A Homiletic Geared Towards Ethical Living:
An Examination of Gospel and the Third Use of the Law with
Relation to the Divine and Human Roles in Sanctification

by

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Abstract

The current Korean protestant pulpit has been encountering the ethical discrepancy of Christians. Many biblical verses are preached but the reality is that the life of the Word is not lived by many Christians. This would not be only an issue about Korean Christians, but about all Christians. In particular, rapid church growth of the Korean protestant church has been experienced in a remarkably short period so that a great deal of attention from the whole world has been given and a lot of praise has been received. However, such a growth has inadvertently highlighted the negative aspects of Christianity and the church and Christians have become the target of criticism within the Korean society. This current context has called into question how preaching can seriously approach the issue of the ethical discrepancy in the Christian life. In order to be more conscious of a serious breaking of the balance between the Christian’s identity and the Christian’s actual life, preachers may need to be concerned with understanding of justification and sanctification. These theological concepts map the journey of salvation, in which faith and faithful living work together, in an inseparable relationship. In particular, in order for sanctification not to simply to be assumed as directly following from justification, without faithful living, it is helpful to emphasize the third use of the law in preaching. Martin Luther’s understanding of the inseparable relationship between justification and sanctification and John Calvin’s concept of the third use of the law may provide preachers with theological foundations for a homiletic geared towards ethical living. Also, this homiletic approach notes that preaching should be gospel-centered. Thus, the tension and harmony of law and gospel serve to set the
basic structure of preaching. Yet, this homiletic focusing on faithful living also pays attention to human roles in sanctification. The third use of the law becomes a key concept for this homiletic and its homiletical implications form a concrete homiletical practice. The practice is not a brand new outcome. Many traces of the third use of the law in preaching can be found in several homiletical theories. On those theological homiletical foundations, through several signs, the third use of the law and its practical implications in preaching take concrete shapes for a homiletic geared towards faithful living. This homiletic may propose a practical way of preaching that is deeply concerned upon the ethical discrepancy of Christians.
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INTRODUCTION
A. The Problem ................................................................. 1
B. The Purpose: A Homiletic Geared towards Ethics ...................... 3
C. Statement of Thesis ................................................................ 4
D. Definitions ........................................................................ 6
   1. Christian Ethics ............................................................. 6
   2. Justification and Sanctification .......................................... 7
   3. The Law ......................................................................... 11
   4. The Gospel ....................................................................... 13
   5. Law and Gospel ............................................................ 14
E. Chapter Outline ................................................................. 15

CHAPTER I
Biblical Perspective of the Christian Ethical Living: Paul’s Understanding of the Law in the Romans 7:7-8:4 .................................................................................................................. 22
A. Contexts of Paul’s Letter to the Romans .................................... 25
   1. Through a Socio-historical Lens ........................................ 25
   2. Through a Political Lens ................................................... 33
B. Paul’s Understanding of the Law with Regard to Sanctification in Romans 7:7-8:4, 38
   1. Romans 7:7-8:4: Its Structure .......................................... 38
   2. The Identity of “I” ............................................................. 44
   3. Paul’s Understanding ....................................................... 48
      a. Law and Sin (Romans 7:7-12) ........................................ 49
      c. Christian Sanctification: Fulfilling the Law through the Spirit (8:1-4) ........ 67
   4. Summary: The Law and Sanctification .................................. 74
Conclusion ............................................................................... 77

CHAPTER II
Theological Perspective of the Christian Ethical Living: Justification and Sanctification by
Martin Luther ................................................................. 79
A. Luther’s Understanding of Justification: Through the Historical Development of
   Luther’s Doctrine of Justification ........................................ 80
   1. From Via Moderna to Iustitia Dei ..................................... 81
   2. New Understanding of Iustitia Dei .................................. 83
B. The Inseparable Relationship between Justification and Sanctification .......... 87
   1. The Twofold Function of Faith: Inseparable Relationship between Faith and Good
      Works .............................................................................. 87
   2. The Two Kinds of Christian Righteousness ......................... 93
   3. The Two Parts of Justification: Divine and Human Roles in Sanctification ...... 100
   4. Luther’s Conundrum in His Concept of Sanctification in Light of Justification. 108
C. Luther’s Principle of Simul Iustus et Peccator as a Theological Foundation for
   Homiletics: His Totus Homo Theology .................................... 113
Conclusion ............................................................................. 123

CHAPTER III
Sanctification in Christian Ethical Living: the Third Use of the Law by John Calvin .... 125
A. Calvin’s Understanding of Sanctification ................................ 125
   1. Inseparable and Distinctive Relationship between Justification and Sanctification:
      Luther and Calvin ............................................................. 126
   2. Sanctification in Union with Christ ..................................... 129
   3. The Gospel of Sanctification: Recovering Imago Dei ............ 133
B. Calvin’s Theology of the Third Use of the Law ....................... 136
   1. Calvin’s Theological Concept of the Third Use of the Law ........ 137
   2. The Third Use of the Law and Sanctification ....................... 143
   3. Calvin’s Theological Principle of Simul and Its Theological Implications with
      Respect to the Third Use of the Law .................................... 147
      a. Calvin’s Simul: Anthropology in Simultaneity of Justification and
         Sanctification ................................................................. 148
      b. The Third Use of the Law in Calvin’s Simultaneity ............ 150
Conclusion ............................................................................. 155
CHAPTER IV
Homiletical Perspective of Christian Ethical Living: Law and Gospel, and Their Ethical Implications in Homiletics ................................................................. 157

A. The Ethical Engagement of Law in Homiletics ........................................... 159
   1. The Problem-solving (Decision-making) Paradigm ............................ 160
   2. The Moralizing Paradigm ............................................................... 162
   3. The Theonomic Ethics Paradigm ................................................. 163
B. Homiletical Understanding of Gospel: From Post-World War II to the Present .... 167
   1. What is the Gospel? ................................................................. 167
   2. Homiletical Theories about the Gospel ........................................ 170
      a. The Bible as the Gospel ....................................................... 170
      b. The Gospel in the New Homiletic ......................................... 174
         1) The Gospel in the New Homiletic’s Forerunners: From the 1950’s to the 1960’s ................................................................. 174
         2) The Gospel in Transformational Preaching of the New Homiletic: From the 1970’s to the 1980’s ......................................................... 180
      c. The Gospel in Law/Gospel as a Theological Grammar ..................... 185
      d. The Gospel in the Post-New Homiletic ..................................... 194
C. Ethical Implications of the Law and the Gospel .................................... 198
   1. Ethics in Recent Homiletical Theories .......................................... 198
      a. An Empowering-Ethical Homiletic: African American Homiletic .... 198
      b. A Communal Homiletic: Postliberal Homiletic ............................ 203
      c. An Other-wise Homiletic: Radical Postmodern Homiletic .............. 207
   2. Ethics in a Law-Gospel Homiletic as a Gospel-centered Homiletic .......... 212
   3. The Potential of the Law’s Ethical Contribution in Homiletics ............ 217

