

Communication through Sermon for the Korean Church in a
Postmodern Period

by

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ABSTRACT

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Postmodernism may be the phenomenon related to the spirit of times, the mental structure, and the world view in the late 20th century; and in the narrow meaning it may be the literature, the art, and the culture in the late 20th century.

It does not adhere to the reason of humans, seeks to a new understanding of the self, and is interested in the alien class, so that it may be positive to a sermon. But it has the negative influence because of its refusal of absolute truth, relativism, the rejection of a responsible subject, and so on.

Communication has developed from oral communication to letter communication, and then printing communication. But in the postmodern times, the printing communication has rapidly fallen down and been extended to digitalized cyber communication, and then mobile communication. The communication of this time is bilateral and revolutionary because of its transcendence of time and space. This environment of communication has made an audience be an active participant, a sermon ministry transcend time and space, and preachers prepare a listenable sermon for an audience.

The traditional sermon has been authoritarian, unilateral, and non-mutual, so that an audience does not try to hear the sermon in postmodern times. In postmodern times an audience is mostly not ready to hear the traditional sermon. So preachers and congregations

should make constant efforts together for the smooth communication and ceaselessly ask the help of the Holy Spirit.

The sermon for this time is the inductive sermon form. That is to say, the inductive and narrative sermon is necessary for the effective communication in postmodern times. Also the proper attitude and heart of preachers will be helpful for sermon communication. Moreover, multimedia and humor are important to effective communication.

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I. Introduction

A. The Motive and Purpose of the Research

The Michael B. Bay, an American director of film, converses on the presentation of problems with defiance or dismantling of the existing social system through the movie, *Island*, 2005. In the movie a human clone suddenly takes the consciousness of 'who I am'. To make him more miserable he knows the fact he is only the stuff produced for organ transplant, because he observes a bug accidentally and then knows there is a different world besides his world. He is merely akin to a robot which is moved by the will of its manufacturer. He discovers that the development of human clones' brains is part of plans for mass murder. But the human clone, the protagonist, secretly enters the factory for duplicating human clones, and extricates his companions.

It is a sort of movie that communicates an ardent wish to present and oppose a problem and to get away from established society and religion, even if the movie does not present a balanced picture. The movie seems to confuse the God of Christianity as a creator who plays with a creature only for selfish purposes. The movie is a part of a trend in which sacrosanctity and authority are collapsed.

There is much popular cinema against established society and religion, including Christianity, which is influenced by Postmodernism.

A prevailing current is to question or to argue against the domain of divinity-nonaggression and authority.

Sermons should still be preached in an era of Postmodernism.

Jesus said “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” (Mt. 28:19, 20) It is the Great Commission.

Today’s society finds it difficult to attain consensus on its issues and affairs.

The present era is a period of pluralism in which people are expected to respect and recognize the character and individuality of every other person. We are left in this current without our convictions.

But we seriously perceive of late that the eternal truth is being threatened as all things lose absolute meanings and become only relative.

The believer’s whole belief about God and faith in Christ who gave the grace of salvation seems to be simple egotism which is difficult to justify against the measuring stick of a secular world.

The sphere of faith is confronted with great defiance in the present period of Postmodernism even more than in previous modern age when science developed and reason dominated. The pulpit is of critical situation importance, perhaps more than ever before.

All fields of theology recently reflect recognition of the importance not to neglect the flow of this age. Once we recognize it, we should never let Christianity assimilate into secular culture.

This research seeks methods for the preacher of the gospel to effectively deliver God’s message in an era of Postmodernism.

B. The Method and Scope of the Research

When the process of preaching includes the interpretation of Bible verses and its delivery, its purpose can become complete. But both of these two tasks are important and should not be neglected.

H. H. Farmer said, “The necessity of preaching is in the fact that God fulfills the history of salvation through Jesus Christ and we have the personal meeting with Jesus Christ in our real life.”¹ Preachers have the duty to deliver their sermon to audiences in order to draw out repentance and change from them. The preaching does not end with proclamation; delivery must also be considered to different audiences. In the preceding Introduction, I have established the motive and scope of this study because of having noticed that preaching can become the most boring element in the order of worship to laymen who live in postmodern times.

In Chapter 2, I will describe the postmodernism’ appearances, and concepts, type, and features. I will deal with the beginning of postmodern theology and its current trend, and offer a homiletic evaluation of postmodernism. In Chapter 3, after looking over the communication style of postmodern times, I will give an account of communication in sermon, of sermon in communication, of causes of separation of a preacher and audiences, of preachers and audiences in sermon communication, and of roles of the Holy Spirit. In Chapter 4, with references to homiletic ministry necessary for postmodern times, I will

¹ H. H. Farmer, *The Servant of The Word* (New York: Fortress Press, 1942), 27.

reflect on modernistic sermons preached in postmodern times, and then deal with changes of understanding with respect to preachers, audiences, gospel, authority and changes in sermon delivery methods. Lastly I will examine the inductive sermon, the narrative sermon, phenomenon-based sermon, and the four pages sermon as alternatives of preaching ministry appropriate to postmodern times.

In Chapter 5, I will refer to inductive preaching and narrative preaching as effective forms in postmodern times. Also I will mention imagery and imagination in homiletic language, as well as non-verbal linguistic communication which makes mutual communication smooth. Lastly I will deal with effectiveness of the sermon as enhanced with multimedia and humor.

In conclusion, I will state the thesis; summarize findings which have been obtained by this study, and offer my suggestions for those who preach for postmodern audiences.

II. Postmodernism and Homiletic Evaluation

A. Understanding postmodernism

Those who are talking about modern mostly think modern mind and culture are facing the fundamental conversion, which is called postmodern by scholars.

In the flow of transition, also there is Christianity. If we cannot resist the historical flow, Christians should have the correct understanding on postmodernism. It is because postmodernism effects on all aspects of society, and we cannot keep a right faith without understanding the current thought of the times.

1. The Background of Postmodernism

According to Mok Chang Khun¹, in the period of the great transition from modern age to the latter modern age from World War I to the 1930s, the term, Postmodernism was at first used for expressing the historical transition, and a Spanish writer, Federico De Onis, in his book *Antologia de poesia espanolae bispanoamericana*, introduced this term in order to express reaction against modernism.

¹ Chang Kyun Mok, "Postmodernism and Postmodern Theology" *Treatise of Professor*, Vol. 9 (1998): 116.

According to Shin Kook Won,² A historian Dr. Arnold Toynbee has more clearly presented us this term. In his book *Story of History*, he said that the modern period ended with World War I and new times have started, which he called postmodern times. He divided Western history into four ages: Darkness, Medieval, Modern, and Postmodern.

The influence of Postmodernism had not at first been so great but was gradually remarkable in fields of architecture and art since the 1970s. In the 1980s, it has spread not only to field of study like literature, philosophy, social science, etc., but also to public culture, which is now regarded as the spirit of late 20th century.

Postmodernism may be the whole gathering of various movements which had risen to escape from purposeless faith, harm, and crisis of the Enlightenment. Therefore the starting point of understanding postmodernism may be the Enlightenment because the modern world has spread to the whole world through the Enlightenment which has still affects the world. The thinkers of the Enlightenment had been adherent to the potential and value of humanism since they had emerged from medieval thinking in which the revelation of God had been the standard to judge absolute truth. That is to say, in the times of modernism the standard of revelation is not the revelation of God but the reason of humans.

Features of modernism, that is, objectivity, the possibility of scientific knowledge, the emphasis on an individual as a subject of thinking, and confidence in universality of humans which come from the Enlightenment had led us to regard a society as one of contracts. And then a state based on constitution had been built and the decentralization of authority had been tried to acquire the rights of humans and the freedom of citizens.³

² Kook Won Shin, *Postmodernism* (Seoul: IVP, 2002), 14.

³ Moon Kyun Lee, *Postmodernism and Christian Theology* (Seoul: Dae Han Christian Press, 2000), 14.

The results of the strong belief on reasonability, objectivity, individualism, and universality which came from modernism has destroyed a community, alienated an individual more than before, rather repressed the freedom of the multitude through a bureaucratic system. Furthermore, as modernism has gradually lost its power in all aspects of society because of confusion and moral decay, recognition of the limit of science, drying up of resources, population growth, and environmental problems, advocates of postmodernism have appeared in this generation. It is regarded that among them Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) had opened the way to postmodernism by refusing the principles of the enlightenment and providing the basis of its thought.⁴

2. Concept of Postmodernism

It is difficult clearly to define the concept of the term postmodernism, although it has been rising as one of the most important contexts,⁵ because not only the understanding on postmodernism is various, but it also keeps spreading into the cultural and social environment of the modern. Also another factor which makes it difficult to understand postmodernism is that there is no unified movement or scholar who can describe its reality.⁶

Even though American literature critics have made it into a philosophical, literal term and spread it to the world, debate about it has still kept going even in the English term. Although it is just a trivial issue, some argue for ‘Postmodernism’ or ‘Post-modernism’

⁴ Kook Won Shin, 25-27.

⁵ Shin Keun Jang, “Challenge of Globalization and Tasks of Christian Education as Public Practical Theology” *Jang-Shin Forum*, Vol. 20 (2003): 443.

⁶ Kook won Shin, “Postmodernism appeared at Jong-No” *Light and Salt* (1996. 6): 142.

without unification. Moreover, the situation is so serious in its content. It is sometimes classified a part of modernism, but some scholars insist that it is new and very different from modernism.

