persons from the three churches.

The reasons that the researcher chose these three churches are the following. Firstly, the Sarang Church is located in the capital city, Seoul, and it also is a mega church. Secondly, the Myungji Church is also located in Seoul, but, because of its size, it is not a mega church. Thirdly, the Smyrna Church is located in a rural area named Changwon City. These three Churches are of the same denomination, namely Presbyterian. It is the researcher's opinion that these three churches represent at least part of the reality of the Presbyterian Church in Korea.

SUVEY FORM - Questionnaire to discern Korean preachers

Please choose one answer below that is closest to your thoughts.

1. Sex?

(   ) male   (   ) female

2. Age?

(   ) 19-29   (   ) 30-39

(   ) 40-49   (   ) 50-59   (   ) 60- years

3. Do you think that preachers in Korea are authoritarian?

( ) Yes ( ) No

4. Do you think that the system of the Korean patriarchal hierarchy affected the authority of the Korean preacher?

( ) Yes ( ) No

5. Do you feel that the pastor of your church has the image of the father figure?

( ) Yes ( ) No

6. What is pastor's best important requisite?

( ) Character or Ethos ( ) Prayer

( ) Spirituality ( ) Administration

The researcher sent a questionnaire to the three Churches with the following questions. Firstly, do you regard preachers in Korea as authoritarian? Secondly, do you think that a patriarchal hierarchy has affected the Korean preacher as a father figure in the church? Thirdly, do you feel that your church's pastor reflects the image of a father figure? Lastly, what, in your opinion, is the preacher's most important requisite? The responses to the above questions illustrate at least part of the attitude of Korean congregations toward Korean preachers, inclusive of their authority and ethos.

The results of these questionnaires are summarized below.

Question one: Do you think that preachers in Korea are authoritarian?

Yes (180)   No (120)
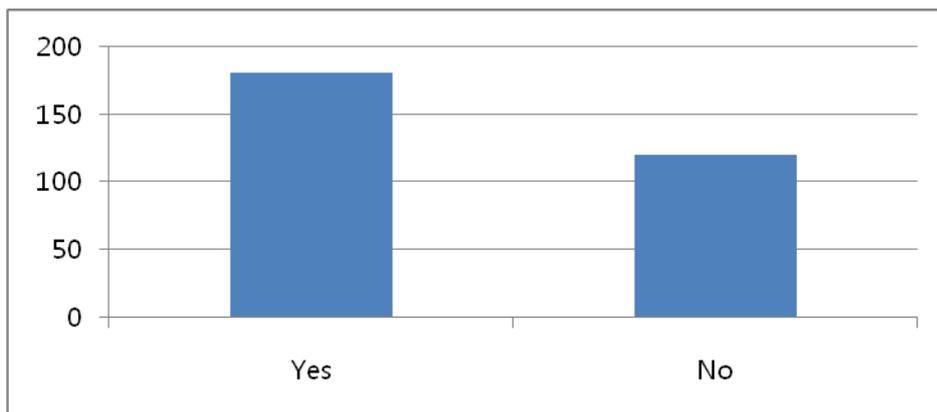
This table indicates that the majority in the congregation of the local church regard preachers in Korea as authoritarian.

Question two: Do you think that a patriarchal hierarchy has affected the Korean preacher as a father figure in the church?

Yes (198)   No (102)
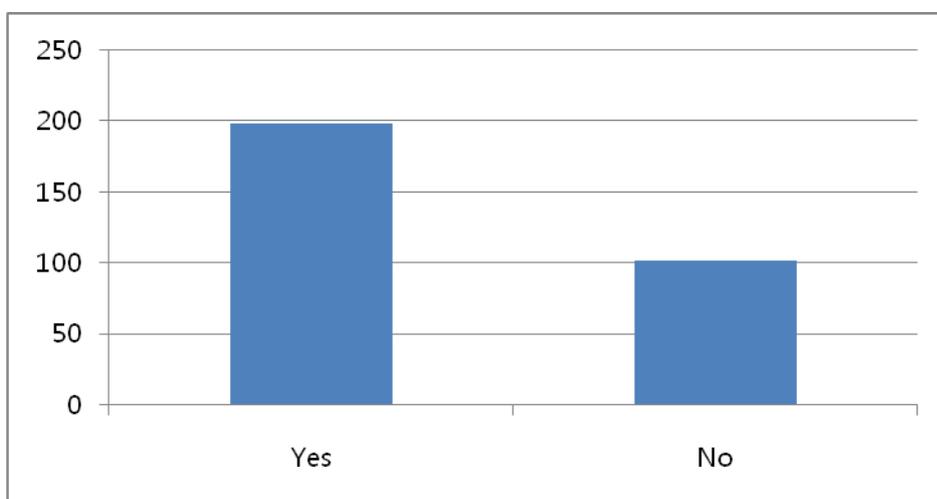
In the response to the above question, a large number think that a patriarchal hierarchy has affected the Korean preacher as a father-figure in the church.

Question three: Do you feel that your church's pastor has the image of a father figure?

Yes (210)   No (90)
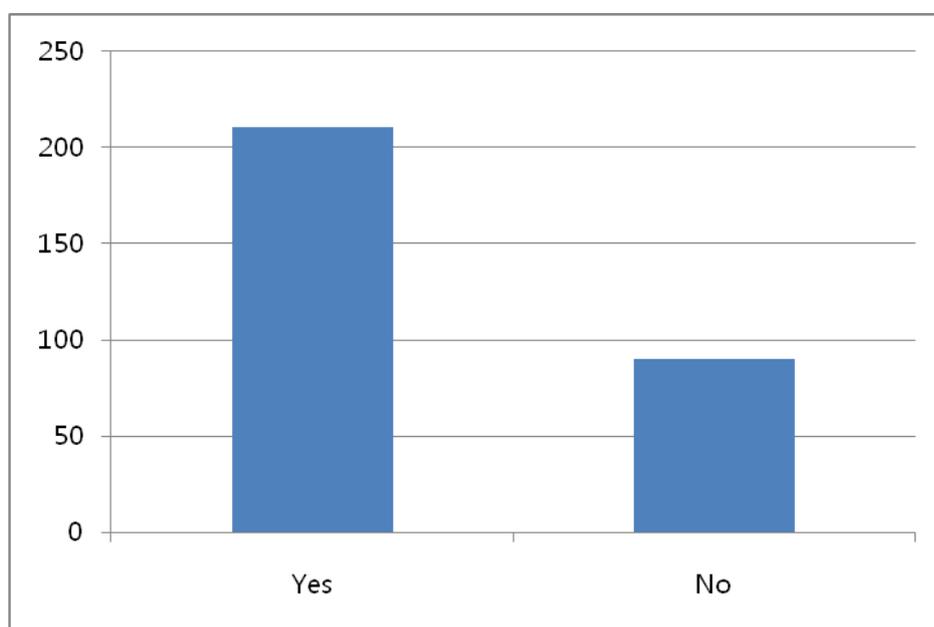
This question shows that the congregation regards his/her pastor as a father figure, that is, a controlling concept of the pastor as a father figure in the local church.

Question four: What is the preacher's most important requisite?

Character or ethos (124)   Prayer (35)

Spirituality (128)   Administration (13)
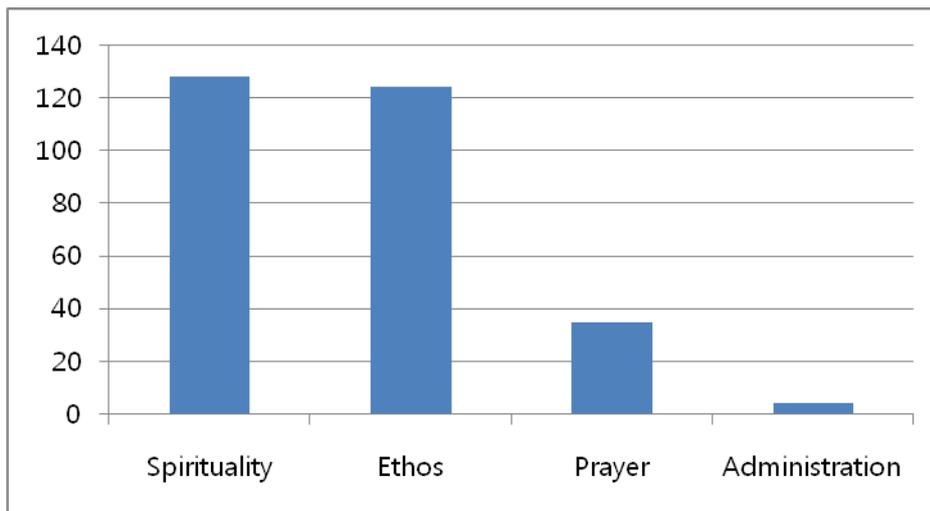
The Korean congregation considers spirituality and ethos as the preacher's most important requisites.

The following two statistics have been obtained from the Korean magazine, *Ministry and Theology* (April 2007), where there were 578 respondents.

Statistics One: What is the preacher's most important requisite?

Spirituality and piety   (63%)   Text analysis   (26.7%)

Congregation analysis (9.1%)   Speech   (0.4%)
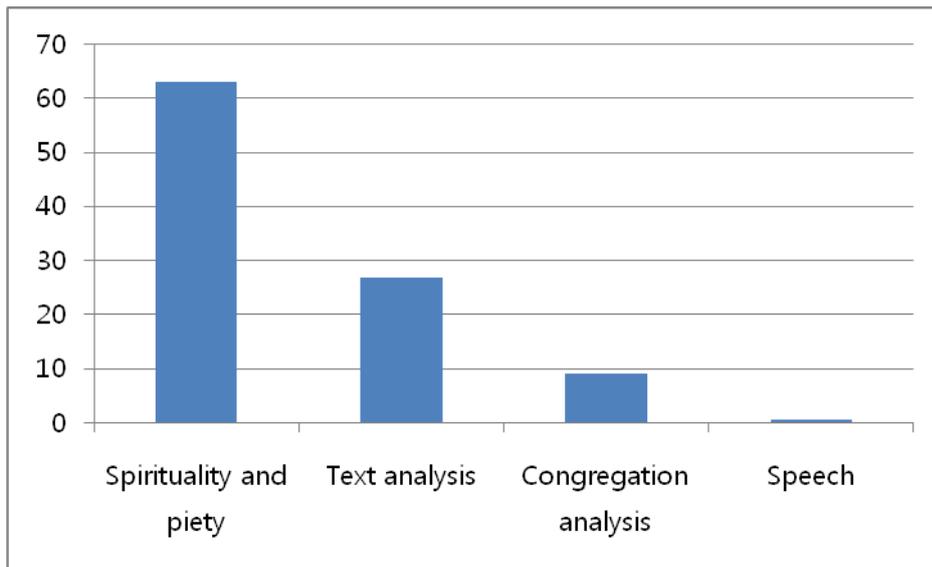
Statistics Two: Korean preachers say that they have lots of other work besides their preaching ministry. The admitting answers, according to age, follow:

     30 years (38.7%)   40 years (41.3%)

     50 years (39%)   60 years (28.1%)
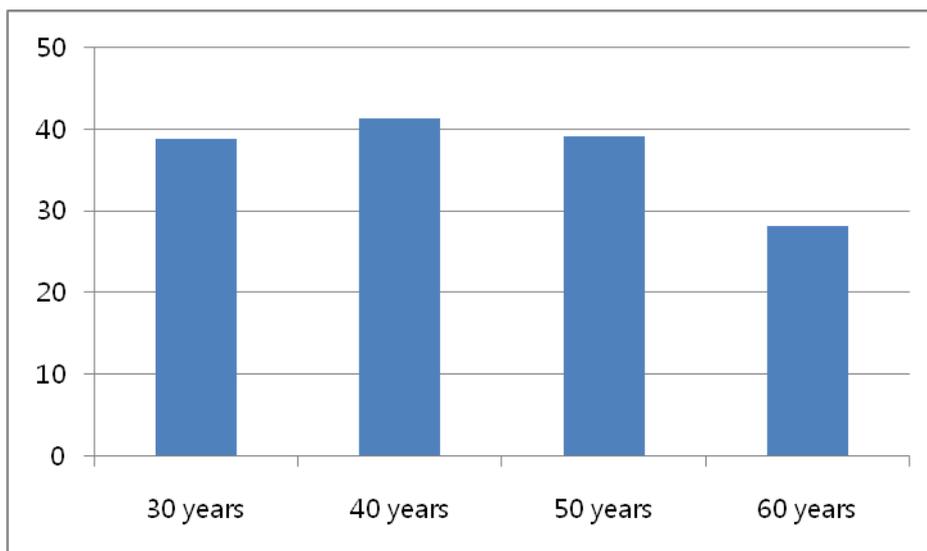
According to Jeong (2007:124-140) the following factors are important for the

enrichment of Korean preaching: (1) continued adherence to biblical preaching, (2) flexibility in view of the changes taking place within congregations, (3) continued development of the preacher's training and (4) improvement of the preaching environment.

The following important statistics were obtained from the Korean Internet named *'Kidok Net'* (2008). There were 1173 respondents, adherents from 27 different areas.

Question: What is your most graceful item within the worship?

Preaching (62.1%)　　Praise (14%)　　Worship mood (13.5%)　　Prayer (7.1%)
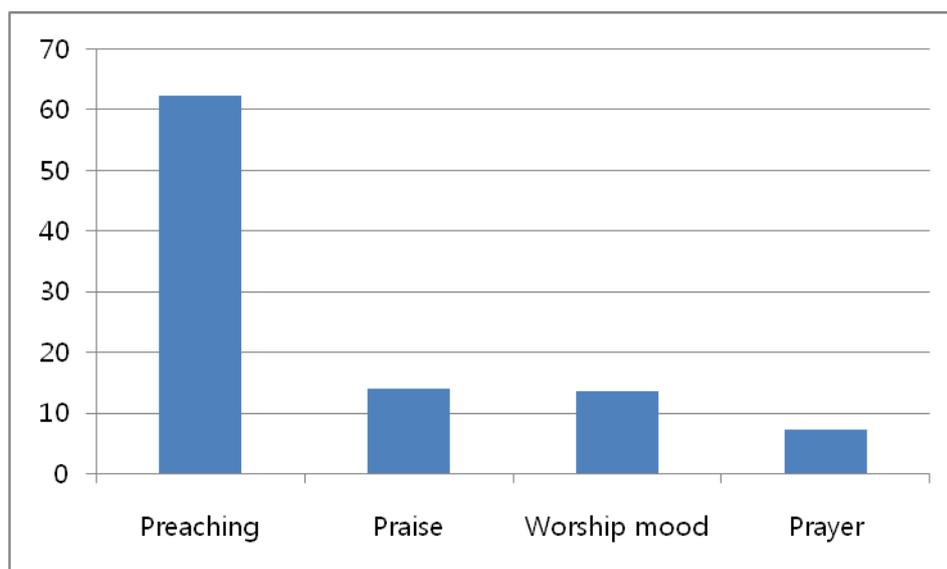
This table shows that most of the congregations consider preaching as the most important item in the worship service. The preachers also regard this as an important statistic.

Here, it is reasonable to comment on the connection between the three empirical

sources. The results show that they all agree about the preacher's ethos. The most important item in the worship service is certainly preaching. Especially, the Korean parishioners think that the patriarchal hierarchy has affected the Korean preacher as a father figure in the church and consider ethos and piety as the most essential attribute for becoming a preacher.

4.4 HOW CAN REASONABLE AUTHORITY BE ESTABLISHED WITHIN A KOREAN CONTEXT?

This section will explore the rhetorical nature of ethos. How do character and authority function as rhetorical strategies and choices within a Korean context?

It is said that truth and personality are the elements of preaching. While truth in itself is a fixed and stable element, personality is a varying and growing aspect. In the union of these two, the combination of identity with variety and stability with growth is provided in the preaching of the Gospel. Forsyth (1957:30) ponders,

> The authority of the pulpit is thus a personal authority. The personal authority of the pulpit is the authority of the divine person who is its burthen. It is an external authority, but it is the authority of an inward objective, living, saving God, before whose visitation the prophet fades like an ebbing voice, and the soul of the martyr cries invisible from under the altar of the Cross.

Allen, Blaisdell and Johnston (1997:52) also remark, "In a postmodern climate, homiletics must reject the idea that all persons listen in the same way. Preachers

need to take account of the phenomena that different people receive and process communications differently." Together with Willimon (2000:48), the researcher agrees with Chrysostom's exceedingly high view of the moral requirements for clergy, not because the clergy are fated to be some upper crust of morally exemplary Christians, but rather because their vocation, as leaders of a countercultural community, demands certain morally strenuous attributes.

Furthermore, the preacher must preach with authority. This is not a matter of self-righteousness or self-assurance. It is an authority, both internal and external, born of the confidence that what is being proclaimed is the Word of God. Gibbs (1960:49) observes:

> A young preacher once received this good advice from an old believer: 'Take care of your character and the Lord will take care of your congregation'. Character is what a person is, reputation is what others think of him. God is far more concerned with what we are than what we do; for what we are determines the value of what we say and do.

As Skinner (1973:35) points out, the adaptation of learned techniques for the improvement of preaching must be made in relation to the individual personality. In addition, a constant spiritual fitness for the task is paramount, and an ever deepening response to the power of the Holy Spirit is essential.

Consequently, the effect of an authoritative message is dependent on the messenger's character. If the preacher's life does not harmonize with his/her words,

the resultant discord will drown out the message, regardless of how well prepared and delivered it is. Johnson (1988:83) believes that the minister's presence addresses the whole person and communicates a message greater than can be put into words.

The debate can be reduced to the Latin maxim that defines the preacher's reasonable authority: *primus inter pares – first among equals* (cf. Bruce 1977:346). This is a phrase that indicates that a person is the most senior of a group of people sharing the same rank or office. In some cases, it may also be used to designate that, while the person described appears to be an equal, he/she actually is the group's unofficial or hidden leader. According to Banks (1980:178):

> Two statements both to troublesome communities, reveal the heart of Paul's attitude to his churches. 'We do not lord it *over* your faith', he tells the Corinthians; 'we work *with* you for your joy' (2 Cor. 1:24). The apostle, for all his divine call, diverse gifts and founding labors, does not set himself in a hierarchical position above his communities nor act in an authoritarian manner towards them.

As a homiletical student, the researcher would like to suggest a biblical model of authority. That is: *serving authority* or *moderate authority*.

It can be concluded that what Jesus is saying is that, towards a fellow-being in the church, one must never adopt the attitude of dependence that children show towards their father, nor must one require others to be, or become, spiritually

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dependent upon one. The father exercises authority over his children because they depend upon him. The reason that God gives, namely, "for you have one Father, who is in heaven," confirms that this is what Jesus intended. Spiritual dependence is due to God, our heavenly Father.

This thesis aims to interpret Resner and Aristotle's understandings of ethos in a particular Christian manner. In a study of ethos from the rhetorical frame of reference, one difficulty is immediately confronted, that is the confusion that exists over the spelling, pronunciation and meaning of ethos. In this thesis, the use of the mode of persuasion (ethos), taken primarily from Aristotle, is a crucial key to effective contemporary preaching. As Resner (1999:19) points out, there are three artistic pisteis: ethos, logos and pathos. Ethos has to do with the speaker's perceived moral character. Logos is about the logical argumentation of the speech itself. Pathos has to do with the way in which the hearers are moved to emotion in the speech. Of these three, moral character (ethos) may almost be called the most potent means of persuasion.