Conclusion ............................................................................................ 224

CHAPTER V
A Homiletic Geared towards Ethical Living: Homiletical Proposals through the Third Use of the Law as Grace for the Korean Pulpit ........................................ 226

A. A New Homiletical Methodology for the Korean Pulpit ......................... 226
   1. Needs for a New Homiletical Model for the Korean Church .............. 226
a. Critiques of Korean Christian Ethics: From Outside the Church ............ 227
b. Critiques of Korean Christian Ethics: From Inside the Church ............ 229
c. Current Issues in Korean Preaching with Regard to Ethics ................. 230
   1) Absence of Homiletical Interpretation of Biblical Ethics and Morality. 230
   2) Overemphasis on Blessing ................................................................. 231
   3) Individual-centered Preaching ......................................................... 233

2. The Third Use of the Law in Homiletics for the Korean Church ............ 233
B. Insightful Traces of the Third Use of the Law in Homiletics ................. 235
   1. Eugene Lowry’s Loop: Unfolding ...................................................... 236
   2. Richard Lischer’s Works of Law and Gospel in Preaching: Analysis, Transition, and Integration ................................................................. 241
   3. Charles Campbell’s Exposing, Envisioning and Practices .................... 244
   4. Paul Wilson’s Four Pages of the Sermon and Nurturing Exhortation ......... 250
   5. Thomas Rogers’ Challenge ................................................................. 255
C. The Third Use of the Law and Its Practical Implications in Preaching: Several Signs of the Third Use of the Law in Preaching ..................................................... 258
   1. Where Does Power Come from? ............................................................ 259
   2. Semantic and Linguistic Positive Actions .......................................... 263
   3. Not Focusing on the Answer to a Problem ........................................ 266
   4. Joy, Hope, Nurture and Celebration .................................................. 269
   5. Accentuation of Love and Justice of God in the Law ......................... 273

Conclusion ................................................................................................. 277
Conclusion ................................................................................................. 280
Bibliography ............................................................................................. 282
Appendix .................................................................................................... 304
INTRODUCTION

A. The Problem

The aim of this study is to devise homiletical approaches for Christian sanctification and present a homiletic that may effectively contribute to ethical formation of Christians. This study is developed on the basis of two key theological principles: justification and sanctification. The process of the Christian life may be understood within a framework of two inseparable aspects, justification and sanctification. Justification is the forensic declaration of righteousness derived from God’s merciful, unmerited forgiveness of sins through the sacrifice of God’s Son Jesus Christ. Sanctification is the active participation in the divine righteousness through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Christians are called to live their lives in the dialectical relationship of these two principles as humans who are justified and at the same time sinners. Justification and sanctification have been historically significant theological doctrines. Understanding them is germane to Christian identity and life direction in the order of salvation (*ordo salutis*).

The Protestant church in Korea may be showing signs of a serious breakdown of the balance between justification and sanctification.¹ In practice, there are a few mega or large churches where ethical violations of ministers and leaders have resulted in a widespread negative impact, not only on the Christian individual’s faith and life, but also on the reputation of Christianity. The rapid growth of the church in Korea, in a remarkably short period, is often overshadowed by the negative aspects of Christianity. Unfortunately, the

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¹ In practice, Korean churches have recently been experiencing many serious ethical issues. These issues may be more concretely introduced and explained in my thesis.
unethical practices of leaders are often highlighted and become the target of criticism.

Justification in the Korean church\(^2\) has generally been explained and preached as the assurance of Christian identity by God’s grace through faith. Justification tends to be preached and taught as a guarantee of redeemed life. Yet, the justified also need to be concerned with sanctification as the fruit of the life of the justified and at the same time as a significant part of the ongoing journey of justification.

However, this is not always the case. Seyoon Kim, biblical scholar and Professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary, points out that the Korean church’s distorted understanding of Paul’s justification (Romans 3:23-24) became a decisive reason for the Korean church’s ethical crisis.\(^3\) According to him, Paul’s justification is to live like Christians not merely by understanding but also by observing the law of God.

In the churches in Korea, justification tends to be linked to proclamation of the gospel in preaching. Sanctification has been used simply as moral exhortation or subsidiary application. While the gospel has been at the very heart of the sermon, the ongoing process of sanctification and the working out of our salvation does not seem to have been fully engaged. The gospel is not merely related to justification. The gospel denotes not only God’s saving acts through Jesus Christ, but it is also announced with particular connection to the

\(^2\) The Korean church mainly signifies churches in Korea, but the Korean church in this thesis includes immigrant Korean churches in North America. Both churches in Korea and North America have different contextual environments, but especially in the first generation immigrant congregation, they tend to be similar with congregations in Korea in their patterns of faith and life. In that sense, this study is significant for both churches, in Korea and in North America.

\(^3\) Seyoon Kim, in his lecture, “The Sermon on the Mount and the Korean Church,” held in Seoul, 2011.
realities of the congregation. The gospel consistently addresses realities of the human condition. The preaching in the Korean church seems often to articulate gospel focus, but does not fully tend to unpack how the Christian should navigate the ethical issues and live a transformed life in Jesus in the midst of a fallen world. Conversely, diverse exhortations are preached, but they tend to be delivered hierarchically or one-sidedly through moral pronouncements. Thus, current Korean preaching does not appear to offer an appropriate balance between justification and sanctification to its congregations. This study begins with such an awareness of these problems and a hope of a theoretical proposal for a greater focus on ethics in homiletics in the context of the Korean church.

B. The Purpose: A Homiletic Geared towards Ethical Living

The goal of this thesis is to propose a homiletic geared toward ethical living, which not only places the gospel and salvation at the heart of preaching, but also encourages listeners to live ethical lives in the realities of today’s world. For this purpose, justification and sanctification will be explored in relation to the gospel and the third use of the law as its pedagogical function, through which God’s will is disclosed, God’s wisdom is instructed, and God’s nurturing voices are heard, so that it can contribute to forming relationship with God. In doing so, this study will propose a homiletic which not only proclaims God’s grace toward the congregation but also through the Spirit extends God’s grace to the particular Sitz im Leben.

This thesis emphasizes that Christian ethics can become transformative when it is

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linked with the gospel at the heart of preaching. Christian ethics becomes the gospel itself, faith as a gift from God that propels Christians forward a Spirit-filled life that results in ethical living. Christian ethics in preaching is not completed just through ethical content. Christian ethics needs to be considered with thorough understanding of the gospel.