The word is sometimes used to point out the extreme critical movement of modern philosophy and culture. Yet on the other hand, it is used as a vague designated word for the wide change of western culture. That is to say, in a narrow sense, postmodernism means a field of art like literature, and in the widest sense, it means the phenomenon related to the spirit of the times of late 20 century or a mental structure or the worldview.⁷

3. Types of Postmodernism

First, there is the positive postmodernism which interprets postmodernism as ‘latter modernism’ or ‘recent modernism’ by translating ‘post’ into ‘a latter term’. These examples can be found in insinuations of scholars like J. Habermas, B. Mchale, M. Featherstone, etc.⁸ The value of this position has been recognized in the point that it has tried to analyze the decadent appearances of modernism by criticizing modernity itself, but it has the limitation

⁷ Wook Dong Kim, *Postmodernism and Post-Structuralism* (Seoul: Hyun Am Press, 1991), 56.

⁸ Jeong Ho Jung and Nae Hee Kang, *The Disputed Point of Postmodernism* (Seoul: Teu, 1991), 15.

that is trying to focus on the solution of phenomenal problems rather than the core of the fundamental problem.⁹

The negative postmodernism has the position that it is the discontinuity with modernism and the complete breaking with it. In this position, a prefix 'post' means 'the quality difference and the breaking.' Therefore they take the position to interpret postmodernism as the breaking with modernism. They have been called negative postmodernists because of their negative viewpoint on modernism. This position has strongly refuted the viewpoint of positive postmodernism. So it is pointing out that modern society is bringing about the crisis by controlling, suppressing, ruling over, and exploiting all things of science. The example can be found in postmodern thinkers like Ihab Hassan, Frederic Jameson, M. Calinescu, V. Burgin, etc.¹⁰

The creative postmodernism refuses the dichotomous composition that postmodernism is regarded as discontinuation or continuation with modernism, rather taking the position that it has both of them. Therefore this position is called the creative postmodernism because it takes the constructive position that tries to improve the proper function and overcome the dysfunction. The scholars who are taking this position are Jean-Francois Lyotard, A. Huyssen, M. Newman, G. Vattimo, etc.

B. Features of Postmodernism

⁹ Kyu Min Lee, "Theological Consideration for Setting Tasks of Christian Education In Postmodernism" *Postmodernism and Theology of the times of Post-Colonialism* (Seoul: Korean Theological Constitute, 1996), 240-42.

¹⁰ David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Boston: Blackwell Publishing, 1989), 31.

The understanding on features of postmodernism will help us seize out the negative and positive effectiveness for the sermon ministry. Also the deep understanding on the times and its application will lead us to effective communication in sermon. In his book, *An Historian's Approach to Religion*, A. Toynbee said features of postmodern times are self-abandonment, escapism, and drifting, and then the times of unfocused syncretism and uncritical generosity that accept all things in every field such as language, customs, religion, etc.¹¹

In his essay "Postmodernism and Korean Theology," Young-Han Kim insisted that postmodernism is the term that has a prefix like 'dis', 'non', and 'un', etc., which mean 'discontinuity', 'dissolution', 'decentering', 'non-crystallization', 'anti-totalization', and internalization, etc.¹²

Postmodernism extremely refuses a tradition but does not refuse the being of the tradition itself. That is to say, it does not seek the transcendental everlasting meanings of traditions but tries to reevaluate and talk with it by another way different from the textual one. On the one hand, it cuts off the relation with tradition, but, on the other hand, it tries to modernize the tradition by reevaluation on the basis of the modern viewpoint. This inconsistency, that is, the mixture itself, is the feature of postmodernism.

1. Extreme Discontinuity with Tradition

¹¹ Kook Won Shin, 14.

¹² Young-Han Kim, "Postmodernism and Korean Theology" *Pastoral Ministry and Theology* (1992. 8.): 81.

One of postmodernism's outstanding features is the discontinuity with the existing tradition or convention. This phenomenon is actually the most core factor of postmodernism. So other features are derivations from this core factor.¹³

Postmodernism has the continuity with Modernism in the point that it is the trend of thought to rise against the tradition and authority of medieval church since the Enlightenment in the 18th century. Modernism had resisted the prescriptive function of tradition and tried to develop objective science, the universal morals and law, and autonomic art by an internal separation of reason. But in the 20th century, it had been broken by World Wars I and II. As the development of science, morals, and art has proceeded to autonomy of each field by experts, the life of humans has gradually been alienated. With the succession of modernism's logic, postmodernism tries to resist the thrust of modernism on rationalism and morals. Moreover, it takes the extreme aggressive attitude against all types of tradition, convention, and authority. This is the phenomenon of extreme discontinuity.

The extreme discontinuity includes a heretical and unorthodox tendency. Postmodernism has rejected absoluteness within orthodoxy, just as the precursor Friedrich Nietzsche proclaimed that the belief in absolutes is a kind of illness and opened the way to relativism and pluralism by an attempt of modification or secession for orthodoxy.

2. Non-Determination and Non-Decision

¹³ Wook Dong Kim, *Understanding on Postmodernism* (Seoul: Literature and Knowledge, 1990), 432.

The second feature of postmodernism may be non-determination, non-decision, or non-conclusion. These terms have the meaning to resist determination and decision by ambiguity, discontinuity, voluntariness, resistance, metamorphosis, collapse, dissolution, etc. Postmodernism refuses the objectivity and the universality of knowledge and morals. Non-determination sank into our concept of action and interpretational behavior, which has composed our world. The phenomenon of this non-decision is the one of the late modern society of industry, and the late 20th century has generally been featured by times of uncertainty.

3. Loss of Objectivity and Dissolution of the Self

Postmodernism extremely rejects Cartesian thinking which is centered on the subjectivity and self of human. Post-Structuralists like Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan, Lyotard, etc., have criticized the thinking centered on subjectivity. According to them, now consciousness is not judge or the standard of all things. It is the challenge given to the philosophy of thinking. Postmodern thinking criticizes the self as the subjectivity of thinking and recognition. That is to say, they point out that the self does not have the ability of concrete and objective recognition for the world. Rather, the self is in the world and the product of history and culture.

4. Fragmentation

Postmodernism denies wholeness, harmony with the whole, and synthesis. This phenomenon is called fragmentation or fraction. This tendency lays more stress on disunity rather than unity, chaos rather than order, disorganization rather than organization. One of surprising facts for rejecting the organic unity and upholding the fragmentation is that this belief has been propelled by the historic 'Avant-garde' movement. This phenomenon of fragmentation shows up even in composition and interpretation of an art or literary work. It does not believe the 'appearance of revelation' assumed by modernism. Whereas the literary works of modernism and realism have order, harmony, and conclusion, there is not any centripetal point, certainty, and ending in the things of postmodernism. So postmodernism ends with opening endless possibilities of interpretation.

5. Interest in and Return to Suppressing and Peripheral Things

Return to suppressing things has gradually showed up in postmodernism. In the early 1960s, blacks had begun to get the political basic rights equal to whites by the human rights movement. Also they have obtained the cultural rights and freedoms. In the case of literature, activity of black writers has been vigorous even to such a degree that the term 'black aesthetic' had been made. And the identity of other minor races, such as American Indian, Irish, Eastern European, Mexican, and even Asian such as Chinese, Korean, etc., has been suggested, and the study of their various cultural traditions has begun.

6. A Serious View of Action and Involvement

Postmodernism emphasizes action and involvement. It leads readers, actors, and audiences to participate and act without any discrimination. Rather it makes readers or audiences to participate creatively so that they may share their experience publically and be affected from its results. Modernism has emphasized isolation, indifference, and formality in action of art, laying stress on the human perception (eyes) whereas postmodernism has taken much of human action (hands).

Especially through a form like avant-garde, now a painter's real being of the moment of the painting is more important than the subject of the painter. Therefore Goodman said that postmodernism is a shift from the only truth and the fixed discovered world to a variety of mutual collided interpretations or the world which is coming into being.¹⁴

7. Popular Culture

Postmodernism is featured by the popular culture which tries to connect art with real life. That is to say, modern had sought after the art in the view of aesthetic autonomy separated from real life. The culture of modernism had been transcendental, aristocratic, and elite because it had kept art in the aesthetic view of art for art's sake. So it had made the public have hatred and just a small number of intellectuals and devotees had had an interest in it. But postmodernism abolishes the gap between elite culture and popular culture,

¹⁴ Young Han Kim, 91.

removes differences of high culture and low culture, and orients the democratic popular culture.

C. Postmodern Theology

1. The Beginning of Postmodern Theology

Theology tries to understand Christian faith in a spirit of the times. As previously stated, it is hard to deny that these days are postmodern times. If so, it is inevitable that theology also has a relation with postmodernism.

Still there is no common definition of postmodernism. The term postmodernism has been consistently used in the theological world in recent years, but its meanings are really different. Therefore it is not easy to define what postmodern theology is because it is still in process of formation. Also the difference of the modern theology and the postmodern theology has been in dispute.¹⁵

If such is the case, where did the movement of postmodern theology start? According to Toynbee, World War I is the critical turning point. Therefore Karl Barth can be pointed as the starting point. He had rejected many things of modern experiments through his experiences during the World War and its previous events. However, he was not a pathfinder of postmodern paradigm and just a initiator or a starter. In 1964, John B. Cobb firstly used

¹⁵ Jong Soo Hong, *Reading Material: Postmodern Theology* (Seoul: Cho-Myung Press, 1993), 23.

the term ‘postmodern’, the New Yale School had conducted the most effectual postmodern experiment. This School regarded the new epistemological situation as the new challenge for understanding of the Christian truth, the Bible, and dogma.¹⁶

2. A Tide of Postmodern Theology

a. Deconstructional Theology

Deconstructional theology is based on postmodernism of Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida who developed their thought according to Nietzsche. Especially Mark C. Taylor has emphasized that it is impossible to prescribe and admitted that he cannot prescribe his theology in a word.¹⁷

Deconstructional postmodern theology implies something that we cannot say with any expression beyond both extremes. According to Taylor¹⁸, humans of postmodern times are those who live purposeless life, which is a wandering life. They are wandering between losses of the old certainty and finding new belief, living on the border line of belief and unbelief. So his imagination is always on the middle of theological and non-theological things, theism and atheism, religious and secular.