In addition, rhetoric has generally been defined as effective communication intended to persuade. Like rhetoric, the goal and intention of preaching is also persuasion. Moreover, all preaching should essentially be persuasive by nature because, according to the Bible, preaching is a persuasive behaviour that attempts to make changes in people's minds and to elicit transformation of their acts (Acts 18:4, 19:8, 28:23). If persuasion is essential to most preaching, it is useful for us to know how

the biblical authors used persuasion through rhetoric in their ministry. Paul also said that he uses all possible means to save all sorts of men (1 Cor 9:20-22). Without question, speaking persuasively is the task of the preacher.

Practically speaking, if the preacher's goal is to persuade people to a new understanding or a new action, then the work is inherently rhetorical. The preacher's goal is similar to that of the rhetorician. Thus, it can be concluded that rhetoric is an effective tool for good preaching, because it is essential to persuade people in mind, heart and will. Moreover, among many Sophists, the category of ethos (the speaker's character) was generally not considered to be a crucial aspect of persuasion.

In particular, individual ethos becomes the yardstick to determine the virtue or vice of the ostensible neutrality of rhetoric. Ethos, moreover, is a significant means of gaining the conviction of one's hearers. According to Resner (1999:17), Plato's main thrust is that the rhetor must be a good person. Furthermore, ethos has to do with the speaker's nature of character and virtue. This survey of the classical rhetorical tradition reveals that the person of the speaker is a prominent matter of discussion.

It goes without saying that the hearer perceives the speaker's character first through antecedent ethos (reputation), and then through the ethos that the speaker projects in the speech event itself. Therefore, ethos is the key to effective preaching, as it is to all effective communication; 'effectiveness' here understood as the ability to persuade one's hearers of one's position.

The table below (Sunukjian 1982:261) is simple but profound: Listeners tend to

agree with a speaker whom they like, and disagree with one they do not like.

Listeners	Admirable Speakers		Obnoxious Speakers	
	Male	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
Agreeing	25	17	7	4
Disagreeing	5	3	23	16

The above table indicates the importance of the relationship between the preacher and the congregation. When the listeners feel the speakers love them, they are ready to accept almost anything the speakers say. Stated differently, if the listeners think the speakers do not like them, they are ready to reject the speakers' messages.

It is evident that both to the student for the ministry and to the active pastor attention given to the preacher's ethos are of utmost importance. It is furthermore clear that ethos involves more than mere verbal contact between speaker and audience; between persuader and those that are persuaded. There must also be a wider framework of attitudes, a sense of the persuader's position or viewpoint concerning those issues that the persuader is communicating. If the persuader imagines himself or herself in a communicative situation in which a decision has to be made, this cannot be done without the integrity or ethos of the persuader coming into play. Interestingly enough, Aristotle's recommendation to a rhetorician would seem appropriate advice for any persuader keen to make effective use of ethos and personality in the act of persuasion (cf. the discussion of Aristotle in Cockcroft,

Robert & Cockcroft, Susan 2005:193).

4.5   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to explain the general circumstances of the church and preaching, as well as the preacher in the Korean context:

Firstly, a brief survey of the Korean Church reveals that one of the most amazing phenomena in Christianity's recent history has been its rapid increase in Korea. Unfortunately, this church growth has actually stopped and the Church has even showed a decline since the mid-1990s.

Secondly, a concise study on Korean preaching illustrated that the theological establishment is not strong and that prejudiced exegesis of the Bible is spreading.

Thirdly, a brief discussion on Korean preachers revealed that these preachers have unnecessary authority; they must perform many activities; and that a reasonable foundation for the preachers' authority is needed in a Korean context.

Lastly, a reasonable authority of the preachers within a Korean context is that the Word of God is the foundation of their authority.

For this reason, true biblical preachers can see fruit and receive gratitude from those who have heard the words of life from their mouths. This is the beginning of their genuine authority in the church among the believers; they can become "fathers in faith" for many of them. According to Allen (1988:27), the authority of the sermon can no longer rest solely upon external sources that people commonly

acknowledge today. In the contemporary climate, the preacher needs to develop an internal authority, that is, evidence within the message itself for the listener to seriously accept the claims of the sermon.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RHETORICAL FOUNDATION OF THE PREACHER'S ETHOS

This chapter will analyse the foundation of the preacher's ethos. To do this, a brief survey of rhetoric will first be offered. Secondly, ethos will be examined in detail and, lastly, the preacher's ethos will be discussed.

5.1   A BRIEF SURVEY OF RHETORIC

This section will firstly examine the existing definition of rhetoric. Secondly, the three rhetorical proofs will be demonstrated. Thirdly, the purpose of rhetoric will be studied. Fourthly, the relevance of rhetoric to preaching will be considered. Fifthly, the rhetorical influence on the preacher will be discussed and, lastly, comment on the importance of rhetoric for today will follow.

5.1.1   A definition of "rhetoric"

When starting an examination of the preacher's ethos, one question should be discussed in advance, i.e. what is rhetoric? Today, "rhetoric" usually means empty talk. One reason is this: the elocution movement, with its excessive emphasis on style, blossomed during the last century (Kooienga 1989:18). It is said that rhetoric is the purposeful use of verbal language in relation to a particular audience. In its classical sense, rhetoric is the art of persuasion. Booth (2004:3) states, "No one

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definition will ever pin rhetoric down. As Aristotle insisted, in the first major work about it – *The Art of Rhetoric* – rhetoric has no specific territory or subject matter of its own, since it is found everywhere." This implies that rhetoric is, to a certain extent, the artificer of persuasion or the influencing and swaying of the mind through words. Corbett (1990:20) says, "Our English noun *rhetoric* derives from the Greek feminine adjective *rhetorike*, which is elliptical for *rhetorike techne* (the art of the rhetor or orator). English got its word immediately from the French *rhetorique*." Cole (1991:2) also declares, "There is no trace of it in Greek before the point in the Gorgias where the famous Sophist decides to call the art he teaches the 'rhetorly' – that is rhetor's or speaker's art (*rhetorike techne*)." Habinek (2005:38) surmises that early in the fourth century BC, rhetoric came to be identified as a craft, or in Greek, *tekhne*.

More cautiously, rhetoric is the capacity for seeing how to be as persuasive as the subject and situation will permit. Cockcroft and Cockcroft (2005:3) define it as follows: "Rhetoric could be very broadly defined as the 'art of discourse', or more precisely, the 'art of persuasive discourse' in that this most widely used and overworked term refers both to spoken and written language." Kennedy (1984:9) also states, "Rhetoric was a systematic academic discipline universally taught throughout the Roman Empire. It represented approximately the level of high school education today and was, indeed, the exclusive subject of secondary education." As Cole (1991:2) points out, the basic and perhaps quite obvious fact about rhetoric is too often obscured or ignored in standard accounts of its origin and development.

Thus, rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of discovering a possible means

of persuasion in reference to any subject whatever (Aristotle 1967:15). Pernot (2005:41) observes, "Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, then, is the crowning achievement of rhetorical theory in Classical Greece." Willimon and Lischer (1995:409) point out that sound definitions of rhetoric include the art, study or skill of using language effectively and persuasively, the art of speaking or writing effectively, and skill in the effective use of speech.

Rhetoric may also be defined as a skill to persuade people in a certain way during discourse. Booth (2004:10) states, "Since rhetoric terms are so ambiguous, it will be useful to rely throughout on the following summary of the distinctions I've suggested. Rhetoric: The whole range of arts not only of persuasion but also of producing or reducing misunderstanding." Hogan and Reid (1999:29) point out that a modern rhetorician has contemporized that definition in this way: Rhetoric is the art of finding and employing the most effective means of persuasion on any subject, considered independently of intellectual mastery of that subject.

As a result, rhetoric is the theory and practice of persuasive discourse. As an ancient art, it encompasses the written and spoken word. Many of the church's greatest preachers and bishops were trained as rhetoricians (Lischer 2002:277).

5.1.2 The three rhetorical proofs: ethos, pathos and logos

For a long time, the concept of rhetoric has been considered negatively. However, Augustine promoted its positive aspects. It is said that Aristotle distinguishes three means of persuasion that the rhetorician's art can produce (Corbett 1990:23). Hogan

and Reid (1999:95) state, "Good speakers shape how listeners view them as speakers (ethos), involve listeners emotionally (pathos), and shape the reasons offered by shifting through the possible arguments, making choices about what to include and what to exclude (logos)." Mitternacht (2007:76) also observes "Aristotle distinguished three kinds of proofs: the first depends upon the moral character of the speaker, the second upon putting the hearer in a certain frame of mind, the third upon the speech itself, in so far as it proves or seems to prove." According to Nel (1998:107), classical rhetoricians, such as Aristotle and Cicero, found it useful to consider persuasive communication from three perspectives: the first was about character (ethos); the second, the emotional register of the audience (pathos); and the third was about the content of arguments used (logos).

There are three technical proofs that Aristotle called the *pisteis*. These are pathos – persuasive proof that arises as an effect of understanding who the audience is and the speaker's ability to move the audience emotionally; ethos – persuasive proof that arises as an effect of the speaker's character; and logos – persuasive proof that arises as an effect of the argument and rational linkages presented in the speech. According to Habinek (2005:103):

> Aristotle describes proofs as un-artistic and artistic. The artistic proofs fall into three categories. Ethos; proofs based upon the character of the accused, the accuser, the witnesses, and the speaker. These proofs may be explicit or implicit. Logos; proofs based upon reasoning, analysis, argument, as contained in the language of the speaker. Pathos; proofs based upon the

emotion of the audience as constructed by the speaker.

Cockcroft and Cockcroft (2005:4) also comment:

> Aristotle classifies the means of persuasion in three main categories, and from these categories we derive three permanent working principles of persuasion. There are: ethos (persuasion through personality and stance); pathos (persuasion through the arousal of emotion); and logos (persuasion through reasoning).

Kraus (2005:79) maintains that, for Aristotle, technical proofs are three in number: ethos, pathos and logos, or as he puts it himself: the first depends upon the moral character of the speaker, the second upon putting the hearer into a certain frame of mind, and the third upon the speech itself, in so far as it proves, or seems to prove.

This implies that Aristotle spoke of included artistic proof – artistic in the sense that it fell within the province of the art of rhetoric: rational appeal (logos), emotional appeal (pathos), and ethical appeal (ethos). Hogan and Reid (1999:29-30) assert:

> Aristotle follows this definition by limiting the search for the means of persuasion to three factors: *ethos*, which is persuasive plausibility that arises as an effect of the persona or character projected by the speaker – who listeners think we are. *Pathos*, which is persuasive plausibility that arises as an effect of understanding the audience and the ability to move them emo-

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tionally – why listeners should care; and *logos*, which is persuasive plausibility that arises as an effect of using what are perceived as good reasons – what we are going to say to listeners.

According to Aristotle (1967:17), now, the speech furnished three kinds of proofs. The first depends upon the moral character of the speaker, the second upon putting the hearer into a certain frame of mind, and the third upon the speech itself, in so far as it proves, or seems to prove.

5.1.2.1   Ethos

Naturally, ethos is the moral character of the speaker. Lawrie (2005:21) states, "The audience's perception of the moral character of the speaker would aid or hinder persuasion." This implies that ethos is a projection of the speaker's character. Hogan and Reid (1999:30) also observe, "Quintilian's definition was purposefully less complex than that of Aristotle. He defined oratory in a way that was later turned into a simple Latin dictum: *vir bonus dicendi peritus* – 'the good man speaking well'." According to Corbett (1990:23), a third mode of persuasion was the ethical appeal that stemmed from the speaker's character, especially as that character was evinced in the speech itself, i.e. a person ingratiated him-/herself with an audience – and thereby gained their trust and admiration.

Moreover, among the three proofs moral character or ethos, so to say, constitutes the most effective means of proof.

5.1.2.2   Pathos

Aristotle (1967:17) broadly defined pathos as creating a certain disposition in the audience. Lawrie (2005:21) states, "Pathos or proof by appeal to emotions or feelings: You can often persuade people very effectively by appealing to their feelings, values, prejudices or interests." In this respect, an equally important dimension of pathos is getting to know the congregation. As Hogan and Reid (1999:74) point out, where popular usage treats pathos as little more than a literate synonym for pity, sentimentality or suffering, the rhetorical notion actually refers to the whole range of emotional reactions that the audience experiences as affecting them.

Stated differently, pathos is the means of persuasion that is most concerned with understanding how to move the audience into caring about, and then acting on, what is said. Hogan and Reid (1999:75) comment, "The word *emotion* is derived from the Latin verb *movere*, which means to move." Moreover, people use the term pathos to describe the effect emotions and feelings have on an audience as well as the role those emotions play in persuasion.

5.1.2.3   Logos

In rhetoric, logos is concerned with actively thinking about, and reflecting on, a situation and then making appropriate choices of words and arguments, given the situation. Lawrie (2005:20) observes, "Logos or proof by appeal to reason: You can

persuade an audience by means of reasonable arguments." According to the rhetorical handbooks, the orator may argue from the appeal to reason (logos) (Thompson 2001:68).

Kraus (2005:79) points out that, in Aristotle, the three technical proofs are neatly distributed among the three main factors involved in linguistic communication: Ethos clearly is associated with the speaker, while pathos is aimed at the listener's mind, and rational argumentation logos goes with the speech itself.

5.1.3 The purpose of rhetoric

It is said that rhetoric is the study of verbal communication in a communal environment. According to Aristotle (1967:15), "Rhetoric, so to say, appears to be able to discover the means of persuasion in reference to any given subject." Moreover, Booth (2004:4) surmises, "In its beginning, rhetoric was often confined to the oratory of males; usually it was the range of resources for winning in politics." This implies that rhetoric is the study of what is persuasive in human communication, whether intentional or simply a consequence of the human condition. Rhetoric is concerned with all of the processes in which people use symbols to influence one another. Kennedy (1984:19) asserts:

> There are three species of rhetoric, a theory formulated by Aristotle and universally found in subsequent writers: judicial, deliberative and epideictic. The species is judicial when the author is seeking to persuade the audience to make a judgment about events occurring in the past; it is deliberative when

he seeks to persuade them to take some action in the future; it is epideictic when he seeks to persuade them to hold or reaffirm some point of view in the present.

According to Lawrie (2005:16), rhetorical acts occur in so many different settings that it is difficult to categorize them, so it is probably wiser to focus on the functions of rhetoric instead. Aristotle focused mainly on the function of persuasion, i.e., winning over the audience to a certain view. In an extreme case, a rhetorician faces a hostile audience and tries to persuade them to change their minds about some issue.

Moreover, rhetoric is about discovering the available means of persuasion in a given situation. Willimon and Lischer (1995:409) observe, "In the classical Greek period, rhetoric was understood as the oral art of persuasion, with its main function to train people adequately to defend themselves in courts of law." In its most classical form, rhetoric has always been an exercise in the art of persuasion relevant to matters open to dispute. Habinek (2005:47) comments, "There are three goals of rhetoric: to teach, to move, to persuade." According to Stowers (1986:51), rhetorical theory was always a combination of what actually happened in practice and what the rhetoricians thought ought to be the case.

As a result, classical rhetoric was associated primarily with persuasive discourse. Its aim was to convince or persuade an audience to think or act in a certain way. Later, the principles of rhetoric were extended to apply to informative or expository modes of discourse but, in the beginning, they were applied almost

exclusively to the persuasive modes of discourse.

5.1.4   The relevance of rhetoric in preaching

In fact, rhetoricians have devoted extensive studies to preaching; studies that have contributed to a better understanding of the rhetorical nature of preaching. The contemporary debate about rhetoric has centred on the use of communications theory and media techniques in the service of the Gospel. According Lawrie (2005:14):

> The Christian church supported rather than opposed the teaching of rhetoric, because the preaching of the Gospel also required effective speaking. Many of the fathers of the church, Augustine, for instance, were trained rhetoricians. In later times, many of the standard textbooks on rhetoric were written by Christian ministers. Blair, Campbell and Whately, the most influential writers on rhetoric in England in the 18th and 19th centuries, were all clergymen.

Kennedy (1993:23) also comments, "Augustine stands in a dialectical relation to the rhetorical tradition of which he was part. After his conversion to Christianity, Augustine sought to reconcile rhetoric and homiletics." Wood (1965:20-21) points out that Dr. Campbell Morgan defined the essential ingredients of all true preaching as "truth, clarity and passion." To these we would only add the two further elements, "persuasiveness" and "colour." Given these five factors, it should be possible to reach men and women effectively with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, there is a fundamental relationship between the art of

preaching and the art of the speaking. Stated differently: preaching involves rhetoric. Shin (2004:48-49) says:

> What is the relationship between rhetoric and preaching? This question was probably the most hotly debated question in the third and fourth centuries. The refusal to apply rhetoric to preaching is deeply rooted in the misunderstanding of the definition of rhetoric by Plato. One of the goals of preaching, like that of rhetoric, is also persuasion. Biblical teaching supports preaching as persuasion.

Hogan and Reid (1999:9) also observe, "Preaching is a skill that can be learned and improved upon, for preaching is a rhetoric art. Preaching is an art of connecting with congregation. It is acquired through the knowledge of principles, through understanding how master preachers before us." As Resner (1999:45) points out, Chrysostom argues that the preacher needs to use rhetoric because of human weakness. The people need more than "the simple Gospel"; rhetorical embellishment provides this "more."

It should be noted that learning the theory of rhetoric is not enough to make one an effective preacher. However, what follows is predicated upon the understanding that knowledge of rhetorical theory can make one a more effective speaker. In a sense, effective preaching is effective rhetoric. According to Oberhelman (1991:116), "Eloquence cannot be separated from Christian truth. Eloquence without truth is empty, false rhetoric." Park (2004:84) also comments, "Augustine (354-430) was also

a teacher of rhetoric, first in Carthage and later in Milan. His work entitled *'On Christian Doctrine'* was effectively the first homiletical handbook." Wilson (1995:63) maintains that persuasion results not just from reason (logos), but also from character (ethos) and emotions (pathos), elements that have been present, though largely ignored, in theology through the ages.

Based on the above, one could ask the following question: How do I preach so that what I say can be received while the sermon simultaneously allows fresh understanding of the living Spirit, the revealing word of God? This is a question about rhetorical culture that is implicitly present in a preacher's struggle to communicate effectively with a congregation (Troeger 2003:102). Preaching is a rhetorical act and we want to offer an interpretation of the rhetorical tradition as it relates to the art of preaching (Hogan and Reid 1999:21). Furthermore, for the future, conversations with contemporary rhetoricians must return and renew the field of homiletics. McClure (1991:3) believes that an abundance of rhetorical strategies exists for preaching. As a result, preachers of the early church employed classical rhetoric (Kooienga 1989:25).

5.1.5   Rhetorical influences on the preacher

It is sometimes argued that the preacher's only task is to proclaim the good news and leave the results entirely to God. In the early church, rhetoric was view negatively. Resner (1999:42) comments, "Jerome (342-420 A.D.) advises preachers to abandon rhetoric."

However, classical rhetorical theory offered an account of the qualities that a speaker needed, such as good sense, goodwill and virtue. Pernot (2009:327) comments:

> Everyone knows that the spoken and written word plays an essential role in religion, as language is necessarily used to address the gods or God, to speak about the divine or the sacred, and to express religious feeling or awareness. All these phenomena can be grouped under the term 'rhetoric' as it relates to forms of expression, in the broad sense of rhetoric, and to the art of discourse in the strict sense.

According to Lawrie (2005:21):

> Aristotle even claimed that the character of the speaker was the strongest means of persuasion of them all. It obviously helps if you already have a reputation to back you, but if the audience does not know you, you have to present your character through your words and your delivery.

Shin (2004:50) points out that, although classical rhetoric is not essential for effective preaching, today's preacher needs to spend more time with the ancient teachers to understand and utilize something of classical rhetoric and persuasion.