Further, law and gospel as I use them are not binary terms, privileging one over the other: both law and grace (gospel) are needed for gospel, and the law in itself is a means of grace. Rather the terms are tensive, much in the manner of Luther’s *simul iustus et peccator*, at the same time both sinner and saved. Law and gospel exist in tension with each other, and out of that tension comes a new identity, that is both faith and ethical living. Calvin’s third use of the law, which is law as grace, can be seen as divine ethical wisdom and empowerment for Christian living.

C. Statement of Thesis

In this thesis I propose a homiletic geared towards ethical living of Christians for the Korean church. Of course, this homiletical proposal may be spoken for any church facing the ethical crisis in relation to Christian sanctification. This homiletic will be constructed at the intersection of biblical concept of the law in sanctification, theological concern about the inseparability of justification/sanctification, a new function of the law (the third use of the law) with relation to the gospel, and homiletical implications of the third use of the law on the basis of gospel-centered preaching especially in law-gospel preaching:

*Preaching that employs a tension between law and gospel tends to clarify Christian justification through proclamation of the gospel as God’s grace. In order for sanctification*
not simply to be assumed as directly following from justification, without faithful living, it is helpful to emphasize the third use of the law in preaching. This use explicitly illuminates God’s grace which especially stimulates and encourages both Christian sanctification of individuals and a church that provides faithful and ethical witness to the community. The third use of the law in homiletics is not simply to elucidate God’s thoughts about the realities of humans and the world; to disclose divine concern for engagement of Christians in the current ethical reality on the firm foundation of the gospel.

In this sense, the tension and harmony of law and gospel in preaching together with the third use of the law can help to clarify divine and human roles in sanctification. It can further help both to clarify Christian identity (justification), and to enable faithful and ethical living (sanctification).

With reference to justification and sanctification, in this study, the inseparable relationship between law/gospel and the third use of the law in preaching will be explored for ethical implications in homiletics. Numerous traces of living God’s will and worldview are embedded in the law.

The third use of the law in preaching does not offer simply norms with respect to human behavioral system such as what is right? what is wrong? what should I decide to do?, etc. It does not simply denote a guideline for human behavior coercively given by God. It also does not merely indicate a human-centered imperative statement. Rather, through the third use of the law God’s doing, God’s purposing or God’s intending and actualizing may be disclosed. Thus, the third use of the law in preaching can fortify theocentricity within a dialectical law/gospel structure while also highlighting human responsibility. According to
Stanley Hauerwas, “the Christian life is not about being in possession of ‘the truth,’ defined as a set of timeless and universal principles of belief and action.” However, “it [the Christian life] is about learning and living the life of truthfulness toward God and one another.” In other words, the Christian life denotes a life-long journey of justification and sanctification in which the truth of the gospel takes the concrete shape of truthfulness. For the Christian life, preaching may need to be concerned about the dynamic relationship of truth and truthfulness. Such a demand brings about a reason for this thesis’ homiletical-ethical concern about the third use of the law as grace.

D. Definitions

As this study gets started, it is important to define several key terms, in particular: ethics, the law, the gospel, and a theological grammar of law/gospel in relation to homiletics.

I. Christian Ethics

Christian ethics\(^6\) signifies an outcome of the Christian life for which Christians as sermon hearers are naturally encouraged to produce. In this study, ethics is not just related to homiletical answers and approaches about ethical issues, but rather denotes the life of faith itself with respect to Christian sanctification. This study of an ethical homiletic does not focus on homiletical methodologies which provide proper norms for the ethical life. As

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\(^6\) Hereafter ethics denotes Christian ethics.
sanctification for Martin Luther cannot be understood as separable from justification,\textsuperscript{7} ethics cannot be fully grasped only in terms of human works. That is, ethics cannot stand as an independent voice apart from the gospel. Ethics provides the contextual grounds on which the sermon is elaborated and the gospel is incarnated.

Moreover, ethics is significant in helping the hearers live out the gospel with relation to preaching. As Art Van Seters states, relating preaching with ethics, “preaching can make a difference in enabling discipleship.”\textsuperscript{8} Ethics in this study is basically about law and gospel and their proper fruits. That is, ethics is the examination of how God through the life of Jesus Christ has impinged on human lives and how ethical issues need to be interpreted. Ethics in preaching is not a mechanism that provides a single answer for a Christian ethical discussion. Rather it signifies a constant process to approach the wisdom of gospel within the diversity and complexity of ethics.\textsuperscript{9}

2. Justification and Sanctification

Justification and sanctification denote a God-driven dynamic, intrinsic process of transformation in the Christian life based on divine grace.\textsuperscript{10} These two theological concepts are understood not only inseparably but distinctively. Whereas they are inseparable in terms

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{7} Olli-Pekka Vainio, \textit{Justification and Participation in Christ} (Boston, MA: Brill, 2008), 46.
of a whole journey of Christian life, at the same time they are distinct from each other in terms of the inward assurance of Christian identity and the outward expression of Christian faith.

Justification signifies the imputation of God’s righteousness to humans. To put it another way, they are justified by grace through faith. This grace is not merited by human efforts. Justification is “God’s free, unconditional, and unmerited acceptance of us in spite of our sin and alienation from God, from others, and from ourselves.”¹¹ Those who are justified by grace through faith are transformed from a state of being the objects of divine wrath to a state of being subject to God’s atoning grace.¹²

Sanctification cannot be grasped without an understanding of justification. Sanctification can be described as the life journey of the justified. Christians undergo the process of regeneration by performing Christian righteousness, but sanctification by itself cannot produce justification. “If justification by grace through faith is the foundation of the Christian life, sanctification is the process of growth in Christian love.”¹³ Yet, sanctification does not simply denote “moral flawlessness or religious otherworldliness.”¹⁴ Rather, it signifies a life-long process of recovering Imago Dei (the image of God) by the working of


¹⁴ Ibid., 178.
the Spirit in the Christian life.

Moreover, sanctification cannot be understood solely as human responsibility of acts though human involvement is required.

It is a mistake to think of sanctification solely what we do in contrast to justification as solely God’s work. Just as faith is properly understood as a response to the divine justification of human life, so love of God and our fellow creatures is properly understood as a response to the divine sanctification of human life in Jesus Christ. It is first of all the gift of God, and then also a human task.\(^{15}\)

Sanctification is the life-long transforming process driven by God, in which Christians should conform to the Christ-likeness, building a true relationship with God in Christ.

Likewise, justification and sanctification are inseparable, but at the same time distinctive.\(^{16}\) I would describe the relationship of the two in diagrams as follows:

\(^{15}\) Ibid.