David Griffin does not think the deconstructional postmodern theology is the representative and right appearance of postmodern theology. He has criticized that the

¹⁶ Wang Sik Jang, *28 Theologians for Understanding Modern Theology* (Seoul: CLC, 2001), 231.

¹⁷ Lee Moon Kyun, 96.

¹⁸ Mark C. Taylor, *Erring: A Postmodernism A Theology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), 5.

deconstructional postmodern theology as the transcendental modern theology is only toward nihilism, and cannot present a solution for problems of today's human.¹⁹

b. Constructional Postmodern Theology

Constructional postmodern theology means the theology of the positive, active character. As previously summarized, in the general types, it may be similar to the creative postmodernism. This is the theological type which does not give up advantages of modernism and rather tries to extend or complete modern plans. Whereas deconstructional postmodern theology insists on the extinction and removal of God, truth, freedom, and moral values, constructional postmodern theology admits their existence and tries to overcome the limits of Western thought on them.

Griffin has taken on the role as representative of this standpoint. He has regarded the deconstructional postmodernism as Ultra-Modernism or Most-Modernism, not postmodernism because it came from logical conclusions of partial presupposition of modernity.²⁰ His main concern is to suggest general views of the world by gathering insights that science, art, ethics, and religion have had.²¹

Griffin insists that all beings in the world are free, not totally passive or active, and creative. This freedom and denial on creativity provoke the ecological crisis. He has appealed to the natural theism in order to solve this crisis. He has regarded human as a part of the nature and a being not to be separated from the natural community. His constructional postmodern theology is based on the philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead. His

¹⁹ Moon Kyun Lee, 98-99.

²⁰ Ibid., 128.

²¹ Ibid., 99.

metaphysics has been under the criticism that he has distorted the biblical understanding of God and presented his own apprehension without reference to the biblical revelation.²²

But Griffin's constructional postmodern theology is trying to attain to the ecological vision for the global community centered on the realism of process philosophy, the whole view on reality. He emphasizes that we should renew the world by the better insight for the holy center, not by the deconstructional postmodern theology. Furthermore, he insists that the right postmodern theology is not the deconstructional theology which is based on the extreme postmodernism but the constructional postmodern theology which develops the whole understanding for reality beyond the limit of modernism.²³

c. Liberal Postmodern Theology (Postliberal Theology)

The term Postliberal Theology, in fact, implies the same meaning as postmodern theology. If modern theology is regarded as understanding and expressing the Christian faith according to the modern way of thinking in the modern world after the Enlightenment, Postmodern Theology and Postliberal Theology can be treated with the same meaning.²⁴ Postliberal Theology, as used by George Lindbeck, has also been formed through the academic atmosphere of Yale University which has had a different opinion from the general tendency of American academic world in understanding the Bible and Christianity. This liberal theology occurred in the late 20century.

By Gustavo Gurierrez's definition, it is the theological thought come from the experience of common efforts through trying to build a free and humane society after

²² Chang Kyun Mok, 130.

²³ Moon Kyun Lee, 101-02.

²⁴ Moon Kyun Lee, 102.

removing injustice situations in South America.²⁵ That is to say, the liberal theology is to interpret the historical task with a Christian view, trying to liberate the poor and the suppressed from Latin America from under poverty and suppression of the majority as a result of long colonial reign and long military dictatorship.²⁶ Its purpose is to transform the present situation.

D. Homiletic Evaluation of Postmodernism

After the Enlightenment, modernization has proceeded under the catchphrases ‘objective science,’ ‘universal morals,’ and ‘autonomic art,’ so as a result, human civilization has rapidly developed. Especially Condorcet prophesied the unlimited possibility and development in the expectation that art and science will guarantee not only the control for the power of nature but also even the happiness of humans.²⁷ But in 20th century such an optimistic opinion had been thoroughly shattered.

Now all modern people have lived in postmodern times and have taken in postmodern thought. Moreover, Christianity has lived under many influences of postmodernism. Therefore, I will present the positive and negative effects of postmodernism to a homiletic pulpit.

²⁵ Gustavo, Gutierrez, *Theology of Liberation*, translated by Sung Youm (Seoul: Boon-Do Press, 2000), 11.

²⁶ Chang Kyun Mok, 333.

²⁷ Harvey Cox, *Religion in the Secular City: Toward a Postmodern Theology* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984), 31, 81.

1. Positive Sides

Because of big incidents of the 20th century, which may be the tremendous power of destruction rather than outcomes of development, nowadays the world has come to need the new frame of recognition. In result the contribution of postmodernism may be to cut off a link of suppression, domination, and exploitation in modernization by revealing the distorted world view of modernism.²⁸ Moreover, problems of both pillars of modernism, the mechanical worldview and scientific absolutism, has been pointed out and collapsed, so that the limit of modernism has been exposed. This may positively affect the homiletic ministry of churches.

a. Criticism of Scientific Rationalism

Postmodernism has made a contribution to the formation of modern thought by breaking the scientific rationalism that modernism has presented by placing autonomy of rationalism at the head.²⁹ Modernism which has succeeded to rationalism tradition had had a decisive effect on the denial for Christian traditional dogma and the Bible's authority by rejecting the revelation of God and the supernatural words of God with setting the scientific rationality as a criterion on all knowledge. According to David Goetz, postmodernism had broken the balloon of the Enlightenment inflated by arrogance, and we are learning science

²⁸ Kyu Min Lee, 243-44.

²⁹ Young Han Kim, 92.

and technical engineering are not gods.³⁰ The humanism which is an old enemy of churches had come to an end; the reason which has been the only medium of knowledge had been dethroned. Therefore in postmodern times not only the interest in Christianity is growing but also it is an opportunity for the revival of the Words of everlasting truth.

b. New Understanding on Self

Postmodern philosophers denied subjectivity centered thought and the autonomy of subjectivity, but insisted that self-identity and transcendentalism are just a kind of myth. The thinking of humans does not begin from an absolute starting point, but rather just take a point in the net of the language order and power. On this point the limit of self is recognized, so that the room to have an interest in god as the Absolute comes into being. Therefore we have come to the chance to find and restore our lost self before the Absolute through the sermon ministry.

c. New Understanding and Interest on Alienated Class

Postmodernism defines that the final decision class is not the traditional political leader class but leaders of multinational cooperation, high class administrators, heads of main professional groups, heads of labor unions and religious or political groups.³¹

Moreover, the flow has made the interest in alienated class wide, so that the love of Christ as the core thought of Christianity has been in the practice. That is to say, distrust for

³⁰ David Goetz, "The Riddle of Our Culture: What Is Postmodernism?" *Leadership* (winter 1997): 56.

³¹ Hyung Ki Lee, *Modernism, Postmodernism, and Christian Theology* (Seoul: Presbyterian Theological Seminary, 2003), 45.

huge discourse has created an environment in which alienated and suppressed classes can rise up with their own voice. So we have come to prophetic preaching ministry against unrighteous society, exploits, and rulers.

2. Negative Sides

a. Denial for the Absolute Truth

Postmodernism denies traditions and patterns, tries to separate from them, so it brings about the deconstruction of traditional values and patterns, and then gives rise to chaos within them. That is to say, the conviction that rationalism based on the scientific and mathematical precision of modernism can improve the quality of human life had been the base to extend the objectivity and the universality of truth. But postmodern thinkers have denied the objectivity and the possibility of truth, and the possibility of objective expression for truth by fundamental criticism of the linguistic ability to express the truth.³²

So postmodernism does not admit the absolute truth. It means that we lose the standard to think and act, so that individualism is empowered. Furthermore, its effects on sermon ministry may be destructive and deconstructive.

b. Relativism of Truth and Ethics

Traditional ethics has developed on the basis of a theory of human nature. But postmodernism does not believe the simplicity of human nature. In other words, postmodernism has made an extreme declaration of breaking, dispersion, and deconstruction

³² Moon Kyun Lee, 85.

of knowledge and truth. This has brought dogmatic relativism and ethical relativism to Christianity.

c. The Denial on Responsible Subjectivity

Postmodernism has denied the dignity of humans and the self.³³ So suicide is the decisive expression resulted from the feature of postmodernism which keeps from establishing the dignity and the identity of self. Preachers had taken the burden of audiences who denied their dignity and self.

d. Breaking of Social General Rule

The deconstruction tendency of postmodernism has led social consciousness and spirit to discontinuation, chaos, deconstruction, and dissolution, so that in result the general rule of society has collapsed.³⁴ In these times, the burden of preachers will be getting heavy because audiences have been affected from the spirit of these times.

³³ Young Han Kim, 94.

³⁴ Ibid.

III. Communication and Sermon in Postmodern Times

A. Understanding of Communication in Postmodern Times

Just as a human being cannot exist without air and water, so they will lose their foundation of being if there is no communication. It is because a human's foundation of being is to recognize their identity through communication. Through communication, humans have accumulated knowledge beyond time and exchanged and transmitted it beyond a space.¹

1. Changes in Communication

Even though there are various positions and views for classifying the history of communication, it may be divided in three steps in the view of its change of paradigm: Oral Communication, Letter Communication, and Electronic Communication.²

a. A Time of Oral Communication

¹ Chang Sub Choi, *Introduction to Church and Communication* (Seoul: St. Paul Press, 1978). 22-23.

² Ibid.