Consequently, the implication for preachers is clear: they are not to shy away from the use of "techniques" in order to engage their listeners and communicate their message; striving to know their listeners, they must craft their words in order to

achieve the most effective impact (O'Connor 2007:120). Naturally, a preacher who adopts a rhetorical stance connects with the congregation. This implies that a person ingratiates him-/herself with an audience – and thereby gains their trust and admiration. As Hogan and Reid (1999:20) point out, the time has come for preachers to change and begin to understand the essential relationship between homiletics and rhetoric. It follows that, educated as he was, Calvin never lost his appreciation for the arts of rhetoric and eloquence (De Koster 1986:321).

5.1.6 The importance of rhetoric for today

For a long time, the concept of rhetoric has been viewed negatively. In a sense, the word "rhetoric" is often misconstrued because of a pejorative use in contemporary contexts. Nowadays, by almost any criteria, the word rhetoric is being muddied. In popular usage, it has become a word used to disparage someone else's argument. For example, "My opponent's speech on the environment was just so much rhetoric! The candidate gave us nothing but rhetoric when what we need are solutions."

However, in recent years, perceptions regarding the concept of rhetoric have changed gradually from negative to positive. MacIntyre (1976:67) explains, "The list of virtues in the Ethics is not a list resting on Aristotle's own personal choices and evaluations. It reflects what Aristotle takes to be the code of a gentleman in contemporary Greek society." Lawrie (2005:14) also states:

In fact, rhetoric became a fundamental part of the Roman educational systems, a part taken over by the European heirs of the Roman Empire.

Throughout the Middle Ages, the so-called *trivium*, that is, the three subjects of logic, grammar and rhetoric, formed the foundation of university education in Europe.

According to Cockcroft and Cockcroft (2005:6), rhetoric grew with the democracies, political assemblies and law courts of Greece and Rome, although it suffered set-backs as a result of imperial autocracy and barbarian invasion. Throughout the Middle Ages, although both church and state narrowly channelled and fragmented rhetoric, it remained central to medieval culture as it evolved; its spectacular revival as a complete system in the Renaissance was based on rediscovered texts. Since the 17th century, although it declined as a taught discipline, rhetoric has continued to flourish as a practical political instrument. Today, rhetoric enjoys a critical revival, not only continuing its political functions, but also developing new variants in the media explosion of the 21st century.

From the above-mentioned discussion, we may conclude that preaching is a kind of rhetoric. This modest claim opens the door to a homiletics based on rhetorical

Although classical rhetoric has largely disappeared from our schools, there was a time when it was very much alive. For extended periods during its 2000-year history, the study of rhetoric was the central discipline in the curriculum. Rhetoric enjoyed this eminence because, during those periods, skill in oratory or in written discourse was the key to preferment in the courts, the forum and the church (Corbett 1990:21).

From the above-mentioned discussion, we may conclude that preaching is a kind of rhetoric. This modest claim opens the door to a homiletics based on rhetorical

principles. The way is now clear to utilize rhetoric and metaphor as the bridge in a positive interface of rhetoric and preaching. According to Willimon and Lischer (1995:416), "The classical canons of rhetoric need not be abandoned as a debt but expanded. Preaching owes a debt to rhetoric; rhetoric's influence on preaching will continue." Resner (1999:42) also comments, "Cyprian encourages a spare use of rhetoric for Christian speakers." Fiorenza (1999:17) points out that Frank Porter of Yale University charted three such shifts: During the first stage the book's records were imposed upon the present as an external authority; the second stage was that of historical science; and the third stage was that of historical criticism. This third literary-hermeneutical paradigm seems currently in the process of decentering into a fourth paradigm that inaugurates a rhetorical-ethical turn. This fourth paradigm relies on the analytical and practical tradition of rhetoric in order to insist on the public-political responsibility of biblical scholarship.

Thus far, the notion of rhetoric has been surveyed. The following section will discuss the concept of ethos in detail.

5.2   A CONCISE STUDY ON ETHOS

This section explores a survey on ethos. To accomplish this, the definition of "ethos" will first be examined. Secondly, the position of ethos in rhetoric will be demonstrated. Thirdly, a study the details of ethos will follow and, lastly, a comment on the importance of ethos will follow.

5.2.1   What is ethos?

It should be mentioned that ethos is a difficult concept to define as it is somewhat complex and intangible. According to Troost (1983:109), "The human ethos is a human inspiration both from the inside and from the outside. It is a motivation that seizes us and drives us on in a certain direction." Cole (1991:11) maintains, "Ethos is a certain impression of a speaker's character." According to Hogan and Reid (1999:52), when the Greek word ethos was translated into the Latin language and Roman culture, it did not mean character or virtue. Rather, ethos became *auctoritas*, the word for authority. Speakers needed to demonstrate by what power they had been given the permission to speak, more than their good sense or goodwill.

Generally speaking, ethos is a term adapted from science and is in common usage in the scholarly community. Baumann (1972:42-43) observes, "Contemporary studies of ethos have settled on the following elements in defining this concept operationally: (1) Expertness, (2) Trustworthiness, (3) Personal dynamism." As Odiam (1989:35) points out, ethos (the first of the three artificial proofs) refers to the personal character of the speaker as determined by the speech itself.

5.2.2   The position of ethos within rhetoric

Ancient rhetoricians realized that the speaker's ethos was an important means of persuasion, or source of conviction. According to them, one of the three means of persuasion is the speaker's moral character (ethos), which may almost be described

as the most potent means of persuasion. Stated differently, they considered ethos to be the most powerful means of persuasion, yet one usually fails to notice it at work. Kraus (2005:80) states, "Aristotle, however, does not make ethos just one out of several technical means of persuasion, but he even calls it almost, so to speak, the most authoritative one." Willimon (1996:169) also comments, "Of the three artistic forms of proof that Aristotle listed as available to the public speaker – logos, pathos and ethos – Aristotle knew the ethos, the character of the speaker constitutes the most effective means of proof."

Thus, it seems only natural that the speaker's character should be regarded as an efficient means of persuasion in eloquence. Hogan and Reid (1999:49) observe, "Aristotle said that, of the three means of persuasion, character is almost the controlling factor in persuasion." According to Willimon and Lischer (1995:66), "Aristotle defines three artistic forms of proof (evidence) provided by the speech. Of these – the logical (logos), emotional (pathos), and ethical (ethos) – Aristotle says: moral character, so to say, constitutes the most effective means of proof."

Moreover, what the ancients used to call oratorical ethos can be summed up as the impression that speakers, by means of their words, give of themselves. Foucault (1977:138) asks, "What matter who's speaking?" Benoit and Benoit (2008:39) point out that Aristotle's conception of credibility (he called it ethos) was intrinsic, consisting of the impression of the speaker created by the speech itself: ethos should be achieved by what the speaker says.

5.2.3 The details of ethos

Expressions, such as attitude, disposition, moral character and moral customs, can summarize the term "ethos." Roen (1989:26) states, "Let us narrow our vision to consider only its ethos, the manner in which the preacher expresses his own character and personality through the words of the sermon." In a sense, ethos and pathos are closely connected, for one effect of ethos, as well as inducing a degree of trust, is also to produce a feeling of goodwill in the audience toward the speaker, so that the projection of the appropriate character achieves more subtly the effect sought by explicit appeals for a favourable hearing. Kraus (2005:80) observes:

> Ethos is the most authoritative proof. Aristotle is quite reticent as to particulars. At least he informs the reader that independently of demonstration, the things which make the speaker himself trustworthy are three in number. These qualities are prudence, virtue, and goodwill.

According to Cockcroft and Cockcroft (2005:191), the focus of ethos is on the persuaders and their personal stance. The best way to understand stance is to stretch the imagination and powers of empathy by trying to write or speak in such a way that a potential audience is convinced. In traditional rhetoric, this exercise was called "representation of character."

Moreover, ethos also includes all of the means by which – once the attention has been grasped – speakers makes themselves appear to be good, reliable and interesting in the hearers' opinion. Not surprisingly, this issue of character was

essential to authority in the era in which Aristotle could say that there are three things people trust other than logical demonstration: practical wisdom, virtue, and goodwill. In other words, humans trust wise counsel (logos) from an individual of good character (ethos). Carey (1996:407) observes, "This view is reflected in the list of desired characteristics singled out by Aristotle as the province of ethos: wisdom, virtue and goodwill toward the audience. Certainly Aristotle is right to stress the significance of ethos in deliberative oratory." According to Cunningham (1991:119), "The moral formation of people today is far more diverse than was that of the typical Athenian citizen; we belong not simply to a particular city-state, but to a wide range of overlapping communities." Louw (2008:278) surmises that eschatology views human beings from the perspective of who they already are in Christ. Salvation and grace determine one's identity. You are accepted unconditionally for who you are. It is not what you do that is fundamental for the quality of ethos, but who you are. The indicative of salvation determines the imperative that emanates from the eschatological character of salvation.

It should be mentioned that the relationship between moral character and persuasion is complex and will become more so when applied to arguments within Christian theology. However, the term ethos demands some clarification. Ethos suggests more than a simple list of the speaker's virtues and vices. The term also refers to the entire range of characteristics that describe how people live their lives. Kennedy (1998:43) states, "Ethos, or the artistic creation of credibility and sympathy by a speaker, probably developed slowly over time with the growth of moral values."

Hogan and Reid (1999:52) also comment:

> By focusing more on external structural authority than on moral character or virtue, speakers were often able to deflect questions of character. Rather than having to convince an audience to listen, it was assumed that the audience would listen because of a position that was held by the speaker. This became an important issue within the early church, growing within the Hellenistic culture that was a synthesis of Greek and Roman cultures.

As Louw (2008:272) points out, the biblical ethos is fundamentally founded by God's grace: a salvific ethos of grace. In this regard the salvation of Christ is central. The impact of such a Christological focus on life is thankfulness, thanksgiving and a life of gratitude, praise and joy.

5.2.4 The connections of the speakers' ethos and their lives

According to the evangelist, Matthew, the Lord asked his disciples the following question at Caesarea Philippi: "Who do you say that I am?," and received a surprising answer. Each time you ask it of yourself or of other people, the answer is likely to be interesting. Marshall (2005:90) states, "When Cicero writes that the best way to persuade an audience that you are good is to be good, he notes that the character, principles, conduct, and course of life of litigants are extremely important to the success of an oration." Gerhardsson (1981:119) also comments, "A good character must be expressed and realized in good actions." According to Mouton

(2002:16), the Bible has been used in Christian ethics during the past 20 centuries and continues to be used in many different ways. If people want to use the Bible to find answers and make decisions with regard to particular moral issues, they will use it in a specific way. If they want to use the Bible to educate their children and to form communities of character where people learn to adopt, and live, specific virtues, they will use it in other ways. If they want to use the Bible to explain how the world and society should be, they will use it in yet another way. Without realizing it, people approach the Bible from radically different historical paradigms and sets of questions and, consequently, find different answers, and come to a variety of conclusions.

As Aristotle cautioned speakers in a much earlier age, too much emphasis on technique overlooks ethos: the persuasive aspects of people's own characters. Carey (1996:406) observes, "For Aristotle the use of ethos, moral character, as a means of persuasion consists in creating through the speech a character that will induce the required degree of trust on the part of the hearer." It follows that a means of persuasion, ethos, or moral character, requires an understanding of moral values on the part of members of a society.

5.3   A BRIEF STUDY ON THE PREACHER'S ETHOS

This section briefly investigates the preacher's ethos a definition of which will first be examined. Second, the importance of the preacher's ethos in preaching will be demonstrated. Third, the focus will be on the relevance of the preacher's ethos and

persuasion. Fourth, the virtues of the preacher will be considered. Fifth, the emphasis will be on the preparation of the preachers themselves and, lastly, the researcher will comment on the two elements of preaching, namely truth and personality.

5.3.1　The definition of "the preacher's ethos"

The concept of the preacher's ethos is rooted in ancient Greek rhetoric. Willimon and Lischer (1995:66) state, "The character of a speaker traditionally has been described as ethos. From a homiletical perspective, however, ethos must be defined as the image held of a communicator at a given time by a receiver – either one person or a group." Cockcroft and Cockcroft (2005:16) also remark, "We divide the concept of ethos into two interdependent concepts: personality and stance." According to Williams (1988:66), there are three types of ethos that Stephen Lucas mentions in *The art of public speaking*. These three are initial credibility, derived credibility and terminal credibility. "Initial credibility" is the impact that the audience's ethical perception of the preacher has before the preaching event takes place. "Derived credibility" in preaching is that ethos or appeal that is produced or generated in the sermon, which Aristotle recognized as supreme. "Terminal credibility" is the audience's perception of the preacher at the end of the sermon.

Moreover, the character of the preacher, as with all speakers, must be considered independently from knowledge and intelligence. As an element of ethos, character relates to the audience's perception of the preacher's person. Willimon

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(2000:34) comments:

> Even in the area of public speaking, especially there, Aristotle sees character as an essential requirement. Of the three artistic forms of proof that Aristotle listed as being available to the public speaker – logos, pathos, and ethos – Aristotle knew that ethos, the character of the speaker, constitutes the most effective means of proof. Cato, likewise, defined a good speech as a good person speaking well.

In terms of the sermon, to understand what the preachers are communicating, they need to ask themselves and the other members of their audience the basic question: Who do you say that I am? The answer is the preachers' ethos, their character as it is revealed by their words, inflections, and gestures in their sermons. In this respect, the object of these sermons is the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, not the self-revelation of the preachers. Yet the preachers' ethos ─ their lives and character ─ are reflected in the sermon.

5.3.2   The importance of the preacher's ethos in preaching

It is said that the preacher's character or ethos make the sermon fruitful. Wilson (1995:78) states:

> Phillips Brooks (1832-1893) believed the ethos of the preacher was so important that he made it part of the central feature of his homiletic. Ethos is more than our personal ethics: It has to do with the personality of the

preacher and the character of relationship with the hearers.

Roen (1989:16) also observes:

> It is what establishes closeness or distance between speaker and hearer, and that relationship is part of the message of the sermon. The ethos of the preacher is what first attracts our attention and makes us listen to what is being said. For any speech to be effective, the hearer must say, "This is someone I want to listen to."

Of course, we often form an opinion of preachers long before they begin to preach. According to Williams (1988:60-61), the stress in preaching shifts from the classical concept of the influence of the speaker's perceived character, as Aristotle advocated, to the demand that the person preaching actually has a personal superior quality of character, as both Plato and Quintilian demanded. However, with regard to ethos, there is also the matter of goodwill in preaching.

It should be mentioned that Christianity has always added significant weight to the notion of personhood. In early Christian thought, a person is understood as existing in relationship to others; personhood thus necessarily implies community. According to Hogan and Reid (1999:52), "The question of external ethos, over and against internal ethos – character developed within the sermon itself – may be one of the most crucial questions for preachers today." Cunningham (1991:140) also comments, "In general, actions and potential actions are integrally connected to how we

evaluate character. We characterize people not merely by what they say; we also pay attention to what they do." As Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969:318) point out, the ancient masters of rhetoric derived practical recommendations from the relation they recognized to exist between the opinion that speakers held and the manner of judging their speeches. They recommended that speakers give a good impression of themselves as persons to gain their hearers' respect, goodwill and sympathy.

In this situation, the preachers' ethos is paramount. This implies that the ancient communication experts insisted that speakers' characters were the supreme confirmation or repudiation of what they had to say. According to Willimon and Lischer (1995:66), "The character of the preacher has been of prime importance throughout the history of Christian preaching. A great preacher is one whose witness to the gospel is reflected in his or her manner of life." In a sense, the practice of preaching can never be divorced from the preacher's person. Troeger (2005:119) maintains that contemporary homileticians need to clarify how traditional concern for the character of the preacher is redefined by 20th century thought and experience.

5.3.3 The preacher's ethos and persuasion

Personal character and ethos are fundamental to whether or not the message preached will be accepted or rejected. Alan (1981:20-21) states, "The preacher must win the goodwill of his audience through the humility he shows in his own person, and through the profitableness of his subject-matter." Louw (2008:267) also remarks, "Building a relationship of trust and confidentiality in the pastoral relationship is

essentially an ethical issue. The human dignity of the other is at stake here because it is connected to the notion of acceptance." Generally speaking, preachers use their best skill to persuade their hearers to accept the Gospel. Moreover, preachers must give the members of the audience some reason to believe that the person to whom they are listening is worthy of their attention. Furthermore, congregations may gain an impression of speakers' characters by listening to the evaluations of others. These judgments can range from informal appraisals to comments on professional reputation.

It could be argued that the audience may know some of the basic details of the speaker's life: when and where he/she was born, educational background, previous occupations and current occupation. Such information seems more concrete than general reputation. Aristotle (1967:17) states, "The orator persuades by moral character when his speech is delivered in such a manner as to render his worthy of confidence. Moral character, so to say, constitutes the most effective means of proof." Hogan and Reid (1999:54) also argue, "Thus, who we are is an inescapable part of what gets communicated when we stand up to speak." Rather, some members of an audience may have had previous encounters with the speaker's rhetorical skills: one may have read a book or an article that the speaker wrote, or one may have heard or seen a recording of his/her speech.

Moreover, one may have had personal contact with the speaker. This might have amounted only to a handshake; but it might also have ranged from a short conversation to an ongoing correspondence. Such experiences, even when very

brief, can often play a major role in the way we construct a person's character. Rexroat (1992:173) comments:

> What makes a preacher a powerful persuader? This is not an easy question to answer because we see so many things in the styles and methods of the preachers we consider to be models of persuasive power. Speech skill, intellectual discipline and personal charisma certainly do not completely explain the secret of success.

In this respect, while it is true that the strongest persuasive force is the work of the Holy Spirit, it is also true that human instruments are involved in properly motivating persons. According to Ward (1992:65), Aristotle struggled with the question of what made a speaker's claim seem truthful to a listener. He taught that the most potent means of persuasion was the speaker's ethos or character.

Suffice it to note that, in ancient oratory, the argument about speakers' characters had decisive importance, for their power of persuasion depended on their trustworthiness before their listeners (cf. Thompson 2001:68).

5.3.4   The virtues of the preacher

It is not farfetched to assume that preachers are called to be men of nobleness, largeness and gentleness - so Pauline, and so Christ-like. According to Campbell (2002:170):

> Preachers are called to speak the truth. Such truth-telling in the pulpit will be

most faithful and profound when it is grounded in a life of truthfulness. The preacher will not speak the truth in a compelling way on Sunday morning if she hasn't nurtured the virtue of truthfulness throughout her life.

Willimon (2000:33) remarks, "Aristotle, on whose thought my emphasis upon character is based, stressed that good works arise from good people." Louw (2008:280) surmises that it is clear that virtues play a decisive role in one's moral awareness and moral sensitivity. For that matter, virtues represent the moral character and fibre of human behaviour.

Moreover, human beings can express themselves in words: they do so by revealing themselves in what they say. Hogan and Reid (1999:49) state, "In fact, the more highly placed the individual, the more extreme the scrutiny. If a person's private actions are questionable, can we trust his or her public actions?" Chartier (1981:81) also observes, "Some nonverbal communicologists claim that the nonverbal is the real communication and that the verbal stuff is just the tip of the iceberg." As Willimon (2000:50) points out, Aristotle believed that it was too much to expect ordinary people to be good. About the best one could expect of ordinary people are good habits.

For this reason, preachers must take heed of what they do, as well as what they say. If, indeed, they will be Christ's servants, they must not be tongue servants only, but must serve God with their deeds. As Steimle, Niedenthal and Rice (1980:21) observe, "There is a strand of Protestant theology in which it is understood

that the truth of a sermon is tested and finally determined by either the piety of the preacher or the rigor of the moral code which he or she espouses." Preachers must study as hard how to live well, as how to preach well.