\(^{16}\) Martin Luther and John Calvin, representative theologians on justification and sanctification, have different understandings of the two in terms of their inseparability and distinctiveness. While Luther understands the two in a broader concept of justification, Calvin tries to distinguish sanctification clearly from justification. Luther explains the two in their inseparability, but Calvin argues their distinctiveness. In other words, they have different doctrines of sanctification. Regarding this, Fong compares their stances well as follows: “Calvin’s emphasis on the outward expression of Christian faith is much stronger than Luther’s. Luther accented the continuing presence of sin in the Christian life, the daily mortification of the flesh, and the daily demand of Christ’s alien righteousness. His intention is to encourage us to trust in the promise of grace continuously. Only through faith alone can we experience the joy of salvation in the Christian life. Hence, Luther would say, “How great a sinner I am! Yet, I believe that God loves sinners like me. What a joyful union with God in justification.” Calvin agreed with Luther that although the “vestiges of sin” within human nature ceases to reign over the justified, it still exists in them, and inclines to sin until Christ’s second coming. In his doctrine of the Christian life, Calvin, however, preferred to say, “How great is God’s salvation! God forgives my sins and leads me to fulfill the law of God in the Christian life. Indeed, God loves the holy and pious man.” Tillich summarizes the difference between Luther’s and Calvin’s doctrine of sanctification: “What describes the Christian life for Calvin is not Luther’s view of the ups and downs, the ecstasy and despair, in the Christian. For Calvin the Christian life is a line going upward, exercised in methodical stages.” Fong, “Luther, Melanchthon and Calvin: The Dynamic Balance between the Freedom of God’s Grace and the Freedom of Human Responsibility in Salvation,” 419-20.
The two diagrams above can only partially describe the relatedness of justification and sanctification. The first one may partially indicate their inseparability, but it is not enough to explain the dialectical relationship between justification and sanctification. The second one can show significance of each, but this also cannot indicate the inseparable relationship for the Christian life.
Diagram 3 depicts not only the inseparability of justification and sanctification, but also delineates appropriately the centrality of justification and the dynamic, expandable process of sanctification for the Christian life.

3. The Law

One of the essential points in this study is to recover a hidden theological, homiletical implication of the law. The law expresses biblical commandments and admonitions which are written in both Testaments. Yet, the law is understood not only in a pattern of content, but also from the existential perspective. As Richard Lischer states, therefore, “the law is a body of divine regulations and a condition of existence (wrath, enmity with God) which characterizes those who have failed to keep God’s commands.”

The apostle Paul remarks that the law is “holy, righteous, and good.”(Romans 7:12) Although sin defiles the law as its tool in deception and death, it needs to be noted that the law itself is neither sin nor a source of sin. As a result, the law has come to be considered negatively as sin’s tool and a reminder of human failure. Thus, the law has been understood as an impetus which raises the anthropological awareness, simul iustus et peccator (righteous and at the same time sinner).

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18 Moreover, in the Korean church even church activities and programs have become the law as a criterion by which Christians are judged. The congregants in the Korean church are seemingly enforced to participate in several church programs and activities, and those, who do not participate, tend to be considered as an unfaithful, undevoted Christian since those activities and programs work as the law in the Korean church.
In particular, however, the law is significant as an inseparable element in relation to the gospel. Certainly, the law may play a function as hammer of judgment: the law’s punitive function indentified by Herman G. Stuempfle, inspired by John Calvin.\textsuperscript{19} To put it another way, the law may be understood as the mirror that “discloses our sinfulness, leading us to implore divine help.”\textsuperscript{20} This use of the law is one of the mainstays for a theological, homiletical grammar of law and gospel in inseparable relation to the gospel. As Lischer remarks, for today’s Christians the law is not so realized from the Decalogue or biblical moral principles. Rather, the law would be experienced when they are identified as those who are involved in the sin of the world and realize themselves as an enemy of the cross of Christ in some way.\textsuperscript{21}

This study goes beyond the punitive function of the law in order to elaborate an ethical homiletic with reference to the third use of the law. Calvin posits the third use of the law as its principal use to reveal and clarify the will of God to the justified. In this regard, the law remains a troubling command without the gospel, but with it, the law begins to illuminate the realities of the world and reveal its divine voice in relation to the gospel. The law, through its third use, could also be homiletically communicated as a practical part of the gospel in which God’s love is confirmed and embodied.


\textsuperscript{21} Lischer, \textit{A Theology of Preaching: The Dynamics of the Gospel}, 39.
4. The Gospel

The gospel is the good news, which can be defined as “the saving acts that God has done, is doing and will do in Christ through the Holy Spirit.”22 Yet, as Paul Wilson argues, the gospel is not truly the gospel if it is delivered without liberation from trouble. Here, the law acts to illuminate this trouble, burdening the hearts of hearers as it reflects or confirms their fallen condition. Therefore, understanding the law becomes an instrumental part in the delivery of the gospel message. Moreover, the gospel is ineffectual if it is announced without any consideration of connecting it to the hearers’ real-life circumstances.23 The gospel has dynamic consistency and concerns about the reality of the human life. As Ronald Allen states, therefore, gospel is good news not only “because God is repairing the destructive work of sin, but also because God is constantly in the world to manifest love, justice and other forms of blessing.”24 If not kept in balance, diverse homiletical understandings of the gospel could emerge according to where the preacher places his/her emphasis of the gospel’s two messages: God’s grace which delivers humans from their fallen condition and God’s continuous concerns about the human reality and loving actions.

Likewise, the gospel has both human and divine sides. One could argue that authentic preaching of the gospel naturally produces Christian ethical perspectives and voices since preaching the gospel is based on such particularities of the hearers’ lives. In the position

22 Wilson, The Practice of Preaching, 35.
23 Ibid., 248.
taken here, preaching the gospel is intimately related not only to the dialectic of law and

gospel, but also to Christian ethics. The ethical implications of the law and the gospel

congering Christian ethics will provide homiletics with a theological direction for ethical

formation of Christians.

5. Law and Gospel

Law and gospel is a significant theological structure that has been theologically
discussed throughout the long history of Christianity. The apostle Paul struggled with the law
and sin in relation to the gospel in Romans (particularly in Romans 6 and 7). Augustine was
also concerned with the relationship between law and gospel, which are identified “as one of
the few kinds of theological senses or meanings to be found in any scripture passage.”25

The concept of law and gospel and their distinctions were central to the doctrinal

teachings of Martin Luther. In Luther’s thought, “the law makes demands of things that we
[Christians] are to do. In the gospel, however, we [Christians] are summoned to distribution
of rich alms which we are to receive and take: the loving-kindness of God and eternal

salvation.”26 The primary concern of Luther and his followers is to make a distinction

between law and gospel. For Luther, law and gospel were inherent in theological thought,
they were not a method or strategy for preaching. Nonetheless, they have been developed

25 Refer to Augustine, On the Spirit and the Letter (London: SPCK, 1925), ch.6; Paul Scott Wilson, Preaching
     and Homiletical Theory (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2004), 74.