In the primitive society, communication had been formed in oral. Oral communication is the communication of meeting. The communication can proceed in confrontation and a speaker and audience are in the same place and time. Oral communication is space-bound and time-bound.³

This paradigm of communication has the limit that message cannot be saved long time and the communication between those who are in distance cannot proceed, but has an advantage of the integrated communication which verbal and non-verbal factors simultaneously proceed.

b. A Time of Letter Communication

A time of letter communication has the positive side as the extension of communication and the negative side as the beginning of impersonal communication. The invention of letter has opened the time of education divided from a usual life.

c. A time of Printed Communication

A printing technique invented by Johannes Gutenberg had been a diverging point of the communication history. And it had had a powerful effect upon the society during the Enlightenment. Mental ability had been emphasized among various abilities of humans, and linguistic intelligence has been regarded as the most important ability.

2. Understanding Communication in Postmodern Times

³ Jung Tak Kim, *Media and Human* (Seoul: Communication Books, 1998), 165.

a. End of the 'Gutenberg Galaxy'

The culture of modern times had been dominated by the 'Gutenberg Galaxy'⁴. But this time has met the situation to admit the social, cultural, and whole needs of change. In postmodern times, the development of various media, especially the development of network by computer and internet, and change from analog to digital have driven out the printing medium to a peripheral area. And the times of communication through video media have come to the whole world.

In this time, uniform thought centered on cause and effect had disappeared; different spaces, different humans, and different environment of communication have become needed. Norbert Bolz, a German scholar of communication, expressed this new time as 'separation from Gutenberg world, that is, the letter'.⁵

b. Digital Communication

As new communication media appeared, the past limits of media such as printing, telephone, and television, had been overcome; furthermore, the enormous changes in social economic life had been brought about. People point out that the digital revolution is the biggest change in the course of entry to 21st century after modern times.

c. Communication in Cyber Space (Internet)

⁴ Marshall McLuhan, *Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), 11.

⁵ Norbert Bolz, *Am ende der gutenberg-galaxis : die neuen kommunikationsverhältnisse*, translated by Jong Suk Yoon, *The End of Gutenberg-Galaxy: Situations of New Communication* (Seoul: Literature & Knowledge, 2000), 183.

In the Postmodern times, as going by digitalization of information, the virtual world or cyber space has newly appeared, different from the real world, or physical space. Especially new space of life, that is, cyber space has affected the physical world, or the real world, because the internet has taken a position as the important tool for life.

The extension of cyber space has caused the moving from closed network to open network, from vertical network to horizontal network. Cyber space has broken up the absolute and the center and made the unlimited network. And the social network which has in the past processed only in the physical world has now been extended to cyber space and moreover made the type or form of communication evolve.

d. Mobile Communication

In postmodern times, the dominant way of communication is absolutely mobile communication. The term 'mobile' is an adjective which means 'easy to move' or the noun which means 'portable device'. Therefore mobile communication has revolutionarily changed the method of communication. In 1990's as great stride of wireless communication technology 'mobile' has been used as the word to express wireless internet technology on the basis of mobile phone technology.

3. Features of Postmodern Times

In postmodern times the communication tools, message contents, and message quantity of individual to individual, individual to group, and group to group have rapidly increased. If that is so, what are the features of communication in postmodern times?

First, the most remarkable features are interaction and bilateralness.⁶ Especially the internet has developed on the basis of interactional tendency through computer. It is the epoch-making change to the flow of information and the relationship of communication that all internet users can use information on the web and make and provide new information without any limit.⁷

Second, the new communication is based on the function of Hypertext⁸ and Hypermedia⁹. Hypertext has reduced the ration of the books as the representative of a linear text, provided hyperlink function in order to convert into other function, have recipients use the information on various multimedia according to their requests, and permit them to access information by connecting with other information. Also the existing recipients had had the

⁶ Joon Soo Yoon, *Conversion of Internet and Communication Paradigm* (Seoul: Communication Books, 1998), 128.

⁷ Dong Kyu, Do Sam Ra, *Internet and Communication* (Seoul: Hanwool Academy, 2000), 70.

⁸ "Hypertext most often refers to text on a computer that will lead the user to other, related information on demand. Hypertext represents a relatively recent innovation to user interfaces, which overcomes some of the limitations of written text. Rather than remaining static like traditional text, hypertext makes possible a dynamic organization of information through links and connections (called hyperlinks). Hypertext can be designed to perform various tasks; for instance when a user "clicks" on it or "hovers" over it, a bubble with a word definition may appear, a web page on a related subject may load, a video clip may run, or an application may open." See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypertext>.

⁹ "Hypermedia is a term first used in a 1965 article by Ted Nelson. It is used as a logical extension of the term hypertext in which graphics, audio, video, plain text and hyperlinks intertwine to create a generally non-linear medium of information. This contrasts with the broader term *multimedia*, which may be used to describe non-interactive linear presentations as well as hypermedia. Hypermedia should not be confused with hypergraphics or super-writing which is not a related subject. It is also related to the field of Electronic literature." See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypermedia>.

limited right to use information and access it. But now in the center of information, recipients can selectively accept information and come to be in the center of all value and judgment.¹⁰

Third, as the above two strength points came from digitalization, digital technology firstly embodies information into the new media (multimedia) on the communication medium, and guarantees the technological environment to provide high-dimensional and integrated service rather than the existing medium. In result, effective communication has been guaranteed better than before.¹¹

Fourth, message storage and broadness of recipients has remarkably been extended. For example, the memory function phone helps recipients overcome the limit of time and space, computer memory technology for massive storage has made it easy to keep and arrange digitalized information.¹²

4. Influence of Changing Communication Environment on Sermon Ministry

The communication environment of postmodern times has brought about various changes to human life and communication type, and furthermore has brought immense effects on preaching ministry. Not only it has given unlimited and positive possibility to preaching ministry, but also it has pitifully taken the negative influence to both of preachers and audience.

¹⁰ Ibid., 73.

¹¹ Otto N. Larsen, *Voicing Social Concern :The Mass Media, Violence, Pornography, Censorship, Organization, Social Science, the Ultramultiversity* (University Press of America, 1994), 63.

¹² Dong Kyu, Do Sam Ra, 75.

Above all, change of communication environment has changed the concept of audience who is just a recipient. Recipients of information are no longer passive, but participate actively in the process of communication.¹³ Therefore, audiences are not passive, but try to share God's grace with a preacher.

Secondly in the postmodern times, preachers should captivate minds and hearts of the audience in order to make them focus on the Word of God. Even though audiences sit down toward a pulpit, they can cover their ears because of the change of linear paradigm. In the past, most of message had a recipient-centered structure discouraging the recipient from taking an active part.

But this linearity has been faced with the change of productive process owing to the advent of the Web based on Hypertext.¹⁴ Recipients can now reinforce the power to control information because they can freely download just what they want from the web. Because audiences have been conditioned by this communication environment, it is hard for a preacher to expect them to hear an impassive message for 30-40 minutes in postmodern times.

Thirdly preachers are accustomed to prepare their message by qualitative and quantitative increase of their sermon through access to a variety of digitalized information, but also can plagiarize it. Moreover, because audiences can select the sermon fit to their interest, the sermon may be made according to audiences' taste, and preachers can fall into populism.

Fourthly the changed environment of communication has given preachers the freedom from the limit of time and space in sermon ministry. Therefore without the limit of

¹³ Joon Soo Yoon, 136-39.

¹⁴ Katsh M. Ethan, *Law in a Digital Age* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1995), 299.

time and space, while audiences can be worshipers; simultaneously the cohesion of worship communication can be weakened.

Fifthly it is possible that internet service can be provided after preaching, in such ways as audiences' questions with preachers' answers or dilatation explanation, etc., on the preaching.

B. Communication and Preaching in Postmodern Times

If the meaning of the sermon is not communicated to audiences, the sermon does not come to its purpose and loses its own meaning. So Reuel L. Howe said, "If the meeting between God's Words and human's words get realized, firstly the meeting of meaning between preachers and audiences should be formed."¹⁵ Modern people in postmodern times have been faced with an assignment, that is, the study of active communication. The development of media, the transmission of information, and the rapid development of information have brought on many changes of the world.

1. Communication in Preaching

The mission of Christianity is to preach the Gospel and the most important tool for evangelism is the sermon. The sermon has been the means for preaching the truth of Christ, but it cannot be regarded that the interpretation of the Bible has been the methodology

¹⁵ Reuel L. Howe, *The Miracle of Dialogue* (San Francisco: Harper, 1993), 36.

sufficient for evangelism. The contents and methods of proclamation have changed according to the times and the culture. That is to say, the development of many various contiguous studies has directly and indirectly affected the methods of the sermon.

It is the same for those who live in postmodern times. Marshall McLuhan has insisted, “The aspect of a society has been formed by the media used in the process of communication rather than the contents of communication”¹⁶ In the background of his saying, there is the implication that if the process of delivery is not effective, the message will always be dead.

2. Preaching in Communication

The contents of sermon are always the proclamation of Christ’s truth as it appears in the Bible. But the Bible is not the only methodology for the sermon. The contents and the methods of the proclamation have changed according to the times and the cultural situation.

But the traditional sermon has still been proclaimed from the pulpit. The traditional sermon has made many contributions to Christianity but also included many problems. Clyde Reid pointed out that the main problem is the ‘authoritarianism character’.¹⁷ The sermon based on authoritarianism means the structure that the power of sermon is focused on a preacher. The traditional sermon should naturally be received as it is proclaimed. It has the uncommunicative tendency, and its direction is always one-sided. Here it is impossible that

¹⁶ Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fioer, *The Medium Is Message* (Michigan: Baker House Company, 1978), 22.

¹⁷ Clyde Reid, *The empty pulpit*, translated by Chang Bok Jung (Seoul: CLC, 1982), 74.

audiences participate in the process of sermon delivery. In result, this sermon has brought about the denial reaction under the situation of postmodern, so the sermon cannot attain to its purpose which changes human life. It is because this era seeks discontinuity with the authority of the past.