5.3.5　The personal preparation of the preacher

Preaching is not *speech* about religion; it is a religious *person* speaking. It is this personal character of preaching that makes the moral integrity of a preacher so important. Barth (1964:95-96) remarks:

> His preaching must be personal. A preacher may, perhaps, draw his inspiration from a model, but once in the pulpit he should be simply himself. He is the one who has been called, he it is who must speak; the finest thoughts, once they have been borrowed and transformed on the lips of another, are no longer what they were. Let him speak in the way that is natural to him, rather than assuming in the pulpit the cloak of an alien speech.

Knox (1957:67) also comments, "It is likely indeed that the problem must be solved by each preacher for himself, and that no two solutions will be precisely the same. But the aim of the preparation is clear; it is a man prepared, not a sermon prepared." In this respect, the preacher's call to preach carries with it the obligation both to do good work and to be a good workman.

It must be noted that sermons cannot be detached from the minister who preaches them. Moreover, in the ministry, as in no other calling, character is decisive.

Friedl and Macauley (1994:97) comment, "The pulpit is not a stage; the homilist is not an actor. He cannot be someone he is not." According to Cox (1985:258), "No preacher can honestly claim perfection of motive or behavior, yet he or she may become a finely tuned instrument through which God can play his own music." In a sense, the preacher's inner attitude is decisive. Lloyd-Jones (1971:166) argues:

> The preacher's first, and the most important task is to prepare himself, not his sermon. At first one tends to think that the great thing is to prepare the sermon – and the sermon, as I have been saying, does need most careful preparation, but altogether more important is the preparation of the preacher himself.

Therefore, the most important thing in delivery is the person: what one is, what one thinks, how one feels, one's motives, purpose and yearnings. Ultimately, God is more interested in developing messengers than messages. Jabusch (1990:113) states, "A good preacher must first of all be a good person." Hulse (1986:62) also remarks, "The making of the person of the preacher is a vastly more complex and difficult matter than the making of a sermon." According to Robinson (1980:24), preaching is the art of being a preacher and delivering that.

5.3.6   The two elements of preaching: truth and personality

Some scholars follow Brooks' definition of "preaching": preaching is defined as the communication of truth by man to men. It consists of two elements: truth and

personality (Brooks 1969:5), both of which are essential (cf. Kroll 1980:20, Fasol 1979:10). It goes without saying that a sermon is truth strained through a human personality. Davies (1963:92) states, "The preaching of 'truth through personality' is Bishop Phillips Brooks' admirable description of strongly marked characters graciously proclaiming the Gospel." Hogan and Reid (1999:54-55) also remark:

> More than a century ago Phillips Brooks offered a definition of preaching that tried to maintain this same balance between what gets said and who says it. In what is arguable the most famous statement ever professed in the *Yale Lectures on Preaching*, Brooks declared that preaching is the bringing of truth through personality.

In a sense, "truth through personality" is the researcher's description of real preaching. The truth must actually come through the ministers, not merely over their lips, not merely into their understanding and out of their pens. It must come through their characters, their affections, their entire intellectual and moral beings. Bruce (1977:15) states, "Of all the New Testament authors, Paul is the one who has stamped his own personality most unmistakably on his writings – because they express so spontaneously and therefore so eloquently his mind and his message." Black (1977:31) argues, "If preaching is a message plus a personality, the personality should have its full and natural share. What distinguishes any two preachers?" Roughly speaking, if they discuss a common subject, most people of similar intelligence and training say largely the same things, and deal with the same

aspects of truth. The main difference lies in personalities, in personal touches, in personal points of view, in personal treatments, and in personal impacts. All great preachers have been strongly individualistic.

It is important to mention that personality should not be about showmanship of gifts and powers that come from God. Fasol (1979:17) states, "The God who sent men to preach the Gospel of His Son in their humanity, sent each man distinctively to preach it in his humanity." Blackwood (1960:23) maintains, "Personality here means all of a minister as he appears to others." Schmaus (1966:21) points out:

> The orientation of utterance towards another human being is one of its funda-mental characteristics. As human beings are meaningfully actualized only through words, in dialogue and encounter, clearly they realize themselves meaningfully only in love, in surrender to others, and not in devotion to business, except when this devotion is for the sake of another person.

In fact, the influence of personality appears in every aspect of a pastor's work today. Steimle, Niedenthal and Rice (1980:25) state, "Each of us is called to preach the gospel through the distinctive gifts of his or her unique humanity: God communicates through your personality." Brown, Clinard and Northcutt (1963:165) also comment, "In at least one area of personality the minister is himself in delivery, whether he likes it or not. It is inevitable that his emotions will be seen in his preaching. Delivery has its first residence, not in the mouth or in the body, but in the inner feelings of the speaker." According to Willimon and Lischer (1995:66), Paul repeatedly asserts that

he will not be the focus of attention: "For I have decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2). Yet, several of his writings carefully detail his personal sufferings and demand attention to the ethical claims that his own witness to Christ offers the listener: "Join in imitating me" (Phil. 3:17). Even if the preacher is to be merely an iconic channel for the presence of Christ, there still remains the problem of the preacher's own personality.

For this reason, preachers should think of Isaiah and Amos, Hosea and Micah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and other prophets not well-known today. Those men spoke at different times, but they all belong together, for they show the meaning of truth and personality. Brooks (1969:5) states, "Preaching is the bringing of truth through personality. It must have both elements. Preaching is the communication of truth by man to men. It has in it two essential elements: truth and personality. Neither of those can it spare and still be preaching." Huffman (1992:425) also observes, "Phillips Brooks' emphasis on preaching as 'communication of truth by man to men,' having the two essential elements of truth and personality has fascinated me."

Furthermore, in preaching, the preacher's personality must be in harmony with the truth proclaimed. It is important that all preachers utter the truth in their own way, and according to their own nature. Stated differently, these then are the elements of preaching – truth and personality. Truth in itself is a fixed and stable element; personality is a varying and growing element. Let us now accord a few moments to consider these two elements of preaching, i.e. truth and personality; the one universal and invariable, the other special and always different. Suffice it to note

that the principle of personality once admitted involves every preacher's individuality.

Thus far, we have investigated the preacher's ethos and personality. According to Kroll (1980:2), "Preaching is the truth of God mediated through a man's voice, life, heart, mind, in fact, his whole being." Therefore, preaching is: bringing truth through personality. It follows that preachers must guide the common impulse and impart to it a specific orientation by means of the influence of their personality.

5.4   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter has investigated the rhetorical foundation of the preachers' ethos and demonstrated three key aspects of their ethos by highlighting the following:

(1)   Aristotle distinguishes three kinds of proofs for structural principles: persuasion by moral character (ethos); persuasion by putting the hearer into a certain emotional frame of mind (pathos); and persuasion by the speech itself, when the true or apparently true (logos) is established.

(2)   One important rule for a preacher's ethos is that listeners trust and feel connected with the speaker.

(3)   Consequently, an important element that audiences use to construct the speakers' characters is attitude. The speakers' attitudes, as their demeanour and moral purpose exemplify, can provide information about what Aristotle calls "goodwill." Blackwood (1948:13) states, "What do we understand by preaching? It means divine truth through personality or the truth of God voiced by a chosen

personality to meet human needs."

For this reason, eventually, the debate was reduced to the Latin maxim that defined the art of oratory: *vir bonus dicendi peritus* – the good man speaking well (Hogan and Reid 1999:54).

The following chapter will propose an alternative solution for preaching in crisis through the preacher's ethos.

CHAPTER SIX

AN ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION FOR PREACHING IN CRISIS THROUGH THE PREACHER'S ETHOS

This chapter will present an alternative solution for preaching in crisis through the preacher's ethos. To achieve this objective, the relevance of the preacher's ethos to preaching will first be considered. Secondly, the influence of the preacher's ethos on preaching will also be observed. Thirdly, the importance of the preacher's ethos will be explained in detail, and lastly, the researcher will explore the relevance of the preacher's ethos for the congregation.

6.1   THE RELEVANCE OF THE PREACHER'S ETHOS TO PREACHING

This section investigates the relevance of the preacher's ethos to preaching by concentrating on three points:

(1)   the preacher's ethos is essential for influential preaching,

(2)   the preacher and preaching are inseparable, and

(3)   the preacher's ethos and the audience's response.

6.1.1   The preacher's ethos is essential for influential preaching

Naturally, preaching is not a mechanical process. God uses people to accomplish the task, not automatons. Tisdale (1998:9) states, "James Henry Harris encourages

pastors to remember that the ongoing development of their own spiritual life and moral character is essential for sound preaching." Chartier (1981:93-94) maintains, "The greatest form of interpersonal confirmation occurs when messages are consistent with nonverbal behavior." This implies that the efficacy of preaching depends on the faithfulness and insight with which the preacher conveys the Word of God. According to Willimon (2000:42), Athanasius stressed that a well-formed character is essential for good biblical interpretation: For the searching and right understanding of the Scriptures, a good life and a pure soul are needed, as well as Christian virtue to guide the mind to grasp, as far as humanly possible, the truth concerning God's Word. Through their lives, one cannot possibly understand the teaching of the saints in their lives. Anyone who wishes to understand the mind of the sacred writers must first cleanse his/her own life, and approach the saints by emulating their deeds.

In a sense, the preacher's learning or merits of prayers produces the efficacy of preaching. Jones (1958:60) comments, "The French have a saying: It must come out of one's self. That is true of a sermon." Willimon (1996:165) also maintains, "We preachers need to hear again the Platonic truth – good speaking involves a good person speaking well. Character, Aristotle's ethos, is a prerequisite for faithful preaching." Furthermore, preaching is not merely the delivery of a message, but the delivery of a message by persons who profess to have felt its power, and who testify to its truth in their own experience. Willimon (1981:15) points out that the congregation seems to be unable to separate the preacher from the preaching. When they listed characteristics of good sermons, they listed personality traits, such as warmth,

honesty, friendliness, and excitement. Therefore, when many laypersons think of good preaching, they associate it with a good preacher.

In this respect, preaching cannot deviate from the rules of normal discourse. Baxter (1947:18) remarks, "We preach to persuade men, and the secret of persuasion is the impact of soul upon soul." Practically speaking, effective preaching, in part, depends on an effective person. Huffman (1992:425) also notes, "There is mystery. There is that special personhood of God and humans which refuses to be reduced to cognitive statements. Truth, to be communicated, needs to be filtered through divine and human personality."

It follows that the pulpit's distinctive power is the preacher's character and ethos.

6.1.2 The preacher and preaching are inseparable

It is reasonable to assume that one cannot divorce preachers from their preaching. In a very real way, the persons are their message: the preachers are their proclamation and the speakers are their sermons. The person behind the message determines its weight for, in this as in everything else, quality is to be preferred to quantity. This implies that one cannot isolate the pulpit or divorce what preachers say from what they are. Willimon (2000:42) states, "Augustine advised that, while we are looking into the heart of the scriptures we would do well also to look with an eye to your own heart."

In other words, one's character makes a big difference in how one under-

stands Scripture. According to Campbell (2002:158), "Preachers are fundamentally called to be keepers of the Word, both in the pulpit and in their lives; preaching and life are inseparable." Stated differently, preaching is inseparable from the preacher. While it is true that power resides in the Word, it also is true that the human instrument affects the proclamation of the message significantly. Cunningham (1991:122) argues that one may have had enough contact with the speaker to be able to say, "I know what kind of life that person lives." Typically, this sort of contact is rare – restricted, in most cases, to family members and very close friends.

Moreover, it is said that the message is to the preacher, as liquid is to the bottle. According to Craddock (1985:23), "All preaching is to some extent self-disclosure by the preacher." This implies that preaching is inescapably personal. Because preaching is done by one human being for the sake of other humans, it is essential that preachers understand not only their parishioners — the people to whom the sermon is delivered — but also themselves. Sleeth (1964:27) comments, "Preaching is not simply the transference of theological ideas from one mind to another. This gospel message is being revealed through a person, whose own response to it will be a tremendous factor in its transmission."

One of the primary tasks that a theological student must accomplish in a seminary is to master all the necessary techniques of preaching, counselling, and church administration. If students do not accomplish the inner task, they will reduce the effectiveness of their ministry. Robinson (1980:24) asserts that the truth must be applied to the preacher's personality and experience. This places God's dealing with

the preacher at the centre of the process. As much as we might wish it otherwise, the preacher cannot be separated from the message.

Consequently, if it is possible for one to preach a message that does not harmonize with one's life, then the message surely will be ineffective. When preachers' lives are in harmony with their message, the assurance of divine benediction floods their souls.

6.1.3   The preacher's ethos and the audience's response

As expected, one judges people's ethos or character every day, whether in the doctor's office, the mechanic's garage, or the pulpit. One makes these judgments through a process so subtle that one can never fully explain it. Regarding the audience's response to the preacher's ethos, Roen (1989:16) states, "If the ethos of the sermon is agreeable and attractive, we will sometimes pay attention even if we do not agree with all that is being said." Hogan and Reid (1999:47) also observe, "In the opening of his letter to the churches in Galatia, Paul devotes a great deal of energy to establishing ethos, or credibility and authority." This implies that Christian leaders who preach the Gospel have always been called to strive for personal virtue because it matters in the proclamation of the Gospel. According to Gibbs (1960:48), the domestic, commercial, social and ecclesiastical spheres, in which all heralds of the Gospel or teachers of the Word move, should report well on them.

Moreover, an audience develops its perception of a speaker's character through different kinds of information: excellence or virtue is assessed on the basis

of the speaker's associations; goodwill is assessed by evaluating the speaker's attitudes; and practical reason is assessed on the basis of the speaker's actions. According to Steimle, Niedenthal and Rice (1980:22):

> Few people trust the political speeches of even our highest elected leaders, but most men and women would still like to think that the preacher both believes and lives what is affirmed in the pulpit. And when they listen to the preacher they will find it highly significant if the sermon and the life of the preacher are congruent.

Stated differently, the individuals or groups with whom a speaker is identified are the speaker's associations, by means of which audiences judge the virtue or excellence of a particular arguer's position. As Cunningham (1991:139) points out, actions are the category of clues that an audience uses to construct the speaker's character. What are speakers' special talents and skills? How do speakers spend their time? In what other activities are they involved aside from the construction of persuasive arguments? Recalling Aristotle's list of elements that inspire confidence, this category corresponds most closely to *phronesis*. Aristotle places this first on his list; here, this is mentioned last because many of these evaluations develop directly from the elements that have been labelled "associations and attitudes."

Based on the discussion thus far, it can be concluded that preachers will be preparing, not sermons, but themselves or, perhaps to describe it better, their preparation of themselves will be, in part, the preparation of their sermons. Moreover, the

real preparation of sermons is not limited to the few hours that preachers specifically devote to it, but to the whole stream of their experience. Therefore, preaching is not an hour's performance; it is the consequence of the preachers' lives.

6.2   THE INFLUENCE OF THE PREACHER'S ETHOS ON PREACHING

This section briefly discusses the influence of the preacher's ethos on preaching in terms of the following four aspects:

(1)   The preacher's ethos affects the congregation's reception of the Word,

(2)   The preacher's ethos can be the best way of persuasion,

(3)   Preachers' ethos reflects in their sermons, and

(4)   Preachers' ethos has their unique authority.

6.2.1   The preacher's ethos affects the congregation's reception of the Word

It is reasonable to comment that the preacher must display good character, which prepares the way for effective communication. Kemp (1959:104-105) observes, "His effectiveness in preaching will depend on his character and personality as much as it will on his skill in sermon construction and public speaking." Baumann (1972:43) also remarks, "The things that have been said in homiletics textbooks for many years are basically true: there must be integrity, the man who says one thing and does another cannot be trusted, and the man who lives the good life does have a claim to listeners." Moreover, many factors combine to influence and persuade listeners, and

ethos is one of the decidedly important variables.

For this reason, a significant form of preparation for preaching is the preacher's own preparation. Effectiveness in the pulpit is indeed tied to the lives, the integrity, the Christian character of the persons who declare the Gospel. Good people are full of their message and will be heard. According to Hulse (1986:62-63), "Effectiveness and power as a preacher will be directly connected to his piety." More-over, preachers' characters speak more loudly than their tongues. This consideration is immeasurably weightier in the case of the sacred than of the secular orator. Benoit and Benoit (2008:40) also remark, "The speaker's credibility can influence the way the audience processes the entire message."

It follows that, if an audience likes you, it will find it easier to believe, and harder to disbelieve, what you say (De Koster 1986:309). To preach persuasively, preachers start with a foundation of godly character. They then empower the message with the presence of the Holy Spirit in an atmosphere of worship.

6.2.2 The preacher's ethos can be the best way of persuasion

It goes without saying that maturity is the best sermon. It is good to fill the minds of people with the nobleness and sweetness of that to which you would gladly draw them. Furthermore, if the person speaking is a beloved and respected preacher, the congregation will want to hear him/her. Van Der Geest (1981:117) states, "The listeners expect the preacher to convince them of the truth of the gospel. They have already experienced that earlier, and now they await it again. How can the preacher

persuade the listeners again?" Watermulder (1982:64) also surmises, "The prea-cher's effectiveness does depend partly on his person and disposition, that he be an example of what he preaches." Stated differently, bullets may be of equal size and material, but the distance to which they travel depends upon the gun. Sermons are bullets. How far they go (their impact) does not depend upon the text or upon the structure of the sermon, but upon the texture of the preacher's man-/womanhood.

It is apparent that Christ's early disciples moved great masses of people, not only because of the message that they preached, but also because of the persuasive force of their lives. Dabney (1979:261) observes, "The hearers' apprehension of their minister's character is a most important element in his power of persuasion." Further-more, the speaker's personal character achieves persuasion when the speech is so spoken as to make one think him/her credible. One believes good peoople more completely and more readily than one believes wicked people. Massey (1998:21-22) observes, "The best preaching is both a divine word and a personal expression of it." It follows that preachers' characters or ethos may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion that they possess.

Because of this, preachers' faithful examples cause the congregation to receive their messages seriously. Through their faithful ethos or moral character, the preachers — as followers of God — inspire the congregation to follow Him.

6.2.3   The preacher's ethos reflects in his/her sermon

It can be argued that the preachers' ethos, perhaps, would be expressed in their

sermons as much as anything else. It remains a mystery why the force, which we call the preacher's ethos, is so much more powerful in some than in others. Alan (1981:143) states, "The preacher should also be faithful in his actions, so that what he does he may do with a right intention, and that he may set God as the end of his deeds." Brown, Clinard and Northcutt (1963:165) also observe, "A popular textbook in speech lists the following as three of the seven basic principles of delivery: An able speaker is (1) an able person, (2) in a good emotional state, (3) with a good attitude toward himself and toward his audience."

This implies that the preachers' total experience as persons is reflected in their delivery. Their deepest feelings, basic emotions and attitudes persistently appear in their preaching. Killinger (1985:188) argues that if ministers are hurried and thoughtless, their sermons will reflect it. If their scholarly and devotional lives are thin and impoverished, this too will show in their preaching. Shallow persons seldom preach deep sermons. If, on the other hand, ministers read widely, spend adequate time in prayer and reflection, and enjoy healthy relationships with their families and other persons, their sermons are bound to reveal these facts, regardless of the texts and subjects about which they preach.

A sermon is the result of so much more than the time and effort actually expended in producing it. It is the result of the preachers' entire spiritual life, their moral convictions, personal experiences and relationships, reading and reflection, even their health and diet. Van Cleave (1943:81) comments, "There is no doubt that a preacher's character and quality of life can strongly reinforce his reasoning about

righteousness. The majority of preachers are people of character and sound spirituality; but there are those few that lack godliness." Bruce (1977:456) points out that Paul was impressive neither in appearance nor in speech. More important, however, are his qualities of mind and spirit.