     Distinction between Law and Gospel, trans. W. H. T. Dau (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1928), 18-
     Journal (September, 1980), 190.
into a structure that has implications for preaching. That is, as Wilson states, the theological categories of law and gospel in Lutheran theology have been developed homiletically in diverse homiletical families “especially in the last 150 years.”\textsuperscript{27} Although these doctrinal structures and distinctions of law and gospel were initially highlighted in Luther’s theology, homiletical implications and theories of law and gospel have been further developed and articulated by homileticians from various denominations.

This structure of law and gospel does not indicate a simple homiletical movement from law to gospel. Rather, the structure of law and gospel in preaching focuses on God’s grace which “overshadows and defeats divine judgment.”\textsuperscript{28} Furthermore, it emphasizes the divine strength and wisdom which may help to fulfill God’s will embedded even in the law in relation to the gospel. In preaching, the structure of law and gospel theologically works not only on the basis of the distinctions between law and gospel, but also homiletically works on the basis of their correlation.\textsuperscript{29} Multi-function of the law will clearly offer a deeper understanding of both distinction and correlation between the law and the gospel throughout this thesis.

E. Chapter Outline

Chapter 1) Biblical Perspective of Christian Ethical Living: Paul’s Understanding of the Law in the Romans 7:7-8:4

\textsuperscript{27} Paul Scott Wilson, \textit{Preaching and Homiletical Theory} (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2004), 74-86.

\textsuperscript{28} Lischer, \textit{A Theology of Preaching: The Dynamics of the Gospel}, 47.

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 41-43.
This chapter will probe a biblical understanding of the law in Romans 7:7-8:4 in order to argue that the law has its hidden and distorted significance for Christian sanctification. This chapter will examine first Apostle Paul’s socio-historical lens and political lens which he used in Romans. This step will help to portray a bird’s eye view of the entire book of Romans. This chapter then will argue that observing the law by itself is incapable of accomplishing sanctification. For Paul, however, the law’s constant significance as an expression of God’s righteous will can be the most credible guide for sanctification of those who walk in the Holy Spirit. As maintained by the new perspective on Paul in recent decades, the law mentioned in this chapter does not mean just the covenant law given to the Israelites, but rather means more inclusive Christian instructions God has given to both Judean Christians and gentile Christians. Paul’s theological understanding of the law and its role in sanctification will be gradually developed into a more elaborate study on the third use of the law and its ethical implications in homiletics with respect to the human and divine roles in Christian sanctification.

This chapter will conclude with summarizing the core theological meanings embedded in Paul’s understanding of the law with relation to sanctification. Paul’s understanding of the law shows the dual impact of the law in the order of justification and sanctification. According to Paul, the law itself is not a dominating device, but the law seems to come up with a negative impact to the Christian life as it is related to sin. On the other hand, when the law is re-illuminated by the Spirit, it positively works in the journey toward the sanctified life. That is, Paul is not satisfied with only knowing or observing the law. His ultimate goal for the sanctified life is for the fulfillment of the law. The conclusion of this
chapter will propose that human roles in the law are to know the law and make efforts to observe the law. Yet those steps cannot be considered as the fulfillment of the law. The fulfillment of the law is the role of the Spirit, and the law has already been fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Chapter 2) Theological Perspective of Christian Ethical Living: Justification and Sanctification by Martin Luther

This chapter will offer Martin Luther’s understandings of justification and sanctification as theological foundations for Christian ethical life. They provide Christians with a concrete life direction for the journey of salvation as well as an entire map for the journey, in a kind of endless cycle of justification and sanctification. The inseparability of the two will be argued in Luther. A human condition as living *simul iustus et peccator* will be centrally considered as a presupposition which brings about the necessity for awareness of the inseparable relationship between justification and sanctification. Knowingly and unknowingly, it has been generally considered that Luther puts more emphasis on justification than on sanctification. Yet, he clearly has a balanced understanding between the two. He is not only concerned about establishing Christians’ identity in relation to God (who they are), but also concerned about establishing their responsibility toward their neighbors (what they should do).\(^\text{30}\) Luther maps out the Christian journey of salvation within two theological notions: justification as a continual starting anew by grace through faith and

\[^{30}\text{David J. Lose, “Martin Luther on Preaching the Law,” Word & World, Vol. XXI, Number 3 (Summer 2001), 253.}\]
sanctification as a continual, proleptic process of justification.

Chapter 3) Sanctification in Christian Ethical Living: the Third Use of the Law by John Calvin

John Calvin’s understanding of the third use of the law in relation to justification and sanctification can richly supplement current homiletical approaches. His concern about the third use of the law will be developed into this thesis’ central thrust: the gospel as God’s grace and the pedagogical use of the law with regard to the formation of the sanctified Christian life. Moreover, Calvin’s theological understanding of sanctification may be able to efficiently expand Luther’s view of individual salvation and sanctification into a more communal sense of sanctified, ethical lives of Christians.

As a result, this chapter will provide theological, homiletical foundations for a homiletical proposal for ethics in preaching through the third use of the law in light of the law/gospel homiletic. As Arthur Van Seters claimed, the law is not used simply as a prelude to articulate the gospel. 31 God’s will can be clarified through the third use of the law so that through the work of the Spirit, the law can speak of God’s will and wisdom toward diverse contextual factors. In this manner the third use of the law can become grace, and can broaden the homiletical lens through which Christian worldviews are illuminated.

Chapter 4) Homiletical Perspectives of Christian Ethical Living: the Law and the Gospel,

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and Their Ethical Implications in Homiletics

This chapter will develop theological notions of sanctification into practical concepts in homiletics regarding Christian ethical life. This chapter will provide a historical overview of law and gospel and their implications for sanctification in preaching from post World War II to the present. Ultimately, this chapter will seek to review what has been said about revitalizing preaching of the gospel and its ethical direction in preaching.

To put it concretely, as justification and sanctification are inseparably related to each other, this chapter will note that the law and the gospel should be investigated in a single paradigm. There is an important theological connection between the two sets of terms. This chapter will first explore how the law has been typically regarded as the norm of ethical engagement in homiletics, but has tended to result in avoiding the gospel. The law has obvious limitations for ethical preaching without the gospel. Second, regarding an essential element for ethical preaching, this chapter will probe the homiletical understanding of the gospel from post-World War II to the present through the works of many authors. In this process, it will be argued that the gospel has been assumed rather than homiletically discussed in much of the New Homiletic. Yet, it will also be shown that the significance of the gospel has still been the focus of some homileticians. This chapter will then examine the wedding of ethics and the gospel modeled in diverse recent homiletical theories: an empowering-ethical homiletic (African American Homiletic), a communal homiletic (postliberal homiletic), and an other-wise homiletic (radical postmodern homiletic). In this process, some critiques of each theory will be made in order to propose a homiletic that is both gospel-centered and ethically-oriented. The chapter will conclude with the potential of
the law’s ethical (pedagogical) contribution in homiletics: the third use of the law in preaching.