This traditional preaching has directly or indirectly been affected by the development of various peripheral studies. And this situation has made communication difficult. Because the main purpose of sermon is to make a dialogue between God and humans, the sermon should be communicative.¹⁸

3. Sermon Communication as a Dialogue

The sermon is the behavior of communication in which a preacher sends a message to the audience. Essentially communication is bilateral and mutual. Until the meaning of the deliverer is clear, the communication with the receiver should be kept. Pieterse said, “God’s way of communication with His people is the source of sermon communication method.”¹⁹

4. A Primary Factor of Communication Discontinuity Between Preacher and Audience

a. Problems of a Preacher

¹⁸ Reuel L. Howe, *Partners in preaching*, translated by Chang Bok Jung (Seoul: Yang Seo Gag, 1982), 124.

¹⁹ Pieterse H.J.C., *Communicative Preaching* (Pretoria: Sigma Press. 1987), 56.

1) One-sided Delivery

Hugh Mackay pointed out, “Before other people are ready for the level of a preacher, a preacher should fit his level to the audience.”²⁰ Sermon is that a preacher as a medium delivers God’s voice to congregation, but, in modern times, many preachers are trying to identify themselves with the congregation on the basis of their own position. So their sermon has become tedious and boring so as not to change the life of the congregation. Of course it may be possible for preaching with authority, not authoritarian, to affect the lives of hearers, even though their preaching is one-sided.

Sermon is the process of communication between human and human in the Holy Spirit. Therefore it has a form for the delivery of intention. Usually an interchange of intention proceeds in one to one relationship, but a sermon is the delivery of intention between a preacher and a number of audiences. So a sermon is affected by a situation, a tendency, a cultural habit, a theological education, etc. Therefore, if there is not a point of contact between a preacher and congregation, a delivery of intention cannot be carried out. In this structure there may not be a reaction or a feedback from the audience.

2) Absence of Co-relativity Between a Preacher and Audience

According to Helmut Thielicke, “Gospel should consistently be delivered to a new address because receivers keep changing their living area.”²¹ So he insisted that above all a preacher should size up the situation of the audience for the sake of effective delivery of the message. Therefore when preachers deliver God’s Words, they should recognize the needs of their audience. The sermon is for hearing, but there should be a dialogue. The purpose of the

²⁰ Hugh Mackay, *Why Don't People Listen?* (Sydney, Australia: Pan Macmillan, 1994), 118.

²¹ Helmut Thielicke, Peter Corney, *Post-modernism and the Gospel*, Grid (spring 1995): 1.

sermon is to embody God's Words in the life of the audience. The sermon should have a conversational feature in order to attain to the communication of this level.

3) Calling of a Preacher

Lloyd-Jones opposed the sermon by laymen. He assented to the sermon of laymen in an exceptional case but believed that it should not be regarded as a normal activity.²² It is because they don't have the calling. A preacher must have the consciousness of calling as a preacher beyond calling as a Christian. Furthermore, preaching is a dangerous work which deals with each soul of believers.

b. Problems of Audience

Up to this point, the responsibility for a sermon delivery has been laid on preachers. But many studies have showed us that the hearing of the audience has taken a grave portion of the responsibility for the problem. Many Christians are not going to focus on the sermon and then have the tendency to lay the responsibility on the preacher. Clyde Reid said about the listening of the audience, "Basically there is no problem in a sermon. Rather the audience is not a good listener. When the gospel is proclaimed, they do not open their heart to hear the gospel. They are too much indolent, lazy and materialistic, so they do not want to hear the challenging news of Christian faith."²³

The audience does not have the attitude to participate in the sermon ministry, so they are going to hear only a favorable content to themselves among the sermon. Moreover they

²² D. M. Lyod-Jones, *Preaching & Preachers*, Translated by Moon Kang Seo (Seoul: CLC, 1993), 131.

²³ Clyde Reid, 38.

do not have the strong awareness that the sermon is the proclaimed words of God. Now the audience is not any more a simple target or an object, but they are the main party of communication process.²⁴

c. Other Factors of Discontinuity

The defensive mental state of humans keeps the audience from hearing the sermon. The more defensive the mental state is, the more the mind and the heart are weakened and devastated. Another negative factor against effective delivery is the environmental factor, which includes the time of worship, the space of worship, sound, the atmosphere, and noise, etc.

C. Roles of the Preacher, Congregation, and the Holy Spirit In Communication

1. Roles of the Preacher

If so, what efforts does a preacher take for the sake of the effective delivery and acceptance of the sermon?

Above all a preacher must analyze the audience. It is not easy that preachers precisely analyze and understand the audience one by one, because they have their own heterogeneity. But these two tools may be useful to analyze and understand them. The first tool is to use the

²⁴ James F. Engel, *Getting Your Message Aross*, translated by Jin Hwan Jung (Seoul: Joy Mission, 1997), 20.

mechanical method including a memorandum, a record of church members, a questionnaire, and other statistical information. The second tool is to observe how they speak, how they think, and how they feel by confrontation in order to analyze what they suffer from, their knowledge of the Bible, their state of faith or daily life, their prejudices, and whether or not their heart is opened.

2. Roles of the Congregation

Even though a preacher delivers the same content with the same text, the effect of the sermon delivery can be different according to the audience. It is because a sermon has the bilateral relationship that creates the effects through the mutual process of a preacher and an audience. In the sermon, the audience must meet God who has been with a preacher; and the preacher should see God who has been with the audience. A preacher cannot deliver the sermon, which is listened to by the audience, without the active attitude of the audience. So an audience is the co-worker of a preacher in a sermon.

3. Roles of the Holy Spirit

A preacher is a being who proclaims the Word of God gained from the fellowship with God, interprets the meaning of God's Word into today's language by the help of the Holy

Spirit, and illuminates the audience's life with the Word.²⁵ That is to say, a preacher has the inseparable relationship with the Holy Spirit. So the preacher should ceaselessly be under the Holy Spirit's help.

²⁵ Chang Bok Jung, *Sermon Ministry* (Seoul: CLC, 1990), 206.

IV. Sermon Ministry Needed in Postmodern Times

Preachers in Korean churches have much more pressure on the sermon than preachers in other countries. Above all it is because Korean believers have lived in the flood of sermons. Moreover, they should not only explain the truth but also deliver the message including God's emotion and intention because today's audience does not change so much as by persuasion or explanation. Now preachers' sermon should change as the changing of time and medium.

A. Traditional Sermon Delivered in Postmodern Times

After the Enlightenment, the sermon in Christianity has fallen into the 'rational bind' for 300 years. Firstly a proposition or a title is presented, which is explained in 3 or 4 points with one or two example stories. It is mostly logical and demonstrative.¹

It is true that traditionally preachers have not had enough interest and a critical mind concerning the form of a sermon. Under the Rationalism of the 9th century, a three-point sermon has taken the main form of sermon. So a structure and system has been regarded as dealing with how each point is arranged, how a point of each part is extracted, how the length

¹ Woon Young Kim, "New Sermon Movement and Seeking the New Paradigm of Sermon" *Collection of Korean Theological Treatise* vol.26 (2002): 261.

of sermon is organized, and how a sermon manuscript is finished by the placement of example stories.

The classical form of sermons has taken this type under the absolute influence of the classical rhetoric. According to the classical rhetoric, “The truth is always concluded in a statement, logically embodied or proved, and combative.” So the main role of a sermon has been regulated as the persuasion of an audience through disputes and proofs. So it is natural to present the various information and data, so a sermon can fall into a category of lectures for the delivery of information.

Against the classical method of a sermon, Paul Scott Wilson said, “Whereas a lecture has a subject which should be revealed, a sermon has a purpose which should be fulfilled.”² And he proclaimed that a sermon and a lecture are clearly different. Therefore a concrete change of sermon forms and methods should progress in today’s pulpit and the worship time.

B. Changing Understandings of Sermon Ministry in Postmodern Times

Eugene L. Lowry insisted that a sermon is not a logical construction but an event appearing in a mutual communication between a preacher and an audience.³ It means that a sermon should be experienced beyond mere understanding. The core of this event is an experience. If a sermon is an experience to an audience, a world should be presented to them. Therefore preachers must be worried about how their audience participates in the process of

² Paul Scott Wilson, *The Practice of Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 31.

³ Eugene L. Lowry, *The Homiletical Plot*, translated by Yeon Kil Lee (Seoul: Korean Presbyterian Press, 1996), 14-25.

their sermon, how the truth can be experienced, and how the life and the mind of an audience can change through their sermon.

1. Understanding of the Preacher

Today's churches are growing empty because they have not dealt with the flow of our time. Some scholars have examined the new dynamic by discovering the crisis of church pulpits. In his book *As One without Authority*, Fred B. Craddock has given his diagnosis of the cause of today's pulpit-depressed church as the loss of preachers' conformity and their inconformity to the postmodern society.⁴ The conformity of preachers has come from the flow of the time which seeks plurality rather than the absolute truth.

Therefore, today's preachers should ask how people have a new understanding of the world in postmodern times. As a result this age has asked today's preachers to deliver the truth with the conviction of the gospel and have an honorable appearance of life.

2. Understanding of the Audience or Congregation

In their book *Learning to Preach like Jesus*, Ralph and Gregg Lewis have insisted that the main key of Jesus' Sermon is to recognize hearers and make a relationship with them,

⁴ Fred B. Craddock. *As one without Authority*, translated by Woon Yong Kim (Seoul: Worship and Sermon Academy, 2004), 45-46.

and the biblical sermon is not message-focused any more without an audience.⁵ So today's preachers do not look for unprepared and changeless preachers any more. The first responsibility of a sermon delivery is in preachers. Preachers elected as servers for God's words must reach laymen through deep study into the method of listenable message.