Preachers' homes, churches, schools, associates, and total backgrounds – all contribute to their characters and all are reflected in their deliveries. Massey (1998:24) remarks, "Although preaching is by nature an artful self-expression, we must not preach with art in mind but with lives in view." As a result, every sermon must contain something of the preacher's ethos and character.

6.2.4   The preacher's ethos has his/her unique authority

It is said that the greater the character of the preachers, the larger the use of their character, and the wider and deeper the people's response to the truth. Demaray (1979:115) observes, "Sources of the preacher's authority include the speaker himself, the Holy Spirit, and the Bible. As for the speaker, good character, dedication, empathy, and proper emphasis all come into consideration. Consistent biblical behavior is basic to good character."

It should be mentioned that preachers themselves live with the biblical message before they proclaim it to others. Hogan and Reid (1999:50) say that one should think for a moment about a recent visit to the doctor. The doctor's surgery wall was probably filled with diplomas and credentials that displayed where he/she had attended medical school and trained in the specialized field. Did you find

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yourself squinting to read the fine print? Just when was this training anyway, and did the doctor receive any special award? If this person will be taking care of your body, you want to make sure that he/she earned good grades. No doubt, the same experience occurred when you last took your car to the garage. Had the mechanic been through the proper, award-winning training? Credentials are important!

In this regard, the significant element of a preacher's power is genuine respect for the parishioners. Waznak (1983:45) asserts, "For preaching to be authentic, it must involve both the faith of the Church and the preacher's own personal faith." Loscalzo (1995:59) claims that another premise under which many evangelistic sermons have been designed is that preachers are respected authorities on matters of religion, moral, value and life.

The possible conclusion drawn from the above-mentioned discussion is that God is in action through preachers' personalities; but God's action does not end there. It continues in the hearts, minds and wills of the hearers who, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, are enabled to respond in repentance, faith and obedience (Colquhoun 1979:28). Consequently, for the ancient Greeks, logos (an argument's reasoning logic) was not to be despised; and pathos (an appeal to the audience's emotions) was certainly important. However, it would seem that ethos, the speaker's character or reputation, was the most important element of all.

6.3   IMPORTANCE OF THE PREACHER'S ETHOS IN PREACHING

This section will establish the importance of the preacher's ethos in preaching related to three aspects:

(1)   preaching cannot be separated from the preacher,

(2)   the preacher must be in harmony with the preaching, and

(3)   the audience is always interested in the preacher's ethos.

Roen (1989:31) states, "Remember: every statement contains the question 'who do you say that I am?' and part of its answer. Open your 'inward ear' and reflect upon how ethos persuades or fails to persuade us."

6.3.1   Preaching cannot be separated from the preacher

As briefly mentioned above (cf. 6.1.2), preachers cannot be separated from their preaching. In many cases, especially when it is a matter of edification, the speaker's person plays a prominent part. Campbell (2002:157) observes, "The character of the preacher comes to play an important role." Compare also the remark of Hogan and Reid (1999:55) in this regard, "Whatever the shape of the sermon, congregational responses exhibit the truth of Aristotle's observation: Who preaches in the most essential component for the receptivity of the Gospel? Virtue does matter."

Moreover, rhetoric seeks to remind one of the importance of ethos. The *who* that listeners determine you are, is essential to your presentations and the arguments that you make, as it convinces your listeners that they should listen to you. Furthermore, the ministry of one character to another has indescribable value. Crad-

dock (1985:22) states, "The person of the preacher is a vital element in effective preaching." Bugg (1992:12) also maintains, "Preaching cannot be separated from the person of the preacher." Therefore, one must recognize that a self-being is always presented. According to Jabusch (1980:12), there is an old maxim in philosophy: one's actions follow one's being. What you do (and what you say) follows from what you are - good preaching comes from good people. If the Christian Church hopes to be blessed with good preaching on Sundays, it must be deeply concerned with the character of its preachers and the quality of their lives on the other days of the week.

Strictly speaking, no place exists where preachers can hide. Even large pulpits cannot conceal them from the congregation's view. Phillips Brooks has a point when he describes preaching as "truth poured through personality" - the person affects his/her message. As Huffman (1992:428) observes, "When Phillips Brooks articulated his concept that real preaching is truth through human personality, he emphasized his conviction that truth must come through the very character affections, the whole intellectual and moral being of the preacher." In particular, preachers should preach to themselves the sermons that they study, before they preach them to others.

Thus, the preacher's life and preaching come into the closest possible contact with each other. It follows that preachers' ethos and character are behind the contents of their messages. According to Ladd (1964:163), the words in Mark 8:38, "Whoever is ashamed of me and my words," shows that Jesus' person is inseparable from his Word. The scribes stood apart from their teaching; their teachings over-

shadowed their persons - they were vehicles of tradition. However, Jesus' words are inseparable from his Person. He Himself is the message that He proclaims.

6.3.2 The preacher must be in harmony with the preaching

The homiletical tradition has an excellent motto: *Character before career*. According to Willimon (1996:164):

> Plato defined good public speaking as a matter of a good man speaking well. The messenger must be congruent with the message in order for the message to be received. This is particularly true when the message is the gospel of Christ, a message that not only demands to be spoken, but also performed, embodied in the lives of faithful disciples.

This implies that the Word of God is the constant quantity - the preacher the variable. If this were true, then preaching is best when, on the one hand, it is most full of the divine message and when, on the other, it reflects the preacher's greatest personality.

Nevertheless, it is historically true that, during its earlier stages, Christianity did not succeed by the force of its doctrines, but by the lives of its disciples. In a sense, preachers' sincerities have two aspects: they mean what they say when in the pulpit, and practice what they preach when out of it. In fact, these two things belong inevitably together. Brooks (1969:49) observes, "The first among the elements of power which make success I must put the supreme importance of character, of personal uprightness and purity impressing themselves upon the men who witness

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them."

Thus, it can be argued that the greatest persuasive force known among persons is that of personality. The apparent differences in effectiveness between different pulpits can largely be explained by the differences in the persons who fill those pulpits. Moreover, faithful preachers must take great pains to rid themselves of a dichotomy between the persons they seem to be in the pulpit and the people they are out of it. According to Thielicke (1965:14), this objective contradiction between what you teach and the way you live is hypocrisy in the fullest sense of the word. The demonic thing about it is that this hypocrisy can go hand in hand with subjective honesty, indeed, with kind, good-natured unawareness of anything wrong. The trouble is: then people stop accepting anything you say, and say that you cannot be believed.

It follows that, if God in his integrity is to be the centre of your preaching, then you, as his messenger, must carry in your person the integrity of your association with Him. Moreover, Jesus condemned the preachers of his day because, as He put it, "they do not practice what they preach" (Matt. 23:3). Therefore, preachers' lives must conform to their profession, lest they do not practice what they preach.

6.3.3   The audience is always interested in the preacher's ethos

It goes without saying that history and present-day experience show that ministers' effectiveness in the pulpit depends on their characters and ethos. Friedl and Macauley (1994:95) claim, "A speaker cannot be effective with an audience if he or

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she does not cast an image of credibility." According to Davis (1962:15), "Preaching is a divinely established cause of grace. But the sign that causes grace depends for its very existence on the priest, and it is a sign that can exist more or less fully according to how well the priest, cries out his function." Allen (1988:29) believes that the first requirement is the preacher's conviction. If the audience senses that the sermon is a matter of real importance to the preacher, they are likely to take it seriously. People respond positively to appropriate and heart-felt passion. If, on the other hand, the preacher seems distant and detached, many listeners are likely to think that the subject is not very important to the preacher and, therefore, need not be taken too seriously.

The second requirement is a sense of respect for, and trust in, the preacher. As long ago as in Aristotle's time, and as recently as the listeners' study to which reference has just been made, the character of the speaker has been recognized as an important part of the speaker's authority. Of particular significance is the continuity between the preacher's words and life. If the preacher consistently stresses love in sermons but treats people as though they are a means to an end, the effect of the message is undermined. In this respect, one of the most effective ways to build trust in the pulpit is to engage in regular pastoral care and calling. By regularly opening the door, the "nursing home" creates its own authority.

In a sense, the congregation's confidence can be influenced in a number of different ways. The listeners may form an opinion of the speaker's character before they hear the speech. As Cunningham (1991:139) maintains, "Audiences are

affected by a speaker's actions, especially when they are connected to the matter at hand." Benoit and Benoit (2008:44) also observe, "A persuader must be particularly concerned about ethical decisions. Persuasive messages often attempt to change the behavior of audiences." In this respect, all regions are essentially self-expressions, the outgoing of a person's own ethos upon others. Of no art is this so true as of the art of preaching. The deepest secret of its power, humanly speaking, is the letting loose of the preacher's ethos upon his hearers.

Therefore, a sermon is meant to be a proclamation of God's truth, as mediated through the preacher. The congregation wants to hear this great truth as it comes via the preacher, via the whole of the preacher him-/herself. Perhaps all have heard the story of the person who preached so well and lived so badly that, when he was in the pulpit, everybody said he ought never to come out again and, when he was out of it, they all declared he never ought to enter it again!

Based on the examination thus far, it can be deduced that preaching is the communication of a biblical concept, derived from, and transmitted through, a historical, grammatical and literary study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit first applies to the personality and experience of the preachers, then through them to their hearers (cf. Robinson 1980:20). It follows that preachers are always in the limelight; their misdeeds are always magnified. Therefore, they must be on their best behaviour, not because of what people might say, but because they are representatives of Jesus Christ and want to please Him.

6.4 THE PREACHER'S ETHOS FOR THE CONGREGATION

This section briefly explores the preacher's ethos for the congregation in terms of the following four aspects:

(1) Preaching requires the preacher to discern the congregation,

(2) The importance of the congregation in preaching,

(3) The congregation's expectation for the preacher, and

(4) Preaching is the dynamic encounter between the preacher and the congregation.

6.4.1 Preaching requires the preacher to discern the congregation

It is a fact that preaching requires preachers to know not only their subject, but also their congregation. Stated differently, it is not enough for preachers to know the Word of God; they must also know the congregation to whom they proclaim it. A preacher must know how they live, what problems they face and how they react. Suffice it to note that this knowledge cannot be gained from books. According to Hall and Heflin (1985:36), "The minister must see in everyone a somebody with potential to grow into the image of Christ." Jowett (1912:168) also states, "A congregation is not supposed to be a crowd of isolated units, each one intent upon a personal and private quest." Willimon and Lischer (1995:87) point out that preaching is a highly particular and incarnational word event. A sermon is not a talk addressed "to whom it may concern," but a proclamation addressed to a distinctive and local body of believers. A

sermon is not a pithy and inspiring message that the pastor crafted in isolation, but an address that arises out of the common life shared with a people of faith.

It could be argued that there are two basic requirements for persuasive preaching: the ability to think in a straight line, and a genuine desire to benefit the hearer in some positive way. Pernot (2005:43) says, "Aristotle highlighted this fundamental idea: persuasion requires exploiting the forces already present in the listener. The good orator knows the cognitive competencies and pertinent mental associations of those listening to him." In order to speak both for, and to, a congregation in preaching, the pastor needs skill in exegeting the congregation as well as the Scriptures. As preachers, "We have agreed to place the congregation's welfare ahead of our own personal wants. This covenantal relationship of trust and love is embodied in the preacher" (Wilson 1995:47).

It follows that preachers' work is the most intense of all occupations. It brings a person into more multiplied relations with they neighbours than any other work. Persons without a strong and deep appreciation of humanity cannot preach well. As a result, in preaching, preachers must pay attention to their congregation's needs so as to meet their human needs. Moreover, preachers should take into consideration the congregation for whom the sermon is prepared, as some congregations are spiritually immature - they are not prepared for the weightier matters of Scripture.

6.4.2   The importance of the congregation in preaching

Naturally, preaching cannot exist without a speaker as well as a listener. This means

that preachers must love their congregations - they must never want to be without them. According to Buttrick (1988:256), "Preachers are members of a being-saved community and, as such, share some modest sense of being-saved-in-the-world." Edwards (1982:46) also states, "Really to engage in preaching, then, means that we say something that we consider to be important to particular people, we say it to them, and we say it in such a way that they can understand it, will be interested in it." In a sense, preachers are part of the congregation. Moreover, they should share with their parishioners what they receive from God.

In a particular rhetorical situation, the listeners determine the speaker's personhood and character. Troeger (1982:58) remarks, "We preachers do not have the last word. Our listeners do. They must spell out with their lives the gospel we present with our voices." According to Hogan and Reid (1999:66-67), many mistakenly believe that the classical understanding of ethos focuses only on the speaker: it is the speaker who is virtuous and who possesses the proper credentials for speaking. They overlook the importance of the audience in this equation. The relationship and conversation between the preacher and the listener, therefore, become crucial issues as the process starts to develop an understanding of the role that ethos performs in a theology of preaching. Ethos, a process of negotiation, does not ignore the listener. Rather, it launches one into a relationship with the community.

The goal of true preaching is to elicit an active participation of the worshippers in the pew. Moreover, the final test of preaching's effectiveness is how well the congregation who heard the sermon can go home and read the passage with greater

comprehension of its exact meaning than they could before hearing the message. Luccock (1954:127) surmises:

> In preaching, as in all creative writing, the thing of first importance is not plots but people. A novelist gave good advice to a young writer when he wrote, 'Do not rack your brain contriving plots. Get out among people. See them, hear them, study them.' It is good advice to the preacher.

Preaching is more than just the proclamation of God's Word; it is the proclamation of his Word to his people (Vosteen 1986:398). Buttrick (1987:294) argues that, with the language of preaching, one brings out a structure of meaning in a congregation's consciousness, and one does so through the design of a sermon.

The researcher's final comment in this section is that someone has pointed out that, if one removes the letter "p" from the word "preach," one has the word "reach." If the letter "r" is removed, one has the word "each." Thus, to *preach* is to present the truth so that it will *reach each* person in the congregation. Nida (1990:37) also states that, "In order to understand the structure of communication we must study it in terms of certain models, which will help us determine how this complex process actually operates. Fundamentally, however, communication is simple, for it involves only three essential factors: (1) the source, (2) the message (the actual form of what is communicated), and (3) the receptor (we use 'receptor' rather than the more technical term 'target' since the message does not merely 'hit' its goal but rather has to be 'received.'"

Consequently, it is not enough to present an accurate exposition of some passage of the Word of God if one does not relate the people's actual needs to it. This is the fascination of preaching: applying God's Word to people's needs. Preachers should be as familiar with the congregation as they are with God.

6.4.3   The congregation's expectation of the preacher

In a sense, it is much easier to lay down the law from the pulpit than to exemplify it in public. You find it simpler to give directions about the way than to lead the congregation in the way yourself. If preachers are true persons, they preach not only while they are in the pulpit; but just as much when they are conversing with a little child on the side-walk, when they are in a social company, or when they are out on a sportive event or picnic with their people. True ministers are persons whose personhoods themselves are strong and influential arguments for their people. Willimon (2000:48) states, "When a pastor ascends the pulpit to preach, the pastor's moral flaws become more pronounced, more visible for all to see."

Moreover, the ministry is difficult. Therefore, the great challenge of the ministry for the preacher is to be the sort of character who can sustain the ministry's practices and virtues for a lifetime. Furthermore, the congregation will understand-ably looks to the preacher to be a responsible leader in the journey toward accepting the ethical claims of the Gospel. According to Hogan and Reid (1999:63), one must demonstrate that one is attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible. In contrast, preachers who seem inattentive, obtuse, unreasonable and irresponsible will

struggle to win the trust of congregations.

A contemporary textbook on rhetorical criticism suggests that modern speakers must demonstrate that they are powerful, competent, and trustworthy, have goodwill, high ideals, and can identify with their audiences. Tisdale (1998:11) comments, "Faithful prophetic preaching is often born when these twins' love – love of God and love of marginalized neighbour – meet." It is reasonable to assume that lawyers may develop great ability in their profession without necessarily loving their clients. Likewise, physicians may enjoy great success without loving their patients. Business people can also rise to great heights of prosperity without loving their customers. However, preachers can never be real workers for Christ without a deep passion for the lost souls to whom they preach the Gospel of God's grace. In a sense, preachers cannot teach unless they live a truly religious life in contact with God. According to Steimle, Niedenthal and Rice (1980:21), a preacher is expected to live in a small, provincial world and to be "Exhibit A" of its values and pieties.

This means that preachers' words in the pulpit must relate to their entire lives. It is said that Protestantism, hitherto, has focused too much on faith and far too little on the problem of credibility. According to Huffman (1992:428), "The hearers of the Word want to sense believability, credibility and integrity in their preacher. Nonverbal gestures, physical bearing, eye contact, vocal variety and the use of comic relief, all within one's normal communication style, are important to the hearer."

Hence, the printed sermon has not made the preached sermon less popular. Moreover, the invisible radio preacher has not caused the visible preacher to be less

in demand. Congregations desire to see, hear and know the person who offers them the bread of life. Ward (1992:66) calls on preachers: "Take note: your congregation yearns for such trust." Consequently, when the preachers' minds are in a heavenly, holy frame, the congregation is likely to partake of the fruits of the Word.

The congregations whom the preachers wish to address must be in the their minds' eyes as they prepare their sermons. Much will depend on whether they know them well or not. The sermon will die away ineffectually in a vacuum if there is no possibility of a response from the audience.

6.4.4 Preaching is a dynamic encounter between preacher and congregation

The first problem that preachers encounter is the complex nature of their congregations. When they begins to preach, the parishioners are much more like a crowd than a congregation. They represent such varied backgrounds and interests that they are not easily united into one group. It is said that the essential human elements in a preaching situation are the preacher and the congregation. According to Barth (1964:96), "The preacher will love his congregation and feel that he is one with them."

In a sense, real preaching is the product of all that both speaker and listeners contribute during their time together. Friedl and Macauley (1994:98) observe, "If the homilist has served a parish for at least a few months, the congregation knows his moods, his likes and dislikes, and his idiosyncrasies." It is reasonable to assume that the act of preaching involves preacher and congregation in a series of dynamic

moments (Massey 1998:13).

In this respect, as the audience judges the speaker's character to be more or less worthy of confidence, the speaker's arguments are accordingly considered more or less authoritative. It is said that preaching follows the text, but moves on from it to the preacher's own heart and to the congregation. According to Willimon and Lischer (1995:67), the local parish, however, continues as the primary area for assessments of ethos. Undoubtedly, the central response to any sermon emerges from the listeners' perception that preachers either do, or do not, believe in their own witness. The parishioners' interaction with the preacher and parish life during the rest of the week will only confirm the judgment.

It should be mentioned that preaching is not only a matter of hearing a 20-minute sermon, but is also an event in which the Word, the preacher, the hearer and the situation, in which the sermon is preached, all come together. In a sense, preaching requires silent dialogue that should develop between the preacher and the congregation. Louw (1999:143) also asserts that, "Paul's letters to Timothy emphasize the notion that piety, as an expression of the awareness of God's presence, reflects a certain life-style and behavior and is expressed concretely in the congregation. Piety is not an inwardly directed quality which concerns only psychic processes, but a corporative issue of the entire congregation." According to Willimon (1987:73-74), "All the preachers' personal relationships with the listeners are brought to bear in the act of preaching. As they listen, members of the congregation want the preacher to succeed. They want the preacher to be able to be clear and persuasive."

This implies that the preacher prepares a sermon, not outside the context of the church, but as a product of the church. The preacher's call was recognized and the church trained and ordained him/her. MacIntyre (1981:141) comments, "It is worth remembering that Aristotle's insistence that the virtues find their place not just in the life of the individual, but in the life of the city." As Cunningham (1991:122) points out, "Most audiences are surrounded by information about the speaker before they hear or read a single word." It is certain that in preaching, the primary encounter takes place between the preacher and the audience. Stated differently, the relationship between preacher and listener is where the decisive element in the worship service comes to the fore.