Chapter 5) A Homiletic Geared Towards Ethical Living: Homiletical Proposals through the Third Use of the Law as Grace for the Korean Pulpit

In this chapter, this study will be developed through investigating homiletical traces of the third use of the law from theories and sermons of various homileticians. In particular, homiletical approaches of the third use of the law for ethics in preaching will be examined and proposed in insightful forms and theories: in Eugene Lowry’s *homiletical loop*; Richard Lischer’s *works of law and gospel in preaching: analysis, transition, integration*; Charles Campbell’s *exposing, envisioning and practices*; Paul Wilson’s four pages of the sermon and nurturing exhortation; Thomas Rodger’s *Challenge* through the stage of “what now?”

On this basis of homiletical traces of the third use of the law, this chapter will propose homiletical signs and practices of the third use of the law. These linguistic and semantic signs with regard to what the third use of the law looks like in the sermon will help the preacher to build up a practical model of preaching which is concerned with divine and human roles in sanctification.

This chapter will also discuss the homiletical context of the Korean Protestant church. This chapter aims to help the preacher to grasp a gospel-centered and ethical-oriented stance toward the law. This understanding will be used to construct a gospel-centered and at the same time contextually friendly ethical homiletic. It will help to highlight divine and human
roles in preaching that encourages sanctified living.

Today the Korean church is normally required to preach on life of the justified and the law of God for the Christian’s sanctified life. At the same time, the Korean church and many Christians seem to have lost their ethical credibility in many areas of the society. The Korean church seems to have generally focused on the law just as the ethical standard or yardstick for sanctification. Without a thorough reflection on the law of God, the law’s function as hierarchical, imperative, instructive religious regulations has been emphasized. Luke Timothy Johnson says: “The law can identify sin but cannot prevent it. The law is a prescription but not power.”32 I will deal with the Korean socio-cultural and ethical realities that contribute to identifying justification as sanctification. This chapter will re-emphasize importance of the proclamation of the gospel and propose relocating the law as a divine pedagogical grace. A sample sermon and its analysis will help to design a practical sermonic method through which the gospel and the pedagogical use of the law can be integrated into the practice of preaching.

Chapter I

Biblical Perspective of the Christian Ethical Living:

Paul’s Understanding of the Law in the Romans 7:7-8:4

Justification and sanctification are biblically, theologically and historically significant doctrines related to Christian identity and life direction in the order of salvation. In particular, the principles of Christian life may possibly be mapped within a framework of justification and sanctification. Seeing aspects of current Christian life, however, many Christians have been derailed from the framework of justification and sanctification. In other words, they may lack trust of the church, especially the Korean Protestant church, may have lost its credibility in Korea. One critical problem in the Korean Protestant church is that some Christians and Christian ministers are causing various ethical troubles inside and outside the church. The absence of an ethical consciousness in Christians already became a

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33 According to “The Korean Protestant Church’s trust index in 2008” surveyed by Ki-Yoon-Shil vividly shows the issue of credibility of the Korean Protestant Church in the Korean society: “Do you trust the Korean Protestant Church? Positive 18.4%, unsure 33.3%, negative 48.3%. Do you trust the Korean Protestant Christians? Positive 14%, unsure 35.2%, negative 50.8%. Which organization do you trust? The citizen organizations 50.3%, none 19.2%, the Korean Protestant Church 9.2%. Do you have a good feeling about following religions? The Roman Catholic Church 35.2%, Buddhism 31.1%, the Korean Protestant Church 18.0%, none 15.7%.”; Moreover, according to a recent survey conducted by the Korean National Association of Christian Pastors in May, 2013, 87% of pastors who participated in the survey replied Korean Christians’ daily life does not correspond to their faith and Christian identity. Their evaluation of themselves is more strict, so 97.4% of them replied that there is a disparity between what he/she believes and what he/she does in his/her everyday life. Furthermore, they answered lack in practices of faith as the most serious current flaw of the Korean church.: See The Korean National Association of Christian Pastors, Hankook Kidokgyo Bunseok Report (Seoul: URD, 2013).

34 Hereafter the church or the Korean church signifies the Korean Protestant church.

35 Kyeong-jo Park points out that such ethical controversies surrounding the Korean Protestant Church include ministers’ ethical issues: “church pastors’ handing down church leadership to their sons at some ‘mega-churches,’ personal use of church finances, and endless sexual scandals surrounding church leaders.”: H. Kwon “Why is the number of Christians decreasing in Korea?,” The Hankyoreh (Seoul: Hankyoreh Shinmoonsa, 2006. 08.10) http://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_opinion/148175.html
decisive reason of the decline (a numerical decline in attendance of the Korean church)\textsuperscript{36} of the church and a considerable obstacle for evangelizing.\textsuperscript{37} Such a problem\textsuperscript{38} caused by Christians, I believe, is to some extent the responsibility of the church which has not correctly preached justification and sanctification.

Justification in the Korean church with which I am familiar has generally been explained and preached as identification, as a forensic act, with a person justified by God’s grace through faith. In doing so, justification is considered as a warranty for a redeemed life. Such understanding of justification began to make Christians misunderstand that they live lives like those who are justified by God. However, justification by itself as Christian

\textsuperscript{36} This decline indicates a numerical decline in attendance of the Korean Protestant Church. According to the 2005 Population-residence report surveyed by the Statistics Korea, the Korean Protestant Church’s population has dropped by 144,000 persons, but the numbers of Buddhism believers have risen by 40,500 persons, and the Roman Catholic Church’s population has increased by no less than 2,195,000 since 1995. Among the major three religions in Korea, only the Korean Protestant Church has experienced a decline. According to the report, as of 2005, 22.8\% of the total population of South Korea are Buddhists, 18.3\% are Protestant Christians, 10.9\% belong to the Roman Catholic Church, 1\% of the people have other religions, and 47\% are non-religious.\textsuperscript{.} \textit{The 2005 Population-residence report} by the Statistics Korea (2005)

\textsuperscript{37} According to Dr. Sungwhan Park’s doctoral thesis, “the Korean Protestant Church has experienced a decline in its attendance since the early 1990s. [For me, his mention of reasons for the decline of the Korean Church seems to be too strong and toned up, but he addresses that] there are two reasons: 1) the Korean Protestant ministers have not worked towards their congregation’s Christ-like maturity, but have tried to maintain or increase the membership in their Churches. 2) they have always been subordinate to worldly powers, the spirit of the times, and American theologies, and were indifferent to the ethics of Christianity, that is, socio-political problems, loving the lower classes, the benefit of suffering for self-reflection in God, etc.”: Sungwhan Park, “Ethical Preaching in Contemporary Korean Protestantism,” (Th.D. Dissertation, Stellenbosch University, 2010), 150.