3. Understanding of the Gospel

In Craddock's opinion, the sermons of preachers who have lost the exclusiveness of Gospel are one of crisis in postmodern times.⁶ In these days, the western churches have fallen into a crisis of pulpit, that is, sermons without a right understanding of the Gospel. This is the fundamental cause for churches getting empty and losing their influence on the world.⁷

4. Understanding of the Preachers' Authority

During the last hundred years, Western society has suffered from the conversion of thinking as a result of the harmful influence of the Enlightenment, but recently Korean society has experienced a similar phenomenon. Since the 1960s Korean society has experienced the modernization and the rapid change of urbanization, and its system of values

⁵ Ralph and Gregg Lewis, *Learning to Preach like Jesus* (Westchester: Crossway, 1989), 16.

⁶ Craddock, 31.

⁷ Craddock, 31-33.

has reflected many changes as past of the flow of postmodern times. Especially the authoritative system of values has changed into the form of egalitarianism.

The phenomenon of a reinterpretation on authority and its breakdown has also appeared in churches. The audience has changed and has asked preachers to change. Therefore preachers need to come down from the authoritarian pulpit and be faithful for their authority of God's Words by learning what they should hear and how the message is delivered.

C. Sermon Forms Needed in Postmodern Times

1. Inductive Sermon

a. Meaning of Inductive Sermon

Inductive Preaching has started from the publication of *As One Without Authority* (by Fred B. Craddock) in 1971.⁸ There had been several warnings on a cognitive and propositional sermon in 1950's and 1960's. And in 1960's all authority has changed and been denied, and in result the phenomenon has started to influence churches and authoritarian sermons. Inductive method is to find a general principle from special situations. That is to say, the inductive sermon is the method which starts from observations, questions, examples, and experiences in a special and concrete situation and extracts a general principle from them.

b. How to Make an Inductive Sermon

⁸ Craddock, 21.

1) Movement and Inductive Method

Craddock has presented the movement of sermon as the first assignment in making an inductive sermon. The movement can be called the ‘development’ which is not to present a mass of information at one time but to deliver the content of a sermon in a developmental structure. It may be a kind of methodology on how a sermon is developed. Until now, the content of a sermon has been important and the method of a sermon has been regarded as a subsidiary technique or skill.

But Craddock has pointed that preachers should fundamentally take a consideration not only on the content of sermons but also on the method.⁹ The influence which leads an audience to experience God’s Words starts from the sermon method. In this point, the method is a message. Therefore the method of sermons equal to its contents should be the subject of a theological consideration. So if preachers want effectively to deliver a sermon, they must have an interest in the methodology.

2) Imagination

Craddock has laid stress on the imagination in an inductive sermon. In traditional sermons, an example story or an image has been regarded as a selection in order to explain the main proposition of a sermon. Rather it cannot be separated from the content of a sermon and should be regarded as a necessary factor in the sermon form.

3) Unity

⁹ Ibid., 107.

According to Craddock, one of definite proofs on a well-prepared sermon is the unity of message.¹⁰ By the reason, the unity of a sermon has made it possible for preachers to have confidence in their sermon from the preparation to the delivery, and their audience's interest in it, and moreover preachers can control which data they choose. If the unity is lost, the movement in the inductive sermon cannot be generated.

c. The Developmental Method of Inductive Preaching¹¹

When the message and the subject are definite through the interpretation and the devotion of inductive preachers, preachers should take a consideration on how they develop the message. If that is so, when preachers deliver an inductive sermon, what must they take into consideration?

First, the inductive sermon always starts from the personal unique experience of humans. The inductive development makes the flow and the participation of an audience possible owing to the beginning from the audience's real life and progress according to the movement toward a conclusion.

Second, inductive preaching can be explained as the trip upon which a preacher and an audience together depart. Because the inductive is expected to induce the active participation of an audience and lead them together to a conclusion, the findings which are found by them will be their definite conclusion.

Third, because the developmental method of inductive preaching is developed with close relationship, unity and movement are regarded as important factors. So the most important image which explains the inductive preaching is a trip.

¹⁰ Ibid., 108.

¹¹ Ibid., 203.

2. Form of Inductive Preaching

a. Meanings of Narrative Sermon

Robert McKee a scenario writer said, “A story is not the escape from the reality but the best effort to find out the tool and the meaning for probing the reality. This narrative-centered sermon has come up as the alternative for the dogmatic, logical, and propositional preaching in the new sermon movement.”¹²

b. Why the narrative style sermon?

Eugene L. Lowry has insisted, “A sermon is an ordered form of moving time.” He said that a sermon should be a story with a plot in the flow of time. According to his concept, the demonstrative sermon of a traditional paradigm is ‘Doing space’ which arranges concepts, but in the postmodern times people need the narrative style sermon of ‘Doing time’ which leads them to experience something in their minds, heart, and real life.¹³

c. How to Make Narrative Preaching¹⁴

1) Step 1: Upsetting the equilibrium

¹² Robert McKee, *Story* (New York: Reagan Books, 1997), 12.

¹³ Eugene L. Lowry, *The Sermon: Dancing the Edge of Mystery* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 58.

¹⁴ Eugene L. Lowry, *How to preach a parable : designs for narrative sermons*, translated by Joo Yub Lee (Seoul: Jordan Press, 2001), 40-50.

Preachers should consider how they attract an audience's interest in the introduction of a sermon before they consider how they keep an audience's interest while they preach. Interest can be induced from upsetting the equilibrium.

2) Step 2: Analyzing the discrepancy¹⁵

If preachers present the discrepancy in the introduction of a sermon, it is really important to keep and develop it. If a solution easily comes up to an audience, the interest of the audience will soon disappear. The second step is to analyze the problem. That is to say, it is the step of theologizing. In this step, the focus of the congregation is on the process of a sermon because a problem is not yet solved. The deep motive in the audience's mind and heart should be revealed and diagnosed in order to bring it to the possibility of healing. In Lowry's sermon, the depth diagnosis is necessary.

3) Step 3: Disclosing the clue to resolution¹⁶

All the process of resolution is to find an explanation for the sake of solving the present issue. During the sermon, a preacher and congregation usually fall into stress and an awareness of problem because they cannot find a solution even though they make the effort. At that time, the resolution comes up so that the congregation is surprised. This point of a resolution is not recognized but is nevertheless experienced by the congregation.

4) Step: Experiencing the gospel¹⁷

¹⁵ Ibid., 51-64.

¹⁶ Ibid., 65-84.

¹⁷ Ibid., 85-90.

It is not too much to say that the possibility of dynamic experience on the gospel through a sermon plot depends on the first two analytic steps. As a preacher and congregation come to step 4, they should be inquiring into discrepancies and problems. The deep analysis must be processed for the congregation to truly experience the gospel.

5) Step 5: Anticipating the consequences¹⁸

Lowry has taken the opposition against finding relief in the righteousness of humans and emphasized that the plot sermon is to focus on God's decision and action, not our righteousness. So the climax of a sermon is attained in step 4, experiencing the gospel. Even though the results of step 5 can be various, but they are based on the situational grace created by the Gospel.

3. Form of Phenomenological Move Sermon

a. Meanings of Phenomenological Sermon

David Buttrick has constantly been interested in the phenomenon of preaching.¹⁹ Especially he has taken a phenomenal consideration on how a sermon is heard and what happens in the event of a preaching. His preaching is usually called 'Phenomenological Move Method.' The phenomenal feature of a sermon is to make an audience see the place of life and receive the experiences in a sermon for the sake of hearing the voice of people and

¹⁸ Ibid., 91-98.

¹⁹ David Buttrick, *Preaching beyond Times*, translated by Woon Yong Kim (Seoul: Jordan Press, 2002), 19-20.

the voice of God who works in the center of people's real life. In this point a sermon fundamentally has the phenomenal feature.²⁰

b. How to make phenomenological move sermon

1) Intention and Language

To help the sermon methodology of Buttrick launch and go for the goal is an 'intention'. Our recognitions given to us through an 'intentional act' are the experience of oneness, living experience, and the guidance to a formed intention. To Buttrick the term 'intention' is related with 'lived experience', which is to be forming the world from various worlds, not a simple thinking or the occurrence of an idea.²¹

According to Buttrick, the form of a good sermon has consideration for this feature. The purpose of this sermon is to lead an audience to implant the image of God's Words in their minds and hearts. Preachers should shape the new world of faith in people's intention and change their identity.

2) Continuance

When a sermon is regarded as a set of scenes and its development which is constantly connected in a subject, how 'move' is composed will really be an important factor. According to Buttrick, a connective logic is really important for a logical connection. Each 'move' is separated, but its logic should be connected and well defined. If the logic of connection is not clear, 'move' will come to a wrong conclusion.

²⁰ Ibid., 323.

²¹ Ibid., 323-24.

c. How to develop a phenomenological sermon

Buttrick has called a sermon 'Move or Scene' which is a kind of plot consisted in a set of compositional factors. Plot is to select and place various factors of a sermon in order to attain to the special purpose of a sermon, which has 4-6 Moves'.

Here diversity and unity are really important. According to his insistence, each 'Move' should be variously developed, but must have a unity, and their running time may be 3-4 minutes in consideration of an audience's concentration in Korean culture. And each move has the structure of introduction, development, and ending.

It can be suggested that introduction is for the focus on intention and the interpretational direction. The focus has the function of a camera lens. Introduction should induce the relationship between the whole atmosphere of a sermon, intention, and subject. The introduction part of 'move' is the step to help an audience concentrate on the sermon through the definite statement of what a preacher is going to say.