Based on the afore-mentioned discussion, it can be argued that sermons are events in time, and God's Word is addressed to particular congregations in particular circumstances. According to Barth (1991:28), "The preacher's position must be as closely oriented as possible to that of the listener so as to illustrate the condescension of God." For this reason, it is maintained that the Gospel should not be written but shouted, and that the church is not a pen-house but a mouth-house. It follows that effective speaking is a transaction between the speaker and an audience in which the latter learns to trust the speaker and thereby accepts the speaker's message.

Consequently, the message should be applied in a very personal way. All preachers should remember that eternal issues are at stake and each person in the audience should be made to feel that the message is for him or her alone.

6.5   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter has been to emphasize four key aspects of a solution for preaching in crisis through the preacher's ethos:

(1)   The relevance of the preacher's ethos is that one cannot separate preachers from their preaching. In other words, preachers are their statements and the orators are their oration.

(2)   The major influence of the preacher's ethos is that a great part of the preparation for preaching is the preparation of the preacher. Success in the pulpit is indeed tied to the preacher's moral character and ethos.

(3)   The most importance aspect of the preacher's ethos in preaching is the danger of inconsistent living that the preacher faces. It is often said that the preacher's talk should be backed up and balanced by the preacher's walk.

(4)   The key point of the preacher's ethos and the congregation is that there should be the shadow of a listening congregation in the preacher's mind during the preparation of the sermon.

Therefore, the art of speaking depends on hard work, constant study, varied exercise, repeated trials, the deepest sagacity and the readiest judgment. However, all this is in vain unless the orator is, above all, a good person (De Koster 1986:312).

As a final comment to this chapter, the researcher would like to mention that

preachers must be an example of their preaching. In addition, the preachers, who wish to be good performers, must be characterized by good behaviour.

The following chapter will deal with further suggestions for the development of the preacher's ethos.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PREACHER'S ETHOS

The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate the need for the development of the preacher's ethos. To accomplish this objective, the researcher will explore the development of the preacher's ethos. Moreover, some suggestions for the development of the preacher's ethos will be proposed.

7.1   DEVELOPMENT OF THE PREACHER'S ETHOS

This section will focus on the development of the preacher's ethos related to four aspects:

> (1)   The preacher requires a great deal of endeavour,
>
> (2)   The preparation of an influential preacher,
>
> (3)   Jesus Christ is the ultimate model of the preacher's development, and
>
> (4)   The qualities of the authentic preacher.

7.1.1   The preacher requires a great deal of endeavour

It could be argued that real speakers are born, but they are also made. MacIntyre (1976:64) states, "Virtue is not inborn, but a consequence of training." This means mere desire or mechanical techniques cannot improve virtue. Preachers must attempt to improve themselves in all aspects. Hogan and Reid (1999:66) write,

"When we recognize the primacy of ethos within the preaching project, we must begin to recognize the importance of attending to and establishing our ethos both within and without the sermon." In other words, preaching requires a great deal of discipline, skill and commitment on the part of its practitioners and is hard work. The best preachers not only possess gifts essential for a preaching ministry, they also work hard at developing those gifts over the course of a lifetime.

In certain aspects about the art and craft of preaching, fellow practitioners are the best teachers and evaluators of the preaching ministry. Preachers are persons among fellow preachers, and the impact of this positive relationship contributes directly to the substance and form of preaching. Tisdale (1998:9) states:

> My advice to people who are considering becoming preachers is not to do it if you do not intend to work very hard at it. Preaching requires a great deal of discipline: reading, prayer, study, writing, rewriting. I go through each day with my eyes and ears open to homiletic possibilities.

And Lueking (1985:57) observes, "The congregation I serve has graciously commended me to this splendid opportunity. They released me for four months of my service to them, knowing that I shall return that much deeper and broader as a person for continuing ministry there." Almond (1980:7) asks, how one may preach a meaningful sermon. The conclusion is inevitable. There must be a balanced blend of prayerful study and meditation on the Scripture with involvement in people's lives. These two elements are the basic resources for sermon-building. Books are our

most panoramic contact with the world of thought, and a never-ending source of inspiration. But the Book of books stands in a class of its own. It is our supreme source of sermon material - the backbone of every message.

In this regard, the preacher's role, as the shepherd of the flock with its attendant responsibility as the provider of food, does not exempt him/her from the need to also be fed. As Craddock (1985:20) remarks, "Of course, listening to other preachers is very important, and far exceeds in value to the reading of their sermons. Since sermons are spoken, hearing is better than reading." Moreover, the preacher's important hope is in God using one, in all one's weakness, for the fulfillment of his great purpose, that humans may have life in Him. According to Rue (1967:16), only God's Spirit makes a successful preacher; it is true that without the Holy Spirit's aid there cannot be a successful preacher; but it does not follow that the Holy Spirit will put the words in the preacher's mouth without the latter's own diligent labour.

7.1.2   The preparation of an influential preacher

It is said that a person who desires to please God in the ministry will desire to acquire those skills that make one an effective instrument for Him. On the other hand, the skills required for the ministry reinforce our love for God and change us into more godly people. Willimon (2000:52) establishes that, "Community, cross and new creation will give content to our discussion of ministerial character, serving as the specifically Christian theological claims that both form and require specifically Christian traits of character." Schlafer (1995:12) also surmises, "The most obvious

way to envision the place of a preaching voice in any sermon is to think in terms of proportion, balance or even amount. 'How much of me should I put in the sermon?' is how the question is often posed." According to Walker (1988:95-96), the great Scottish preacher Alexander Whyte preached a message with power in Edinburgh one Sunday. After the service, a rather gushing woman met him as he left the pulpit: "Oh, Dr. Whyte, you spoke tonight as though you came straight from an audience with God!" "Perhaps I did," the preacher quietly replied. Evangelistic preaching is built on constant believing, and expectant prayer. From prayer comes a sense of confidence in what God can do. Through prayer, his immeasurable, inexhaustible, infinite resources are received. If ever the words of Jesus are true, they apply to anyone who dares to stand up and preach: "Without Me you can do nothing."

The spiritual preparation of an evangelistic preacher to proclaim a whole Gospel does not take place in a vacuum. It involves a response at various levels of personality and in several areas of activity. It means being prepared through constant surrender, inner integrity, identification with people, courage to remain true to principles, and a humble waiting on the Spirit of God for power. Johnson (1994:190) observes, "Much of the preaching of the modern era assumed that the listener accepted both the speaker's right to speak and the authority of the Bible."

One could argue that everyone recognizes that ministers must have faith. However, talking about faith from the pulpit is not enough. They must have an attitude of trust and commitment that permeates all of their lives. Preachers should develop nonverbal dynamism consistent with their personality and emotional state to

draw the congregation into the preaching moment.

Moreover, people must rise to a much higher level than common personhood if they aspire to be preachers (Beecher 1872:52).

7.1.3 The ultimate model for the preacher's development is Jesus Christ

In fact, Jesus Himself was the first preacher in Christianity. In a sense, God takes care of the preacher's character all the time. Hence, he/she will become more and more effective in ministry among the congregation. However, such growth in character comes only as a by-product of increasing Christ-likeness. Willimon (2000:54) states, "Though we have not yet been fully redeemed, the church already embodies the power of Jesus' resurrection." Likewise, Blackwood (1960:32) comments, "If you keep taking first-class care of yourself as a Christ-like person, God will take first-class care of your Christian personality." According to Louw (2008:274), in order to understand the undergirding hermeneutics of a theological, Christian ethics, two basic important decisions must be made. Firstly, theologians must decide whether their reflection will be done within the parameters of a creation paradigm or a re-creation paradigm. The second fundamental decision is whether the starting point for ethical reflection is the incarnation with its emphasis on Christ's mediatory work, or inhabitation while highlighting Christ's indwelling presence within the realm of the human body.

However, by the grace of God, all real ministers can make the most of them-selves as persons. Thus, they should keep on growing more Christ-like as long as

they live. Piper (1990:63) states, "Jesus is the great example for preachers – the crowds heard him gladly, the children sat in his lap, the woman were honored." Stated differently, this adornment consists of honesty in business, truthfulness of speech, morality of life, wholesomeness of mind, evenness of temper, righteousness of acts and godliness of character. These are the qualities that speak louder than words. It has been well said that Christianity does not come into the world tariff free, but there is always a duty associated with it. Coggan (1988:106-107) observes:

> My personality is one of God's most gracious gifts to me. It is unique. Just as there are no two people with the same finger-prints, so there are no two people with the same personalities. The distinctiveness is God's charisma, and he wills to use it distinctively in his service and not least in the ministry of the word. That is why it is wrong for anyone to seek to copy another preacher.

For this reason, preachers are called to a type of life in which there is a balance between solitude and society. Their solitude will be occupied with prayer, study and continual work on the meaning of words and the making of sentences. In this respect, the process of developing the preacher's ethos is similar to that of sanctification. Reformed theologians commonly assert that sanctification continues throughout a believer's life, but occurs once and for all. Hoekema (1989:208) ponders, "Christians are not simply to sit back and wait for the time when they will be totally like Christ; they must be constantly and energetically active in the struggle to overcome evil with good." Willimon (1996:166) also argues, "I believe that a major source of homiletical

renewal is clerical lives grasped by something greater than ourselves: namely, our vocation to speak and to enact the Word of God among God's people. Clergy ethics has its basis in homiletics." Killinger (2005:129-130) is of the opinion that silence discovers reality. It also shapes character. Only in silence, in the space between noise, speech and activity, is there room for a person to become focused, to achieve gravity and centredness. This is why there is luminosity about certain gurus – the substance of silence affects their public appearance from their hours of meditation. It explains the weight of Moses' personality when he came down from the mountain, or Jesus' after a period of prayer.

Cilliers (2008:28-32) describes his view on silence as follows:

(1)   We are in dire need of silence in our liturgies, specifically also in the Protestant tradition, which often seems to equate Word-centredness with being word-driven;

(2)   We are in dire need of liturgists whom silence has formed and reformed ethically and aesthetically;

(3)   We are in dire need of a new word, new words, born from silence;

(4)   We are in dire need of holistic liturgies, especially in the Reformed tradition, that take into account both the verbal and non-verbal components of religious experience.

7.1.4   The qualities of the authentic preacher

It is reasonable to comment that preachers must demonstrate dedication. Singularity

of purpose characterizes the preachers' total dedication to their calling. This implies that God's people who do their homework with this kind of devotion will inevitably command the respect of their people. Their only desire is to work toward, and eventually win, the authority necessary to open the ears of their people, to whom the preachers desire most to minister with genuine spiritual power. Willimon (2000:53) states, "Jesus' death on the cross is the paradigm for faithfulness to God." Williams (1988:65) also observes, "The preacher who uses ethos well should clearly recognize the compatibility of knowledge and piety." According to Hogan and Reid (1999:58), the preachers' physical appearance is another way in which they communicate their relationship with the congregation and enhance ethos. While you often remind your children that you cannot judge a book by its cover, the reality is that, in fact, one does just that.

For this reason, preachers must have empathy with their congregation. Rather, the real preparation of the preachers' character for their work takes place through the opening of their lives on both sides, towards God's truth and towards people's needs. Broadus (1944:7) maintains, "The preacher needs the capacity for clear thinking, with strong feelings, and a vigorous imagination; also capacity for expression, and the power of forcible utterance." Piper (1990:58-59) also comments, "Gravity and earnestness in preaching is appropriate, not only because preaching is God's instrument for the weighty business of saving sinners and reviving his church, but also because it is God's instrument for preserving the saints." As Smith (1984:50) points out, a prayerful story, alert eyes, sensitive ears and a compassionate heart are

ingredients that form the preacher's personality.

It is said that the church is called to be a counter-cultural community. In a sense, the one definite note of power is sincerity. If it is absent, preaching is only an empty noise. If there is sincerity, it may atone for every other omission among honest hearts. In addition, a constant spiritual fitness for the task is paramount, and an ever-deepening response to the power of the Holy Spirit is essential. Moreover, courage is a quality of effectiveness in the preacher. Of the apostles it is said that they spoke the Word of God with boldness and, since their days, all who had significant success in the winning of souls were distinguished by the same characteristic.

For this reason, an effective minister should be a person of integrity, willing to learn; competent in Scripture, theology and church polity, and have an understanding of the sacraments. Moreover, a competent minister must be aware of the current culture – those ideas, movements, and other matters in which people are caught up. According to Phelps (1908:17), "The genuine power of spontaneous preaching is very largely a reflection of the power of elaborate discourse." In connection with the discourse of the sermon, its introduction is very significant in contemporary preach-ing. The sermon's introduction, whether spoken or written, is another way in which a preacher establishes ethos prior to the delivery of the sermon. The introduction can have a powerful influence on a congregation. Therefore, preachers should give careful thought to its written or oral content before they preach.

Based on the discussion thus far, it can be argued that, when God calls a person to his service, He also fits and equips him/her for it, for God enables his

commands. If God wishes one of his creatures to fly, He gives it wings to adapt it to the sphere in which it is to live.

It follows that Aristotle's distinction between these two kinds of virtues was initially made in terms of a contrast between the ways in which they are acquired; intellectual virtues are acquired through teaching, and the virtues of character from habitual exercise (MacIntyre 1981:144).

7.2 FURTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PREACHER'S ETHOS

Further suggestions for the development of the preacher's ethos will be opresented, concentrating on five areas: (1) the preacher's vocation, (2) the preacher's spirituality, (3) the preacher's reading, (4) the preacher's prayer and (5) the preacher's glory.

This study began with the importance of the preacher's ethos. Perhaps it is now clear why the researcher put *development of the preacher's ethos* into the last chapter, as the topic of the preacher's ethos seems to be slightly nonobjective. Therefore, several practical suggestions should be offered for the development of the preacher's ethos.

The following picture designates reciprocal movement of the preacher's ethos. To improve and develop the preacher's ethos, he/she should ponder and require a great deal of labour. In a word, each item (vocation, spirituality, reading, prayer and glory)

affects the growth of the preacher's ethos. A very common proverb is: a good man speaking well. The debate can be reduced to the Latin maxim that defines the rhetorical understanding of ethos as: *vir bonus dicendi peritus* – the good man speaking well (Hogan & Reid 1999:54). Ethos is central - this is the golden thread.
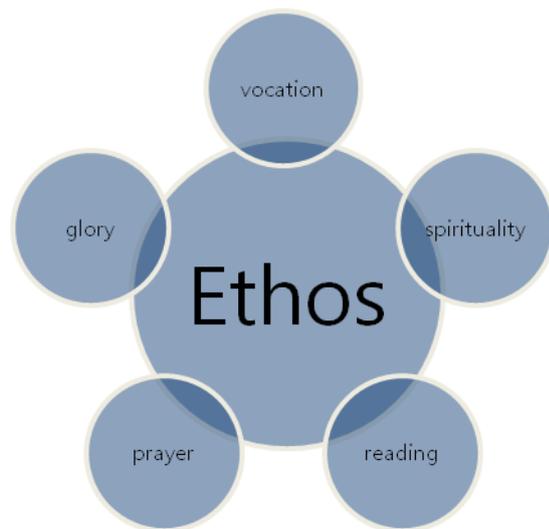
Development of the preacher's ethos

7.2.1   The preacher and vocation

This subsection briefly surveys the preacher's vocation related to three aspects:

(1)   the definition of the preacher's vocation,

(2)   The necessity of the vocation, and

(3)   The features of the vocation.

7.2.1.1   A definition of "the preacher's vocation"

It is necessary for preachers to have clarity with respect to their understanding of

their own vocation. They should know what the vocation is, and they should be sure that they have it. Chappell (1951:11) states, "It becomes true that the preacher's call is a matter of universal interest." Massey (1998:20-21) adds, "The very call to preach is a claim upon us to be believers, eager servants who work out of personal experience with the Lord and deep conviction about God's truth." Koller (1965:13) observes:

> In the Old Testament the preacher was a 'prophet.' This title is derived from the Greek *prophetes*, which in turn is a free rendering of the Hebrew *nabhi*, meaning 'one who is called by God, one who has a vocation from God.' Thus, the prophet was a man who felt himself called by God for a special mission, in which his will was subordinated to the will of God, which was communicated to him by direct inspiration. It was this call that differentiated him from other men.

It is said that vocation becomes an act of will, a grim determination that one's life will go this way or that whether it wants to or not. Palmer (2000:4-5) maintains, "Vocation does not come from willfulness. It comes from listening. That insight is hidden in the word *vocation* itself, which is rooted in the Latin for *voice*. Vocation does not refer to a goal that I pursue, but to a calling that I hear." Evans (2003:30-31) draws attention to Soren Kierkegaard who describes a Christian as a person who tries to live his/her life *coram Deo* (before God). As he puts it, the astounding thing about the Christian faith is that each one of us, however unimportant we may feel ourselves to be, has

the privilege of being personally addressed by God, the almighty One, the Ruler of the universe. A person who might feel incredibly lucky to shake the hand of a presidential candidate, in fact, has a much more exalted status as he or she is called to live continually in the presence of God. In addition, God has a unique name for each one of us, a unique set of tasks.

Moreover, preachers must be conscious of an interior call. They must experience the imperative pressure of a vocation and accept it with all their hearts. According to Tisdale (1998:2), "Call is preeminently a divine act, a claim of God that comes from beyond and summons the believers to speak on behalf of God." For this reason, preachers testify to a diversity of ways in which they experience God's call in their own lives. For some, the call to preach is a gradual process that develops and unfolds over a long period. For others, the call comes in a sudden moment of illumination. Some eagerly and willingly respond to the call, others need more convincing. In a sense, God has called preachers to be his collaborators in transmitting his message to the world - in calling humans to the divine life. John 15:16: "You did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you to go and bear fruit …."

It should be mentioned that the ministerial call is the conviction that God has set one apart to proclaim the message of his Word and administer the sacred sacraments that Jesus provided for the church. Barry (1958:7) remarks, "The Ministry is a gift and call from God. It is not a mere delegation of function or convenient division of labour. It cannot be conferred by human appointment nor can a man choose it by his own will." In a broad sense, it can be said that every Christian

is called to proclaim, but this common task becomes most clearly visible in the preacher. Placher (2005:232) argues that most of the later Protestants distinguished between our "general calling" to be a Christian and our "special calling" to some particular vocation. Calvin used the same terms, but in a different way – the "general calling" was the word that anyone could hear in preaching, inviting people to faith; a "special calling" worked only in the hearts of the elect, to bring them to that faith.

Consequently, the preacher's calling imparts joyous confidence and a holy boldness that lies behind the message and the messenger. According to Linn (2003:18), speaking of going to work, it is important to remember why you do so. The word is *vocation.* Ministers "go to work" because God calls them to go. There is no room for ambiguity here. Clarity is essential. Doubts about a call can easily lead to a loss of focus.

7.2.1.2   The necessity of vocation

Naturally, preaching is a sincere account of the speaker's own personal faith. Truth that is preached must first be experienced. The preacher is a participant, not a spectator. Baumann (1972:33-34) observes, "God's servant is first of all called to sonship. No one has a claim to the pulpit of the Christian church who has not experienced the redemptive touch of Christ upon his life." According to Unger (1980:59), "The Bible expositor must possess the settled conviction that God has called and separated him to the Gospel ministry as a life work. This call and commission have been the portion of all God's prophets and apostles throughout Old and New Testament times." Willi-

mon (2000:33) points out that ministers must be called. True Christians believe that all occupations ought to answer to the vocational question, namely: How is this work an extension of your Christian discipleship? For clergy, this sense of vocational responsibility is crucial due to the peculiar demands upon ministers.