\textsuperscript{38} Young-Sang Noh explicates the ethical corruption of the current Korean Protestant Christians, ministers, and churches: 1) Christians’ ethical corruption: The Christian politicians’ degeneration, their seeking of material blessings, self-centered faith, disrespectful behavior toward other religions (i.e. breaking a Buddhist statue or prayer-walk in Buddhist temple in a Christian way); 2) Ministers’ ethical corruption: sexual ignominies, luxurious property and belongings, “pro-the former military government,” heredity of senior pastor position, pro-government, pro-America, Seeking a larger church, Authoritarianism; 3) Churches’ corruption: “pro-conservative (right wing) party,” the indifference to social, economical and political justice and prejudice, “the lack of the social services,” imprudent following of western theological views, excessive financial investment, etc. Young-Sang Noh, \textit{An analysis and rethink of the Korean Protestant Church’s mistrust and an empowerment of the Korean Protestant Church}. (Seoul: Ki-Yoon-Shil, 2009); Sungwhan Park, “Ethical Preaching in Contemporary Korean Protestantism,” (Th.D. Dissertation, Stellenbosch University, 2010), 153-54.
identity is not enough. Rather, it is more important for Christians that they live and act like the justified by God. In other words, all who are justified should be concerned about sanctification as the fruit of the life of the justified. Seyoon Kim points out that Paul’s justification (Romans 1:17) became a decisive reason of Korean church’s ethical crisis.\(^{39}\) That is because Paul’s justification has actually been distorted in the Korean church. According to Kim’s argument, Paul’s justification is to live like Christians by observing the law of God.

Likewise, today the Korean church is required to preach life as those justified and the law of God for authentic Christian sanctification. Yet, it is also true that the Korean church has generally focused on the law as the ethical standard or yardstick for sanctification. Without thorough reflection on the law of God, its functional aspect as hierarchical, imperative, instructive religious regulations tends to have been emphasized. It seems likely that Luke Timothy Johnson’s addresses of the law have been overlooked: “The law can identify sin but cannot prevent it. The law is a prescription but not power.”\(^{40}\)

This chapter will probe in Romans 7:7-8:4 to argue that the law has its hidden and distorted significance for Christian sanctification. This chapter will examine first Paul’s socio-historical lens and political lens which he used in Romans. This step will be helpful to give a sense of the entire book of Romans. This chapter then will argue that observing the law\(^{41}\) by itself is incapable of accomplishing sanctification. This chapter will also contend

\(^{39}\) Seyoon Kim, in his lecture, “The Sermon of the Mount and the Korean Church,” held in Seoul, 2011.


\(^{41}\) The law mentioned here does not mean just the covenant law given to the Israelites, but rather means more
that the law’s constant significance as an expression of God’s righteous will can be the most credible guide for sanctification of those who walk in the Spirit.

A. Contexts of Paul’s Letter to the Romans

1. Through a Socio-historical Lens

Many Christians have thought of Romans as a doctrinal letter. As Douglas Moo states, there is nothing wrong with such an understanding of Romans as a theological writing. As Martin Luther mentioned, Paul’s letter to the Romans is the “purest Gospel.” Moo points out the fact, however, that Romans is written within a historical background like other NT books. Romans has its own specific circumstances and purposes. According to such elements of the letter, the core messages and the context of intended recipients are properly grasped. Therefore, for a sound understanding of the letter it is necessary that its specific context is thoroughly considered.

One thing Paul was socio-historically concerned about is the relationship between Judean Christians and gentile Christians.43 Reading Romans with his concern about this socio-historical lens, we can get close to his purpose of Romans, its recipients and his intended messages throughout Romans as well as the contemporary Roman context. In

inclusive Christian instructions God has given to both Judean Christians and gentile Christians.

42 Douglas Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1996), 1.; Luther, “Preface to the Epistle to the Romans” (1522)

Romans, two ethnic groups\textsuperscript{44} are found in a certain regional location. That is, Romans was written within a distinction between Judean\textsuperscript{45} people and gentile people in Rome as a capital of the Roman Empire. Examining Paul’s understanding of those two ethnic groups in Romans becomes an effective beginning for a contextual observation of Romans through his socio-historical lens.

Many biblical scholars\textsuperscript{46} have the view that Paul writes Romans to a mixed audience of Judeans and gentiles. This understanding seems to assume that Paul had his intended purpose for his upcoming trips to Jerusalem and Spain in writing the letter. In other words, Paul intended to unite both groups so that his upcoming mission trips could be supported by the Roman church.\textsuperscript{47} Francis Watson also demonstrates that Romans was written to bring about the union of divided communities. Watson proposes that the Roman Judean Christians worshipped separately from the gentile Christians and they were two separate groups of

\textsuperscript{44} Andrew Das and Neil Elliott agree to “the idea that “gentile” is placed in lowercase since, unlike “Jew,” the word, “gentile” is not a proper name referring to a particular ethnic group but is rather a Jewish designation for the non-Jewish world.: A. Andrew Das, \textit{Solving the Romans Debate} (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 1; Elliott’s 2005 presentation at the national meeting of the SBL. According to this view on gentile, the gentile group cannot be defined as an ethnic group, but I place it as an ethnic group which means non-Judean group in this chapter.

\textsuperscript{45} Neil Elliott defines his view on translation of the Greek \textit{Ioudaios} in his book, \textit{The Arrogance of Nations}. According to him, “some scholars have recently proposed distinguishing between the term \textit{Judeans}, as ethnic and geographic term for a member of the people hailing from Judea, and the term \textit{Jews}, denoting cultural and religious adherence to the way of life of that people.” He employs the term \textit{Judean} “as a way of conveying both the ethnic-geographic and the religious components of Judean identity” agreeing to ideas of other scholars, Shaye Cohen and Philip F. Esler.: Neil Elliott, \textit{The Arrogance of Nations} (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 16.

\textsuperscript{46} Douglas Moo explains that Romans indicates two groups as its audience: groups of Judean Christian and gentile Christian.: Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, 10; Werner Kümmel writes that the obvious audiences of Romans were Judean Christians, yet the epistle contains statements which indicate the audience group includes gentile Christians.: Werner G. Kümmel, \textit{Introduction to the New Testament} (London: SCM Press, 1975), 309.

\textsuperscript{47} Das, \textit{Solving the Romans Debate}, 52.
Christians. According to Andrew Das’s citation from Peter Lampe’s writing, the Roman Christian church, which was composed of Judeans and gentiles, was gathering in separate locations for worship. For that reason, the argument Paul gave the Roman church was about their united gathering and worshipping even though he might give slightly different messages to these two different groups, Judean Christians and gentile Christians. According to Watson’s view on the relationship of Judean Christians and gentile Christians, Paul wanted both groups to come and gather together for worship.