When preachers are going to compose the developmental part, they need to take a consideration on a rhetoric point of view and the content fit to the intention of an audience. The most important thing to the composition of 'move' is what kinds of views a preacher has for the sermon. What kinds of views preachers have will decide on the style of their sermon and the change of a new sermon style may implant God's Words in hearts and minds of the congregation. The ending part of each scene should include the concept presented in the developmental step. And the last sentence of each 'move' should be simple, for if it is complex a close will not be effective.

It is better that the final conclusion of a phenomenological sermon is composed in 5~8 sentences. The conclusion is a simple formation of languages. If the conclusion is too simple,

it will not form an intention, and if it is too long it will be boring. The conclusion is to assemble meanings. But it is not wise to repeat the preceding contents. It should be expressed with an image or a simple sentence.²²

4. The Four Page of the Sermon

a. Meanings of the Four Page of the Sermon

Since the mid-1990's, Paul S. Wilson has introduced his new method of a sermon, the Four Page of the Sermon, to North America and explained why it is needed at this time. Wilson has especially noted that sermons of preachers are not delivered as a joy and a hope to the congregation any more. According to him, an audience does not experience God's being in a sermon, and the sermon will not be joy to them. So the congregation has turned their eyes from the pulpit to television.²³

It is today's feature that the screens of television and computer have dominated the life of the congregation. Preachers must renew their sermon according to the change of the time. It is to visualize a sermon. The four pages are a sort of movie with four scenes, that is, a sermon with four scenes.²⁴

²² Ibid., 331.

²³ Paul S. Wilson, *The four pages of the sermon: A guide to Biblical preaching*, translated by Seung Joong Joo (Seoul: Worship and Sermon Academy, 2006), 30-33.

²⁴ Ibid., 92.

Each of the pages has its own content. Wilson's page is not the page of a sermon transcript. He has preferred the visualized method for making contents of pages. Especially his four pages are just not 'four page' but 'the web page consisted of four pages'.²⁵

But why does he insist on four pages? It is because he believes that the form of a sermon must reflect the theological content. It is the theology of Sin and Forgiving, Judgment and Grace, and Trouble and Grace. So he has added the viewpoints of the Bible times and today to them as follows:

Scene 1: Trouble in the Bible

Scene 2: Trouble in the World

Scene 3: God in action in the Bible

Scene 4: God in action in the World

b. How to develop four pages sermon

Wilson has presented how to make a sermon during a week in consideration of the situation that the preparation of a sermon may be burden on preachers. If preachers prepare a sermon for about 2 hours a day, it will not be burden on them and its contents will be more abundant.

1) Start – Monday

Above all preachers should look into 6 factors for the purpose, unity, and definiteness of a sermon on Monday.

- A preacher should select one text from the Bible.
- A preacher should select one theme sentence.

²⁵ Ibid., 93.

- A preacher should select one doctrine.
- A preacher should select one need.
- A preacher should select one image.
- A preacher should select one mission.

2) The first page: Trouble in the Bible - Tuesday

The purpose of the first page is the introduction on the Bible text in lively, vivid, and theological method.²⁶ The first page of a sermon starts with a story of the Bible. In the case of the didactic epistles, a preacher needs to take out a story from their background like why Apostle Paul wrote and sent an epistle. And the first page will deal with human's responsibility for the right behavior and the results from human intelligence in God's will. In the first page a preacher needs to focus on one idea, deepen the understanding of congregation, and help them see the Bible with that view.²⁷

And the first page should present the foundation or the reason of God's action for other pages. We can think there is no problem in the Bible text, or severely emphasize on a problem. But God's Words always have the two edges. It is consisted of restriction and freedom, problem and grace, and our sin and God's grace.

3) The second page: Trouble in the World – Wednesday

If the first page is the problem shown in the Bible text, the second page is about what God is doing in the relation of it in today's situation.²⁸ That is to say, it is to reinterpret and illuminate the conflict and problem of the Bible text in today's life. In the second page,

²⁶ Ibid., 87.

²⁷ Ibid., 98.

²⁸ Ibid., 207.

preachers should often present the mission as a duty to congregation. And then in the second page the request of this mission will change into chance, privilege, and invitation to meet Christ in a needed place.²⁹

4) The third page: God's Action in the Bible - Thursday

In this page, there should be the conversion of a viewpoint. If the preceding pages deal with the viewpoint of troubles shown in the Bible and today's life, this page will illuminate them and present resolution in the viewpoint of God's grace. The darkness of law and judgment will go to the sunshine. Therefore the third page will intensively illuminate God's grace shown in the Bible.³⁰

And on the third page God's activities will be proclaimed. A preacher promulgates God's faithful and redemptive love without hesitation and condition. The purpose of the third page is to express God's behaviors with the possible visualized method. Also the focus of the third page is on God's action in the Bible text.³¹

5) The Fourth Page: God's Action in the World - Friday

The fourth page will proclaim that God's grace worked in the Bible is still working as God's gracious behavior in today's life. Therefore the fourth page may be the application of the third page to today's present life.³²

The focus of the fourth page is God's action in our real life. It is really hard to insist on God's activities because the sign of God is unseen and not clear. But it may be enough that a

²⁹ Ibid., 222.

³⁰ Ibid., 286.

³¹ Ibid., 287.

³² Ibid., 364.

preacher just follows the contents presented in the third page. And in the fourth page congregation need to find the sign of God’s action in their real life.

According to the method of Wilson, a preacher can present the calling of Isaiah like this.³³

The first Page: Our problem in the Bible	The second page: the problem in our world
Isaiah was not perfect	The world is not perfect.
The third page: Grace in the Bible	The fourth page: Grace in the world
God gave Isaiah a new identity.	God will give us a new identity in Jesus

In the four pages preachers should lead people to believe that God is participating in the world and the individual life. And in this sermon, a duty is not task but privilege, honor, and opportunity. Preachers can use the three simple paradigms or the basic theological motive which make the application of the story on God’s grace possible.³⁴

Conclusion of a sermon is the last part to hear the sermon. If the content of a sermon is not fully delivered to congregation, a preacher can say something more. But he/she should not try to say too much in a conclusion. The part of conclusion should proceed to the

³³ Ibid., 364.

³⁴ Ibid., 376.

direction to recognize the subject of the sermon anew. That is to say, it is not the summary or the review on the subject, but makes all people know that the sermon is about one idea.³⁵

³⁵ Ibid., 371.

V. Task of Effective Sermon Communication in Postmodern Times

The biggest task of Christianity is to introduce and use the communication theory of postmodern times in the field of gospel proclamation for the sake of God's Kingdom.¹

A. Making a Sermon Transcript in Postmodern Times

1. Inductive Sermon

An audience of postmodern times refuses to receive a given truth or fact as it is, wants to examine and probe it with skepticism. They are not interested in a foreseen truth or proposition. So Jesus has mostly taken the form of an inductive sermon which starts from the place of life to God's Kingdom. Jesus has preached in an inductive method because the life style of people has been used to the hearing and he has known it well.

An inductive sermon method is to start from the special experience of humans to the remarkable conclusion of gospel. Therefore an inductive sermon is not tied with a lump but constantly developed from a beginning to conclusion. Its basic frame is that an audience has their own thinking, their own feeling, their own conclusion, and their own resolution. In this

¹ Woon Yong Kim, "New Sermon Movement and Seeking the New Paradigm of Sermon" *Collection of Korean Theological Treatise* vol.26 (2002): 306.

way, this sermon leads an audience to have the ownership on God's message so that they may have an active attitude to find God's Words.²

The development of an inductive sermon may start from an individual experience of an audience. The method accords with the interest of an audience and effective principles of communication in postmodern times. It is the method that is focused on how an audience listens but its purpose is to make the congregation participate in the process of thinking developed during a sermon and stay with a preacher until they come to the conclusion of a sermon.

2. A Sermon by Storytelling

Viewers of a movie cry out and shudder because they identify themselves with characters of the movie. Nobody can deny that a storytelling is a powerful communication method in postmodern times. A story can help an audience understand God's Words well and induce the interest of people, and it makes them remember a message for a long time and elevate emotional parts.³

Most of the Bible consists of stories. The stories have been used for the tool to deliver God's message, the proclamation of Gospel may always be a form of stories. Therefore Amos Wilder insisted that "The most basic mode of Christian sermon was a story and the core essence of Gospel is coming to us in the form of a story." A story has been the tool to reveal God and the world, God has used the place for His revelation in Christ. So the Bible

² Ibid., 302.

³ Ibid., 319.

has included stories as the most centered medium, and even Jesus did not say anything without a story (Mt 13:34),⁴ except contexts of the general descriptive statement (cf. Jn 16:29).

B. Sermon Language Including Pictures and Imagination

The delivery of thought through language is the most basic means in communication. Even though preachers have prepared a great sermon, it is possible that sometimes they cannot get the expected results. Its first cause may be the sermon language.

1. The Importance of Sermon Language

A sermon is fulfilled by the medium, that is, a language. It is because God's Words are delivered in the form of languages and the directive motivation which causes something in minds and hearts of humans. So preachers should be careful for selecting and using language in a sermon.

When preachers take into consideration of the language of a sermon, firstly they should know 'people', 'today's world', and the feature of language. Secondly a sermon is not the delivery of simple logic, and not the word-play. The purpose of a sermon is the change of humans.

⁴ Ibid., 324.

The traditional theories of sermon have been interested in the definite use of language to deliver dogma or proposition, but the language of engagement is important in the sermon of postmodern times.⁵

2. The Pictured Sermon Language

The audience of postmodern times is familiar with the image media. Therefore the sermon of today should include not only the linear delivery for the satisfaction of the knowledge dimension but also to appeal to the whole person including the emotion and will of the audience. So it is really important to use the language which causes image, metaphor, and imagination. In other words, preachers should go into the image, metaphor, the world of imagination in order to realize the meanings and show them to the congregation.