In this regard, one who handles the Bible needs above all else to be spiritually renewed. Yet, so frequently, for some or other reason, people who have never experienced salvation enter the ministry and attempt to preach and teach the Word of God. So, the absolute necessity of this fundamental spiritual requirement must be emphasized. As Van Der Geest (1981:143) observes, "Being a preacher is not for everyone." This implies that there are many ways in which the call may come – directly or indirectly through circumstances. However, come it must! Preaching God's Word is important work. God selects, calls and empowers for this momentous task. It should be mentioned that laymen may preach and teach the Bible and do it well. Yet, when God calls one to give one's full time to the ministry of the Word, you ought to know that you are divinely called and commissioned for this sacred occupation. For this reason, preachers should feel inwardly called to their office. They should be aware of the need for this call and give themselves to it wholeheartedly.

As a consequence of this influence, God must call the preachers. They cannot take upon themselves the office without the assurance that God prepares them all their lives in all of his ways to do his work. It must be an internal conviction and an external confirmation by the church.

7.2.1.3　The features of vocation

It is reasonable to argue that happiness is also a worthy ingredient in the understanding of God's call. When one senses God's touch upon one's life, it is frequently endorsed by a sense of personal joy. For such individuals, happiness and God's will become synonymous. Tisdale (1998:5) states, "I agree with our preachers that the call to preach should be both internally experienced and externally confirmed by the church." Massey (1998:26-27) points out that one is initially aware of this call and that at least five crucial features can be isolated regarding what it does and means:

(1)　Being called to preach is an experience that places a demand upon you, and the result is a convictional knowledge about an assignment.

(2)　The call guides one in a challenging direction that becomes central to one's new identity, beliefs and behaviour.

(3)　The call is an experience that aids one's self-development, granting one a point for integrating the self.

(4)　The experience of receiving a call from God to preach grants one a new surge of life and a plus to one's normal energies and natural powers.

(5)　Staying surrendered to the demands and opportunities for which the call is given opens new springs of creativity within one.

Moreover, peace - a difficult concept to define but is certainly experienced - can be a further recognition by a minister that the call is from God Himself. Stated differently, scriptural verses were the seeds that were planted in these ministers: at the right

moment, they burst into growth and open their hearts to God's call. Nederhood (1986:34) observes, "A minister who is sure of his call is among the most poised, confident, joy-filled and effective of human beings." Since God is a God of infinite variety, it is not surprising that He does not call all his ministers in the same way.

A true calling always includes concern about others, interest in them, a realization of their lost state and condition, and a desire to do something about them, share the message with them, and point them to the way of salvation. This is an indispensable part of the call. Moreover, there should be a sense of constraint. This is surely the most fundamental test, which means that preachers should feel that they can do nothing else. It follows that, before a person is called to be a preacher, the church must confirm his/her personal calling, i.e. the church must attest it. As Linn (2003:19) points out, everything one does must be directed toward the goal of making Jesus known in the world. Without this sense of vocation, one finds it harder and harder to get up and go to work in the real world of ministry.

It follows that, in the Bible, vocation has two primary meanings. The first is the call to become a member of God's people and to take up the duties that pertain to that membership. Whereas the Puritans referred to this as God's "general calling," Luther refers to it as God's "spiritual calling." The second meaning is God's diverse and particular callings – special tasks, offices or places of responsibility within the covenantal community and in the broader society. Luther refers to this as God's "external calling" and the Puritans described it as God's "particular calling." In recent years, many Bible scholars and theologians have disdained this second sense of

vocation (Schuurman 2004:17).

7.2.2   The preacher and spirituality

This section focuses on the relevance of the preacher's spirituality in terms of the following three points:

(1)   The definition of spirituality;

(2)   The importance of spirituality to the preacher; and

(3)   The role of spirituality in preaching.

7.2.2.1   The definition of "spirituality"

It is said that a sermon is not the preacher's possession at all but, instead, the Holy Spirit's work. Kim (1999:17) maintains, "It is important to define 'spirituality' correctly because there are some misunderstandings in Christian circles. The most popular definition is to think that it is an opposite conception of body or substance." McKee (2001:2) also observes, "Most descriptions of spirituality explain it as the conscious relationship of human beings with the divine and the shape which that relationship gives to human life." As Waaijman (2006:14) points out, spirituality is a relational process that constitutes an original whole in which God and man are reciprocally related.

Despite the paramount importance of the spiritual element in the life and ministry of the preacher of the Word, it is striking how little emphasis is put upon this aspect of the minister's equipment in our current day. Varga (2007:145) remarks:

In my understanding spirituality means a belief that there are forces or there

is a God or there are gods beyond the experienced reality of the individual. It is therefore a rather diffuse sentiment or belief in transcendent forces that may or may not directly influence the individual life.

Carkoglu (2008:113) states, "Spirituality is seen as a subjective individual experience with the sacred world." According to Willimon and Lischer (1995:448), one might say that spirituality is the way persons live out their conviction of who they are in relation to God, self, others and creation.

It is reasonable to assert that spirituality must include the public or outer practices, as well as the private and inner ones. The responsibility for this renewal of the Spirit rests both upon the pastors and upon the leaders who discern God's call to the church (Johnson & Dreitcer 2001:18).

7.2.2.2   The importance of the preacher's spirituality

It could be argued that, since God should be the source of the message, the preacher who delivers such a message should enjoy intimate communion with Him. According to Unger (1980:56), "There is no requirement more essential for one who would expound the Word of God than the spiritual." Barth (1991:50) also maintains, "Preaching is not a neutral activity. It is not an action involving two equal partners. It can mean only Lordship on God's side and obedience on ours." This is the only way the message can be conveyed with the greatest accuracy, clarity and passion. By many imponderable signs, the layman can discriminate between preachers who

speak from the depths of their souls and those who recite lessons learned in a book. When the former have listened to Jesus whispering in their ears, they preach in a way that enables their listeners to hear that same whisper in their inner ears.

Moreover, the preacher must be dependent upon God the Holy Spirit for divine insight and understanding of God's Word. Without the Spirit's illumination and power, the message will be relatively powerless. As Forbes (1989:21) observes, "To preach today in Jesus' name, and to do so with power, still requires the enabling presence of the Holy Spirit." According to Jabusch (1990:113), "A strong formation in Christian spirituality is of the greatest importance." For this reason, to enjoy the Spirit's full, untrammeled teaching ministry one must also yield to God's will, adjust to his purpose, and be under the full control of the Spirit's wisdom and power.

Faced with a crisis in preaching, the Christian messenger depends on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Chittister (2003:88-89) remarks,

Wrestling with God is of the essence of life. In the process, we learn things about the self and we come to understand some things about God as well. Given enough struggle, it becomes very clear after a while. Struggle is the process the drives us to find God within us and in the darkness that surrounds us.

According to Johnson and Dreitcer (2001:18), a spirituality for leaders challenges ministers and lay leaders to discover the spiritual dimensions of ministry, not only in secret places of Bible study and prayer, but also in the public roles of congregational

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care, preaching and administration.

Furthermore, preachers, then, need to be sure that they know God, not just know *about* Him. Bugg (1992:15) comments, "However, preaching is more than a craft. It is a calling from God; thus, the preacher places ultimate reliance upon the Spirit of God." Adams (1982:146) also observes, "The pastor who wants to be a preacher needs to have a faith like that in his Maker." In a sense, out of all the relationships that ministers have, none is more vital than their relationship with God. Therefore, the prime qualification of ministers is that they should be spiritual people, that is, before they begin to make God known, they should first know Him.

No doubt, the prime and greatest need in the pulpit is spiritual authority. There is only one thing that gives preachers authority, and that is: they should be filled with the Holy Spirit.

7.2.2.3　The role of spirituality in preaching

It is a fact that God is greater than the messenger. Only the Holy Spirit can convict the conscience, illumine the mind, enflame the heart and move the will. Only the powerful demonstration that the Holy Spirit can give to the Word, can prevail upon the congregation to receive it, hold it fast to bring forth fruit with patience. Unger (1980:57) states:

> There is a twofold reason revealed in Scripture why anyone who would expound the Word of God must enjoy the benefits of the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. The first is that the Holy Spirit alone *knows* the things of God.

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The second is that the Holy Spirit alone can *teach* the things of God.

According to Forbes (1989:19), "It is the Spirit who convenes a congregation to hear the Word of God. And it is the Spirit who opens our heart and minds to receive anew God's self-disclosure as the living word." Miller (1996:28) notes that the word *sermon* implies God's presence in its words that otherwise would be only a speech. Without the Holy Spirit and his creative and re-creative activity, there can be words, essays, or the reading of papers, but there can be no preaching. When the Spirit comes into our speaking, our words are no longer a mere speech.

Moreover, as has already been shown, the pulpit's essential and peculiar power consists, not in the words that the preacher teaches, but that the Holy Spirit teaches. According to Adams (1982:155), "The best preacher is the one who allows his voice and body to become a well-tuned instrument in the hands of the Holy Spirit." Niles (1960:22) also remarks, "Actually, there is only one witness to Christ and that is the witness of the Holy Spirit. The witness of Christians is but a witness to His witness." Rust (1982:14) points out that Christ confronts the hearers through the preacher's words, acts in their souls, and makes his forgiveness and liberating love effective. His Holy Spirit moves in people's hearts. The cross and resurrection become living realities as they are preached. People are crucified with Christ and raised to newness of life as the Gospel becomes dynamic in the preacher's words.

It goes without saying that true preaching, after all, is an act of God. It is not just a person uttering words; it is God using the preacher. God uses the person who

is under the Holy Spirit's influence. According to Walker (1988:87), "There is no more spiritually demanding task in the world than preaching, especially evangelistic preaching." Ultimately, decisions and all achievements of preaching depend on the Holy Spirit. Even if the preacher is obedient and faithful to the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit is the active power that reveals God's faith, teaches, strengthens, comforts, and achieves the objectives of the sermon.

Preachers will find that the Spirit, who has helped them in their preparation, may now help them, while they are speaking, in an entirely new way, and point things out to them that they had not seen while they were preparing their sermon. This implies that preachers are the mere instruments, the channels, the vehicles, and the Spirit uses them while they are looking on in great enjoyment and astonishment. Suffice it to note that nothing compares to this. This is what the preachers themselves are aware of. According to MacArthur (1992:103), powerful preaching occurs only when Spirit-illumined people of God expound clearly and compellingly God's Spirit-inspired revelation in Scripture to a Spirit-illumined congregation.

For this reason, the level of awareness of the Spirit's movement, that those in the pulpit and the pew share, affects most significantly the preaching's quality. Therefore, the most holy people are excellent students of God's works. Stated differently, the walls of Jericho did not fall by the shouts of Israel, but by God's breath. This implies that God is the One who repeatedly breaks the silence of eternity and speaks to humans. Nierop (2007:113) points out that, in the chapter on meditation, the *Predigtlehre,* Bohren (1980:347-387) connects the belief in the power of the Holy

Spirit with advice for the preparation of a sermon. According to Bohren, meditating about a Bible means living with that text. The Holy Spirit might give you an idea for the sermon while you are sharing your life with the text in the Bible.

On the last page of his influential book, *Preaching and preachers*, Lloyd-Jones (1971:325) comments on spirituality in preaching as follows: when the power comes, yield to the spirituality. Do not resist. Forget all about your sermon if necessary. Let Him lose you, let Him manifest his power in you and through you. As Coggan (1988:106) points out, the preacher's holiness affects the quality of preaching in a very intimate way. This does not deny the fact that God's grace is such that it can take the utterance even of a wicked person and, by a miracle, use it to further his mighty purpose.

Consequently, the preacher can never be content with preaching that is formally correct. Unless preaching breathes the Spirit of the truth expounded, it is incorrect and itself needs healing and correction. Moreover, preachers must be persons who are characterized by spirituality to an unusual degree, and who have arrived at a settled assured knowledge and understanding of the truth and feel that they are able to preach this to others. Chittister (2003:103) comments,

> The spiritual task of life is to feed the hope that comes out of despair. Hope is not something to be found outside of us. It lies in the spiritual life we cultivate within. The whole purpose of wrestling with God is to be transformed into the self we are meant to become, to step out of the confines of our false securities and allow our creating God to go on creating.

Thus, if preachers are determined only to set forth the truth of God, they may rely upon Him to take care of them.

7.2.3   The preacher and reading

This section briefly investigates the preachers' reading in terms of the following five aspects:

      (1)   The importance of reading;

      (2)   The benefit of reading;

      (3)   Preachers should be persons of the Bible;

      (4)   Preachers should read a variety of books; and

      (5)   The relevance of reading to preachers.

7.2.3.1   The importance of reading

There was a time when the minister was the best-educated person in the community, and the fact that this is no longer true is no reason to abandon the assertion that every minister must maintain a high level of intellectual curiosity and scholarly competence. Baxter (1947:59-60) observes, "R.W. Dale drew attention to the importance of the preacher's having regular hours of study. 'Your strength,' he said, 'must be given to grave and continuous studies. You will fence round the prime hours of the day and keep them for hard work, or else you will be lost." According to Lischer (1981:95), "The Bible is the source of preaching and the sustainer of

preachers."

It should be noted that it was a common idea that the orator ought to know everything. Preaching consists not only in speaking, but also in speaking sense; and that depends on knowledge and "the full mind" that, in turn, depend on reading. According to Demaray (1974:31), "Alexander Whyte, faithful and fruitful Scottish minister, advised: Sell your shirt and buy books." For this reason, preachers have regular hours for study. There are no rules about when to begin work or how long to remain at it. However, they should have a fixed hour to reach their study and go there prepared, determined to work in earnest.

7.2.3.2   The benefit of reading

It is reasonable to assume that successful preachers are people who have trained themselves to spend many hours in careful reading. As Baxter (1947:67) remarks, "Every book you read will contribute to your message, and become part of the inspiration of the Spirit." Lloyd-Jones (1971:181) also observes:

> There are men who get their ideas from books and journals, indeed from all sorts of strange places. I maintain that this is not the primary object of reading. What then is its main purpose and function? It is to provide information; but still more important, it is because it is the best general stimulus. What the preacher always needs is a stimulus.

According to Killinger (1985:191), a minister whose spiritual life is unattended will

naturally have difficulty preaching 50 or 100 sermons a year, year in and year out for a lifetime. One sermon will sound pretty much like another, with nothing to distinguish it from the others. However, the minister who reads the Bible daily and listens to the voice from its pages will never run out of fresh ideas for sermons.

Moreover, the beauty of reading is that it is a chance to spend hours and days in the company of authors whom you choose. They have distilled onto the pages of their books the essence of their thinking and feeling and have shaped it as pleasantly as possible. They have garnered facts, ideas and images that would require years for one to assemble on one's own. Gibbs (1960:40-41) comments:

> He must both make and take time for the devotional reading of the Bible for his own soul's profit. It is possible to be so busy cultivating other people's gardens that one's own is apt to be neglected. One can be so occupied in feeding others that he becomes undernourished himself.

According to Lloyd-Jones (1971:181), "… the function of reading is to stimulate us in general, to stimulate us to think, to think for ourselves." As a result, the preacher should not read books for ideas; the business of books is to make one think. In other words, brilliant minds make better lawyers and doctors, so the same brilliance of mind makes for better ministers.

Consequently, there is no better way to amend our speaking than to study the right books eagerly.

7.2.3.3   The preacher should be a person of the Bible

It could be argued that one of the primary qualifications of the ministry is an intimate familiarity with the Scriptures. Much of ministers' work is spent searching in the Scriptures, and preachers of the highest order will always be persons well-versed in the Scriptures. According to Unger (1980:62), "The expositor must live in his Bible. Other books he must read, but the Word of God must be his daily food and drink. He must study it, meditate upon it day and night." Lee (1997:109) likewise observes, "The preacher not only needs to carry the Bible all the time, but he or she also needs to know the Bible well enough to pick passages relevant to particular occasions." Lloyd-Jones (1971:172) points out:

> One should read the Bible not to find texts for a sermon, but to use the nourishment for your soul that God has provided. Moreover, one should read the Bible because it is the Word of God and the means whereby one can get to know God. It should be read because it is the bread of life, the manna provided for the soul's sustenance and well-being.

Furthermore, the most instructive and inspiring preacher is the one who knows the Bible best. This implies that the study of the Scriptures is a life-long task, which must start early in life and continue through the years; but, even so, it can never be completed. Parker (1992:44-45) observes, "If he is a teacher, he must himself know his subject; he must be a student of the Scriptures in the manner not only of literary criticism but also and far more in the way of seeking in the Scriptures the knowledge

of God in Christ." According to Green (1972:58), "The Bible is the basis and the condition of all authentic preaching. Ministers must be men of one Book as well as of many books." The preacher is expected to read, study, and understand the Bible better than the members of the congregation. The primary qualification of preachers is their biblical knowledge. For most congregations, theological education means learning the Bible. The more degrees in theology preachers have, the more they should know about the Bible.

One of the worst habits preachers can ever fall into is to read their Bibles simply in order to find texts for sermons. Grasso (1965:215) states, "To serve the Word means that the preacher must become a man of the Bible. The preacher's first duty is to know the Word of God, to meditate upon it, and to understand it." This means that preachers must be persons of the Book. Moreover, they must know it by reading it. It is essential that preachers should be well acquainted with the Book from which they preach because the Bible gives the Christian preacher his or her most enduring, appropriate material (Willimon 1987:77). Since preaching is to be an exposition of Holy Scripture, follows that preachers should know the Bible well (Parker 1992:38).

In a sense, the preacher should be acquainted with the Bible as a whole, and this can be accomplished only by reading it from cover to cover. In others words, preachers must be "people of the Book" and masters of its contents. They should be able to quote from it freely and thus make its beautiful language their own. For this reason, the Holy Scripture must be the preacher's favorite book. This implies that the

Bible is the preacher's book, not simply because it is the story of what happened once, but also because in it, and through it, and by way of it everything happens now.

In conclusion, it is reasonable to assume that a preacher must be a person of the Bible. Peterson (1987:62) argues that, among people of faith, the intent in reading Scripture is to extend the range of their hearing God who reveals Himself in words, become acquainted with the ways in which He has spoken in various times and places along with the ways in which people respond when He speaks.

7.2.3.4   The preacher should read a variety of books

In a sense, the Scriptures were considered the chief textbook of all preachers, and almost every other branch of learning was suggested as a supplement to this central body of knowledge. Baxter (1947:62) states, "There is still another direction which your studies should take. The preacher should be a man of broad and generous culture, and should, not only the Bible, but books outside of the Bible." Gibbs (1960:78) likewise maintains, "The preacher should also read fairly widely the best of secular literature, including history, poetry and the classics. In this way, he will widen his horizons, increase his vocabulary, become better acquainted with good English and thus learn to express himself better." Thus, the persons who wish to be true and understanding preachers, may well read history and deepen their sense of identity with all the long traditions of the past.

Preachers' eyes should traverse the course of history and the great facts of human society to illustrate and confirm their expositions of the Word. According to

Macgregor (1946:68), "A.B. Davidson maintained to his students that all good literature is the most profitable study for the preacher, since in it the human mind is to be seen in all the breadth of its humanity – its emotions and aspirations and idealisms, its grieves and cries over failure." White (1988:31) also claims, "Respected literature has long been employed in Christian preaching, and sometimes it has supplanted scripture as the principle source of knowledge cited and persuasive power relied upon." Stated differently, preachers must read widely and insatiably and should especially seek out books of human interest. Theological writings will be indispensable, but detective stories will also have value. As a homiletical student, the researcher believes that preachers should keep up with the progress of theology, church history and other specialties of their profession.