3. Imagination engaging Sermon

Riegert said, “The fantasy brings the escape from the reality, but the imagination brings the plainness and the abundance of the original meanings for the real life.”⁶ Above all preachers should make the identity as God’s people in minds and hearts of audience by revealing the world through imagination in the Bible.

⁵ Warren Wiersbe, *Preaching & Teaching with Imagination*, translated by Chang Woo Lee (Seoul: Jordan, 2003), 22-26.

⁶ Eduard R. Riegert, *Imaginative shock: preaching and metaphor* (Burlington: Trinity Press, 1990), 58-59.

Charles Rice pointed out, “The ability to receive the activities of imagination is really important for making the sermon.”⁷ And Warren Wiersbe said, “Imagination is the mental activity to make an image in inner picture gallery of human mentality.”⁸ Also Paul Scott Wilson insisted, “Today’s sermon does not develop or use imagination enough to shake hearts of other people.”⁹

Imagination is the ability to make an image in our hearts. That is to say, we say with a language but a picture or a movie causes our imagination in our thinking. Therefore it is to make our life more lively, and the decisive and dominating fact of our life. So if preachers want their sermon to attain to the hearts of the congregation and make them practice the message, they should use imagination.

For example, the sermon of Martin Luther King ‘I have a dream’ is the typical sample of imagination-included sermon because it is the sermon that Martin Luther King had preached in imagination. Half a century ago, Halford Luccock had insisted, “The purpose of a sermon is not to make congregation know the rationality of the sermon, but to make them see the vision through the sermon.”¹⁰

4. Sermon Expression with Clear and lively language¹¹

⁷ Charles Rice, *Preaching Biblically* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983), 104.

⁸ Warren Wiersbe, 25.

⁹ Woon Yong Kim, 289.

¹⁰ Halford Luccock, *The Minister’s Workshop* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1944), 112.

¹¹ Paul S. Wilson, *The four pages of the sermon: A guide to Biblical preaching*, translated by Seung Joong Joo (Seoul: Worship and Sermon Academy, 2006), 412-15.

Preachers must always think on how they communicate with congregation, especially what words they select for their sermon. It is because a sermon is delivered with words and the attitude of the audience will be different according to how they say it.

Preachers should express the sermon with definite and simple language. For this purpose, the words and the sentence should be used with clarity and simplicity. The short sentence prevents the congregation from confusion of thought and helps preachers remember the contents of their sermon.

Directive and individual language is really important for a sermon. Preachers have a close relationship with their congregation to the degree of having an individual confrontation with them. Therefore the sermon should be heard as if a preacher and an individual talk together. It should not be heard as if a preacher just read a thesis or a dissertation.

The feature of an effective language is liveliness. People learn and know circumstances through the sense of hearing, sight, and smell. Therefore sometimes preachers must appeal to their senses in order to make the congregation experience the message.

Preachers must have the ability to draw a picture in their brain like a painter or a writer. It is because the concrete language develops according to firstly how they see and then how they express with words. Especially they should take care in using nouns or verbs.

C. Non-verbal Sermon Delivery for Communication

How do preachers make their audience hear their sermon in postmodern times? The non-verbal factors should not be overlooked.¹²

1. Rhythmic Sermon

‘The Rhythm of Sermon’ for the delivery is the speed of language, the modulation of voice, and the dynamic situation of a message. The ears of human refuse to cling to a fixed tone. The emotion of human is same with ears because to refuse the fixed condition is the human nature. The greatest taboo in the delivery of a sermon is ‘monotonousness.’¹³ If a preacher speaks with same tone from the beginning to the end, an audience will struggle with sleepiness.

Rudyard Kipling has left the saying, “You will say through silence.”¹⁴ In a sermon a pause is a meaningful stop. It plays a part like the punctuation mark of sentences. So preachers must use it after the end of one thought, the reckless use will bring about confusion of the congregation. The proper pause can be more effective than any other powerful language.

2. Proper Attitude and Action of Preachers

¹² Chang Bok Jung, *Sermon Ministry* (Seoul: CLC, 1990), 296.

¹³ Doo Man Chang, *Remaking a Sermon* (Seoul: Jordan Press, 2000), 265-66

¹⁴ Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: the development and delivery of expository messages*, translated by Young Ho Park (Seoul: CLC, 1999), 241.

In a sermon the attitude and action of a preacher is important. Good attitude and action can help the congregation be absorbed to the sermon. Especially proper gestures of hands and arms will help the congregation understand the contents of the message and emphasis on the important part.

Eye contact between a preacher and congregation is really important. Good eye contact gives rise to effective communication, but the poor eye contact will be a barrier to effective communication. Good eye contact is to look around the congregation. In a sermon an expressive face is very important for communication. Preachers must avoid giving their congregation tension. The attitude of a preacher should be full with belief, and a peaceful smile.¹⁵ But it should not be forgotten by a preacher that oculosics and facial expression, as well as gestures are culturally contextual.

D. Sermons using Multimedia

It is not exaggerating to say that the postmodern times is a time of video and audio. Today's people are consciously or unconsciously under the influence of many mass media and are familiar with them. Therefore the proper introduction of movie, drama, etc., can be a good pathway of a sermon delivery.

“Multi-media” is a compound term of “multi” and “media” and means various media or complex media.¹⁶ In a wide sense, multi-media is the system to integrate many means of

¹⁵ Myron. R. Chariter. *Preaching as Communication*, translated by Ho Won Cha (Seoul: Hope Press, 1993), 83.

¹⁶ Jin Yean Kim, *Christian, Internet, and Multimedia* (Seoul: Christiandigest, 1996), 173

communication such as voice, picture, movie, letter, etc. The biggest effect of multimedia on the communication of humans is to create bilateral communication structure beyond the unilateral ones. But preachers must not forget that, although the proper use of multimedia is effective to a sermon delivery, its excessive use can make the essence of the Gospel indistinct.

E. Sermons including Humor

Audiences of postmodern times turn the channel from a boring TV program to an interesting program. So humor can break an awkward or unnatural atmosphere. And it can bring about the insight of an audience, help them understand the message. Also it is the best tool to induce the interest of an apathetic audience.

VI. Conclusion

A. Findings

A sermon is to proclaim and deliver the gospel. Its purpose is to deliver the message of a preacher to the congregation. If the message of a preacher is not delivered to the congregation, it will just be a kind of empty echo even though its contents are good. The message of a preacher has its meaning when it is delivered to congregation and changes their life and attitude.

Hans Küng said, “The essence of church exists, but its form depends on historical things.”¹ It means that church does not have the fixed form to be captured by a changeless frame but the flexible form to respond to the request and question of the time dynamically, and has the self-transformation which can correspond to the changed times.

Therefore, the important fact found in this thesis is that a preacher should also preach according to a social change and study a new communication of sermon. If a sermon is 100%, it is really reasonable that the content is 60 % and the delivery is 40%.

But some preachers say that the delivery of sermon is just a technique. Of course, the delivery of a sermon should not lean to the technique. But as a preacher devotes and studies God’s Words, the study on how to deliver a sermon should be in the preparation process of a sermon. Therefore the delivery of a sermon does not simply depend on pastoral experiences.

¹ Hans Küng, *What is Church?*, translated by Hong Keun Lee (Seoul: Bun Do Press, 1978), 21-23.

Another finding in this thesis is that, if preachers are not going to return to the place of God's Words and feed God's people with the whole word in purity and passion, it is impossible for churches to revive.

But it is the most important thing that the truthful and honorable appearance of preachers' life should be presupposed for the proclamation of a message. When the truthful life and the pure passion of preachers meet with the Holy Spirit, their sermon will be delivered as a powerful message to God's people. The whole life of preachers is the most powerful message of God's Words.

B. Suggestions

If preachers are to be capable of carrying out a great sermon ministry, firstly they must take a deep consideration on the words and language used in their sermons. In a sermon a language will be the tool not only to deliver the thought of preachers but also help congregation attain to the salvation and give rise to changes of the life.

In modern times the language of a sermon is just for delivery of dogma or propositions, but in postmodern times it is for the participation of congregation. It is believed that the Western sermon can be well delivered through logic and proposition according to rationality and reason.

But as it is found that the mental world of humans is just like the gallery, in the modern sermon theology the language structure of a story has been really important.

In a sermon the renewal of a language is one of the most urgent assignments for those who are going to carry out a sermon ministry in postmodern times. It should be remembered that the wrong use of a language can obscure the power of the Gospel. Therefore preachers must be mindful to the use of language and use language fit to modern sense.

Secondly preachers must reconsider the importance of the audience's role. In a time of modernism, an audience has passively received the message. They are the final termination to which God's Words should be delivered, and open their ears to receive the message. But they are not just hearers but companions of a preacher during the trip of a sermon and those who must experience a sermon as the event of meeting with God.

Today's preachers should newly understand the position of an audience with the development of communication. Preachers are not separated from an audience and with them in the community of faith. They are at one with their audiences and just come up to the pulpit to preach God's message. Therefore they should also hear God's words together and audiences must go on the journey of Words with preachers. Therefore a sermon should be a co-work and interactive preaching related with the role of an audience.

Thirdly preachers must renew the form of a sermon. The sermon form is necessary for effective preaching, and determines the direction and the flow of a sermon. Until now, preachers have mostly been interested in the contents of a sermon, not the method of delivery. The indifference on how to deliver a sermon may be a main cause of tediousness and boredom.

The form of a sermon is the important factor to determine the flow and the direction of a sermon. It brings the frame and the vitality of a sermon for the congregation. Therefore the preachers in postmodern times must be interested in how God's Words are heard and how it

works to the consciousness of an audience. They may successfully overcome the limit of the traditional sermon, be interested in the new methodological frames of an inductive sermon, a story-styled sermon, a phenomenological move sermon, and four pages sermon, for the sake of an effective sermon communication.

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