As a result, when preachers examine some portion of the Bible, they ought to preach what they find and what they find depends almost as much upon their own personalities as upon the character of the passage (Blackwood 1941:46).

7.2.3.5 The relevance of reading to the preacher

It is reasonable to comment on the reason for it being necessary to keep in step with the congregation's reading: if preachers are not familiar with the books that their pari-shioners are reading, the latter will soon consider the preachers as intellectual foreigners – strangers to their (the congregants') ways and thoughts and, in some respects, ignorant of much of the most interesting part of their lives. Baxter (1947:57-58) remarks:

If you are going to be a master in your business, you must know about all these things yourself. Having eyes, you must see; having ears, you must hear; and having a heart, you must understand. A minister ought to be the best informed man on the face of the earth. He ought to see everything, inquire about everything, and be interested in everything.

According to Killinger (1985:197), "A seminary education is not meant to complete our education for ministry, but to initiate it."

For this reason, religious teachers will suffer this same collapse of authority if they are ignorant of the great principles of science or the facts of general knowledge in history, geography and literature. They can no more be leaders, and people will listen to them, not to receive instructions, but to criticize their teachers' errors. Taylor (1975:29) observes, "You are to lead your people up to an intelligent apprehension of its meaning, and a cordial reception of its statements, and it will be impossible for you to do that if you are not yourselves masters of its contents." Stated differently, beyond the realm of Scripture, preachers' studies take them into the fields of history, literature, art and science – in short, into all the established areas of learning. It follows that the time spent on books, drama, music, contemporary history at home and abroad, is not time taken from work. Comprehension of these issues is part of the preacher's equipment.

Thus, it can be concluded that a teacher must first be a scholar (Parker 1992:37). Moreover, the Bible is the Word of God and thus the only reliable basis for

all preaching. Jesus brought men and women into conversation with God – no longer merely reading the Scriptures, at which many of them were quite adept, but listening to God, which they hardly guessed was possible. Therefore, the ears of the congregation are the primary target of the Word. It should be mentioned that when ministers stop studying, they simply stop (Pearson 1959:78).

7.2.4   The preacher and prayer

This section will focus on the preacher's prayer related to four aspects:

(1)   The importance of the preacher's prayer;

(2)   The benefit of the preacher's prayer;

(3)   The preacher should be a person of prayer; and

(4)   The result of being a prayerless preacher.

7.2.4.1   The importance of the preacher's prayer

It goes without saying that prayer may be the most difficult part of preachers' prepa-ration and, unless they are spiritually prepared, they cannot become instruments of proclamation. According to Unger (1980:61):

> There can be no substitute for definite and stated times of fellowship with God. This exercise of the soul is indispensable. It is the source of power and blessing. It is the gateway to enlarged spheres of service. It is the time when God speaks through His Word to His servant that His servant by lip and life may speak to his needy fellow man.

Strictly speaking, the sermons that ministers preach must be the results of prayer. Rediger (2000:139) also states, "Prayer is the most obvious of the spiritual disciples." Hulse (1986:83) argues that Jesus' prayer habits evoked from his disciples the request that He teach them just as John had taught his disciples (Luke 11:1). If John's praying was anything like his preaching, one can well understand why they referred to it. Now, to the question will follow whether ministers' prayer habits, today, in any way resemble those of their Master.

Every lecture or book about preaching admonishes the preacher to pray, as this is an essential part of sermon preparation. Lloyd-Jones (1971:169) observes:

Prayer is vital to the life of the preacher. Read the biographies and the auto-biographies of the greatest preachers throughout the centuries and you will find that this has always been the great characteristic of their lives. They were always great men of prayer, and they spent considerable time in prayer.

Smith (1984:50) also remarks, "Prayer and preaching cannot be separated." Walker (1988:92) believes that all preachers need a prayer support group to surround their ministries with intercessions. A praying church is essential in evangelism. Prior to a service of worship during an appeal for commitment, a prayer meeting of dedicated laypeople can have a powerful influence.

Consequently, preachers must learn to listen to God before they speak for Him. Regarding their prayer, they must be persons of prayer in all respects. Wegner

(2009:110) maintains:

> Many Christians have lost sight of the importance of prayer. Without God's
> power, the sermon will remain lifeless, no matter how accurate and polished
> it is. Equally, simply listening to a sermon is now what brings lasting change.
> We need to ask God's Spirit to use His truth to change lives.

According to Cole (2008:85), the 16th century theologian, John Calvin, called prayer "the chief exercise of faith." He recognized in the Christian faith the promise that God remains the source for what humans need in life. This promise allows people to seek God, become better acquainted with Him, and call upon Him to provide. All of this is done through prayer.

7.2.4.2 The benefit of the preacher's prayer

It can be argued that prayer is vital. The Spirit draws humans to their knees first and foremost through their humanity. People's definite needs tells them that they have no choice but to come to Him. He is the true source of strength, comfort and help. He alone knows what He wants to say via his servant. Killinger (1985:191) remarks, "The minister who learns to pray constantly, turning even fantasies and night dreams into material for reflection and devotion, will be like a fountain of everlasting life in the pulpit." According to Hulse (1986:90), "The preacher is to speak God's Word to God's people. To speak that Word accurately and powerfully, the preacher must first allow himself to be spoken to by that Word – both directly and indirectly. This is the life of

piety." Grasso (1965:218) maintains that, at the very moment when preachers are to speak that which the people must receive, or let those who can or will read, the preachers should pray to God that He may give them the right words.

Furthermore, the best and holiest of persons have forever made prayer the most important part of pulpit preparation. Walker (1988:91) comments, "Preaching requires a rich, personal devotional life. Prayer-persistent, specific, believing prayer – is the center of everything. Only through prayer do we tap endless resources of God." According to Rediger (2000:140), through prayer, one knows and preaches the instant (also continuous) communication that God offers, which is even faster and more reliable than e-mail!

All preachers need to be nourished in prayer, because prayer is contact with God. As Cole (2008:85-86) points out, preachers should live constantly in a state of prayer. Through praying, they grow and strengthen in their relationship with God and others, much as muscles and tissues grow and strengthen through physical exercise.

7.2.4.3   The preacher should be a person of prayer

The preacher is a person of prayer who knows what it is to spend time in a secret place. Moreover, prayer is the principal element in the kaleidoscope of spiritual characteristics that mark a preacher. Spring (1986:137) observes, "If he is not a man of prayer, he is not a man of God, and had better be anywhere else, than in the pulpit." Thielicke (1978:116) remarks, "He prays more than ordinary Christians, else he were disqualified for the office which he has undertaken." This implies that

preachers are called to the ministry of the Word and prayer because, without prayer, the God of our studies will be the timid and uninspiring God of insipid academic gamesmanship.

Moreover, a preacher must be in constant prayerful communion with God to receive the full impact of the Word. The obvious One to consult for clarification is the original Author. According to Barth (1991:86), one cannot preach without praying. Since, in the final analysis, the sermon can only emphasize God, words of the sermon must be spoken in the course of calling upon Him, and the congregation, too, must be summoned to pray.

7.2.4.4   The result of being a prayer-less preacher

It is reasonable to declare that preachers, who do not pray and regularly pore over Scripture, become easily discouraged by the obstacles normally encountered in ministry. According to Demaray (1979:110), "James S. Stewart summed up the urgency of prayer in a single sentence: 'Chalmers was indeed going to the root of the matter when he declared that most failures in the ministry were due, not to lack of visiting or of study or of organizational activity, but to lack of prayer.'" Sloyan (1984:16) also claims, "We do not preach well because we do not pray well." It is important that prayer is the preacher's daily bread (Wilson-Kastner 1989:63).

Moreover, a prayer-less ministry is both powerless and profitless. It is said that *Theology* must always be accompanied by *kneeology*. Much prayer equals much power; little prayer equals little power; no prayer equals no power. According to

Walker (1988:93), the fastest-growing Methodist Church in the world is in Korea. In five years, from 1976 to 1981, the membership of this church grew from 340,000 to 703,000, and the number of churches increased from 1500 to almost 3000. While visiting South Korea, Walker tried to find the secret of a church that brings thousands of people into a relationship with Christ and his body. He noticed one arresting feature about the Korean Church that sets it apart from many churches around the world - it prays. Every day of the year there is a prayer meeting in all local churches from 05:00 to 06:00 a.m. Pastors are expected to be present with their people each morning, interceding with them for God's blessing to be on the church and the people. Walker left Korea convinced that this prayer life of God's people largely explains the making of new Christian disciples in such numbers.

Prayer is the essential means that God has provided for empowering his servants. It is reasonable to regard a prayer-less preacher as a proud preacher. According to Cole (2008:86), "Prayer involves speaking to God and listening for God. Prayer draws us toward God's love, passion and desire for creation, including ourselves." Moreover, the preacher with the most brilliant gifts of communication and teaching is impotent to plant saving knowledge in a sinner's heart without God's help. Prayer is vital to the life of the preacher, as the biography of every preacher indicates.

7.2.5   The preacher and glory

It is said that the highest service that people may aspire to on earth is to preach the Word of God. Lloyd-Jones (1971:9) observes, "To me the work of preaching is the

highest and the greatest and the most glorious calling to which anyone can ever be called." According to Stott (1982:37), "There is happiness in preaching. Nowhere are experienced, more than in the pulpit, the clear, heavenward soaring of the intellect, the daring flight of imagination, or the sweet agitations of the holy passion." This implies that preachers' work should be not only their way of serving both God and humans, but also their way of finding satisfaction in living.

There is glory in preaching because God calls preachers and because they present the crucified, resurrected and ascended Saviour to a lost world. Hogan (1978:14) remarks, "There is glory in preaching because those who preach are involved with Christ as Savior, man and his problems, truth and ideas and in genuine lasting service to the human race." Bowie (1954:18) also states, "The glory of prea-ching is to tell men that they do have a Friend and to make their hearts as well as their minds believe it." Thus, all commissioned ministers can dare to trust that God has something to say through them. How wonderful, therefore, is such an opportuni-ty! According to Ritschl (1960:23), Jesus Christ is the Subject of our preaching; the One who acts. He uses preachers who are the object of his words. If this were not true then, of course, the glory of preaching could neither be seen nor proclaimed. In the influential book, *The wounded healer*, Nouwen (1972:82-87) claims:

> We live in a society in which loneliness has become one of the most painful
> human wounds. All around us we see the many ways by which the people of
> the western world are trying to escape this loneliness. This is a very hard call,
> because for a minister who is committed to forming a community of faith,

loneliness is a very painful wound which is easily subject to denial and neglect. But once the pain is accepted and understood, a denial is no longer necessary, and ministry can become a healing service.

Preaching is the most amazing and the most thrilling activity in which one can ever be engaged. What is the rule in preaching? It is in the glory and greatness of the truth that the preacher preaches. Moreover, the only way to deal with the self is to be taken up with, and so enraptured by, the glory of what one is doing that one forgets oneself altogether. Since the preacher is in the hands of God, anything can happen. He will lead the preacher on from surprise to surprise!

7.3   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The first aim of this chapter was to emphasize that preaching requires a great deal of endeavour and that faithful preachers not only acquire the gifts necessary for a preaching ministry, they also work hard at developing those gifts during their lives.

We have investigated the development of the preacher's ethos, concentrating on four areas:

(1)   The preacher requires a great deal of endeavour;

(2)   The preparation of an influential preacher;

(3)   The ultimate model for the preacher's development is Jesus Christ;

and   (4)   The qualities of the authentic preacher.

The second purpose of this chapter was to offer further suggestions for the development of the preacher's ethos related to five areas:

(1)   the preacher's vocation,

(2)   the preacher's spirituality,

(3)   the preacher's reading,

(4)   the preacher's prayer, and

(5)   the preacher's glory.

Many scholars insist that preaching is God's Word to the congregation. In other words, preaching is the Word of God because it functions within his liberating purpose. Preachers do not preach for any reason other than: God has called them and He seeks to use their voices for the liberation of humanity. Therefore, when they preach God's redemptive Word, their voices just happen to be God's voice. This is the preachers' ultimate glory.

Therefore, it follows that a Christian community is a healing community. Mutual confession then becomes a mutual deepening of hope, and sharing weakness becomes a reminder to all of the coming strength (Nouwen 1972:94).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

GENERAL SUMMARY

Now what remains is to present the results of this investigation and to indicate their significance. The aim of this study was to establish the importance of the preacher's ethos in preaching, and to demonstrate the reasonable authority of the preacher – that is, *"serving authority"* or *"moderate authority."*

In **chapter 2**, an appropriate analysis was conducted of preachers themselves, comprising the following four components: Firstly, the definition of the preacher is that he/she is the servant of the Word and of God. Secondly, the significance of the preacher's occupation is similar to that of Jesus Christ and the preacher's words lead to the salvation of the congregation. Thirdly, there are many functional names given to the preacher, such as ambassador, prophet, witness, shepherd, steward, herald, spokesperson and messenger. Fourthly, the role of preachers in preaching is that they act as mediators between God and humans, interpret the Bible to the congregation and help the congregation to live a more fruitful life. Lastly, the significance of preaching related to six areas was demonstrated: the preacher, the congregation, the church, the worship, Christianity and the world.

Chapter 3 investigated critique from four major categories: social scientists, communication experts, theologians and even the church pew. They all agree that

something is seriously wrong with the contemporary sermon. Moreover, every aspect of preaching is under attack today, just as it always has been from the beginning. Our exploration made it abundantly clear that no age of pulpit proclamation has ever escaped heavy criticism.

Chapter 4 examined the general situation of the church and preaching, as well as the preacher in the Korean context: Firstly, a brief survey of the Korean Church indicated that one of the most amazing phenomena in the recent history of Christianity has been its rapid increase in Korea. Unfortunately, the Church stopped growing and even experienced a decline since the mid-1990s. Secondly, a concise study on Korean preaching showed that the theological establishment is not strong and that prejudiced exegesis of the Bible is spreading. Thirdly, a brief examination of Korean preachers illustrated that:

(1)   these preachers have excessive authority;

(2)   they are involved in many activities, and

(3)   in the Korean context, a reasonable foundation for the preacher's authority is needed.

Lastly, within the Korean context, the preachers' reasonable assumption is that the Word of God is the foundation of their authority.

Chapter 5 provided the rhetorical foundation of the preacher's ethos, focusing on three key aspects of the preacher's ethos:

(1)   Aristotle distinguishes three kinds of proof for structural principles: persuasion by moral character (ethos); persuasion by putting the hearer into a certain

emotional frame of mind (pathos); and persuasion by the speech itself, when the true or apparently true (logos) is established.

(2)   One important rule for regarding the preacher's ethos is that listeners trust and feel connected to the speaker.

(3)   For this reason, attitude is an important element that audiences use to construct the speaker's character. The speaker's attitude can provide information about what Aristotle calls goodwill. In due course, the debate was reduced to the Latin maxim that defined the art of oratory: *vir bonus dicendi peritus* – the good man speaking well.

Chapter 6 demonstrated four key aspects of a solution to the crisis in preaching through the preachers' ethos:

(1)   the relevance of the preachers' ethos is that they cannot be separated from their preaching;

(2)   the major influence of the preachers' ethos is that a major structure of preparation for preaching is the preparation of the preachers themselves;

(3)   the most important aspect of the preachers' ethos in preaching is the danger of their own inconsistent living that they face;

(4)   the key point regarding the preachers' ethos and the congregation is the presence of a shadow of a listening congregation in the preachers' minds and behind the preparation of their sermons.

Chapter 7 attempted to propose suggestions for the development of the preacher's ethos, focusing on the following five components:

(1)	the preacher's vocation,

(2)	the preacher's spirituality,

(3)	the preacher's reading,

(4)	the preacher's prayer, and

(5)	the preacher's glory.

This chapter indicated that preachers are definitely called to preach. The essence of their calling is that it concerns not simply something that they must *do*, but primarily something that they must *be*. Their call is not a call just to preach, it is the call to be preachers. It was argued that the adaptation of learned techniques for the improvement of preaching must be made related to the individual moral character.

CONCLUSION

The researcher's suggested hypothesis was, *firstly, that one reason for the crisis in preaching, especially in the Korean context, is the understanding that preachers have of themselves or, more specifically, in the systemic-ethical role that has been imposed upon them for many centuries. Secondly, a re-visitation and re-appropriation of the ethos of preachers can play a major role in overcoming the above-mentioned crisis in preaching. Thirdly, this transformation of preachers' ethos cannot take place without addressing the systemic understanding of preaching, i.e. without taking cognizance of hearers'/congregations' understanding of their preachers.*

The primary purpose of this thesis was to highlight the importance of the preacher's ethos in view of the contemporary crisis in preaching. This study offers the following findings relating to the researcher's hypothesis, and which could benefit future investigations regarding the preacher's ethos.

Firstly, preaching is being attacked for many reasons and in all possible forms, and these attacks must be withstood and endured, but also taken cognizance of. The personal ethos of the preacher him-/herself is for instance considered to be one of the reasons for the declining influence of preaching.

Secondly, the Korean preacher's excessive authority comes from the very structure of the Korean society. If the father is the most powerful person in the family and the family is the foundation of society, then being a father figure in the Korean community means he is the most powerful person in that community. The Korean preacher is often regarded as the father figure - the head of the family. However, preachers' reasonable authority can and should be defined as *primus inter pares – first among equals.*

Lastly, as the importance of ethos within the theology of preaching is considered, the hope exists that preaching and the preacher's ethos are inextricably linked. Therefore, two issues were of supreme importance: the speaker's character and authority, which often appear as synonyms for ethos. Hall and Heflin (1985:40) point out that the Roman rhetorician, Quintilian, defined the orator as a "good man, speaking well." Indeed, the Gospel states a requirement no less exacting: preachers must be good persons; they must speak well.

It has been said that a true and reliable leader is not one who desires to lead, but one whom others desire to follow. In terms of the preaching ministry, this means that the best sermons come from persons whose wholesome personalities, vigorous maturity, alert minds, and Christian consecration are gathered up in a power to communicate, based less on a cleverness of strategy than on an achievement in being – on a *good person* speaking well.

Therefore, good preaching is not just a matter of homiletical technique; it is also an issue of character, a moral matter of significant proportions. Preachers must prepare themselves as carefully as what they prepare their sermons. Moreover, preaching is native and essential to the Christian faith. In the future, as in the past, it will remain a vitalizing force in the life and worship of the church. According to Wingren (1960:61), the preaching of the Gospel once had a beginning, and one day it will come to an end. It began when Christ came, and shall endure until He comes again as the visible King. It should be good news for preachers to know that the Word they preach is alive and dynamic and that it can be a means of grace.

It is certain that the preacher should have different qualities; there has never been a question about faith and character that has not been raised. The congregation experiences the message and the messenger together. Therefore, the person of the preacher can be an advantage or a responsibility, even a challenge, to the preaching event. Therefore, the person as well as the sermon must be prepared.

The preachers' ethos cannot be eliminated from the preaching situation, and what they appear to be is a part of what they communicate. To be effective preachers

requires trust in God's integrity and the development of their own moral character and integrity. It is reasonable to assume that preaching the Gospel of Christ is the greatest work in the world. It takes some sacrifice, much hard work and occasional disappointments. However, it also gives the greatest joy and satisfaction known to humankind. Paul's charge to Timothy to "preach the word" is relevant still today (cf. 2 Tim. 4:2).

At any rate, it is very important to realize that the preacher's ethos is essential to persuade the congregation and proclaim the Gospel. Nevertheless, one task remains: more research on the preacher's ethos in connection with rhetoric is needed. However, for the moment, the researcher must rest content with the completion of this homiletical groundwork of the preacher's ethos in preaching.

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