James Dunn agrees to the characteristic of separation between both groups, but at the same time he demonstrates that both groups of the Judean Christians and the gentile Christians are “not separate groups, but factions within the same gatherings.” In other words, the Roman church can be defined as “mixed Judean/gentile groups” rather than as “two groups precisely distinguished as one Jewish and the other gentile (see on Romans 16:3-16).” Watson argues that Paul intended to “persuade members of the Roman Jewish Christian congregation to separate themselves from the Jewish community and to recognize and unite with the Pauline gentile Christian congregation.” Such a view of Paul’s objective


50 Das, Solving the Romans Debate (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 50


52 Ibid.
of Romans may give a better understanding of the contemporary sociological realities of Judean Christians and gentile Christians as addresses of the letter.

Yet, Dunn opposes not only Watson’s view on the simple separation between both groups, but also Watson’s grasp on Paul’s intention that Paul wanted to separate Roman Judean Christians from the Jewish community because Dunn realizes that Paul wanted to maintain “the bond between covenant people and Christian congregation.” Paul did not attempt to convert “weak” Judean Christians into ‘strong’ gentile Christians. Rather, for Paul, the gentile Christian majority needs to welcome the Judean Christians minority with mutual acceptance.

In short, Dunn admits that there were factions of both groups in a mixed community, but he believes that Watson’s views, mentioned previously, views on a clear division between Judean Christians and gentile Christians and separation of the Judean Christian group from the Jewish community, could bring about improper understanding of Paul’s authentic purpose of Romans. Nevertheless, it can be said that these scholars have the common conclusion that Paul’s primary focus in Romans is a mixed group of Judeans and gentiles and union of both groups. Further, Paul would have intended to maximize the

53 Ibid.

54 Andrew Das explains Dunn’s view in detail as follows: “Paul pointedly reminds the gentiles in Rom 11:11-32 that they have been grafted on as wild olive shoots to Israel’s tree and heritage. The gentiles do not form their own separate tree but are dependent upon Israel. Paul even looks forward to a day when ‘all Israel will be saved.’ Far from urging his audience to sever all ties with the Jews, the apostle holds out hope for his people and wants the gentile Romans to think similarly. He never asks the ‘weak’ to abandon their Jewish practices in 14:1 but calls instead for mutual acceptance (15:7). The Roman gentiles represent the fulfillment of the promises to all Abraham’s seed (4:16). Abraham is the Jews and gentiles’ mutual father in 4:12.”: Das, Solving the Romans Debate, 50-51.

55 From a different perspective, however, it is also demonstrated that Paul considered not the relationship
support of these groups for his mission to Spain.\textsuperscript{56}

Another theory for the situation behind the Roman church needs to be reviewed. That is an Edict of Claudius, which expelled the Jews from Rome in the year 49 CE. After the severe expulsion, the Jews and the Judean Christians were forced to leave Rome so that the gentile Christians influenced from the Judean Christians had to maintain their faith independently and form their own Christian groups. Once Nero sat on the throne, the Jews and the Judean Christians could return to Rome and the Judean Christians reformed their group. However, the gentile Christians had already formed their own Christian communities centered in the house churches. The gentile Christians began to have a different appreciation for Judaism from Judean Christians. As a result, it would have become difficult for the expelled and then returning Judean Christians to establish a harmonious relationship with the gentile Christians. Andrew Das explains such a context as follows:

Some of the converts\textsuperscript{57} may not have appreciated the Jewish roots of Christianity. The gentile “strong” found themselves in conflict with the returning Jewish Christian “weak.” Jewish Christians, who had comprised the majority of Christians in Rome prior to the expulsion in 49 CE, found themselves in the minority upon their return five years later. The non-Law-observant majority questioned the ethnic practices of the

\textsuperscript{56} Romans 15:22-24.

\textsuperscript{57} The converts designate gentiles who converted to Christianity during the years the Jews were absent from Rome: Das, \textit{Solving the Romans Debate}, 51.
returning Jewish Christians.\(^{58}\)

According to Andrew Das’s analysis of the context assumed previously, the conflict between the gentile Christians as the majority group and the returning Judean Christians as the minority group became the momentum by which Paul came to write this letter to the Romans. Paul wrote the letter “to resolve the tensions between the gentile non-Law-observant strong and the Jewish, Law-observant weak.”\(^{59}\) In such a sense, Paul expected to see unification of the divided factions between the gentile Christians and the Judean Christians through summarizing his gospel message. Ultimately Paul’s intended audiences were both Judeans and gentiles.\(^{60}\)

However, Andrew Das’s contextual understanding of Romans proposes a different, new approach. That is, he raises a question about the assumption of the mixed Judean/gentile audience of Romans. Assuming that Romans was written in 57 C.E.\(^{61}\), Das pays attention to the fact that “a decisive split had taken place between the Jews and the Christ-believers [the Judean Christ believers] by the time Paul wrote.”\(^{62}\) The split of the Christ-believers from the

\(^{58}\) Ibid.

\(^{59}\) Ibid.

\(^{60}\) Many scholars follows this popular approach and have expanded it: Willi Marxsen, H.W. Bartsch, Ernst Käsemann, James Dunn, N.T. Wright, Karl Paul Donfried, F.F. Bruce, Peter Stuhlmacher, James C. Walters, Jaffrey A. Crafton, and etc.: Ibid., 51-52.

\(^{61}\) After his three-year ministry at Ephesus (Acts 20:31) 53-56 C.E., Paul spent three months in Corinth (Acts 20:2-3) in 56 C.E. He started his trip to Jerusalem in the beginning of 57 C.E., and he probably wrote the letter to the Romans at the beginning of 57 C.E., just before his ministry in Jerusalem.: Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT., 3; E.F. Harrison, Romans, Expositor’s Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995)

\(^{62}\) Das, Solving the Romans Debate, 148.
synagogues had already taken place at the time when Paul was writing Romans. Some scholars believe that Judean Christians were not in Christ-believers communities which had already split from the synagogues. Das demonstrates that the split group is not cited as a significant Judean minority in a Christ-believer community.

For instance, the greetings at the end of the letter identify five people who were likely of Jewish ethnicity, two of which were a couple associated with Paul’s missionary endeavours to the gentiles (Prisca and Aquila). Similarly, two others who were likely of Jewish ethnicity were also a missionary couple associated with Paul’s gentile mission (Andronicus and Junia). These individuals are included in a set of greetings in the third person, which was typical for letters in which the addresses were admonished to greet a third party. In other words, the individuals mentioned in Rom 16 were not themselves members of the Roman congregations at the time Paul wrote. The discussion of the weak and the strong conforms to the widely recognized interest in Jewish food law and Sabbath observance on the part of gentile God-fearers. Gentiles who had formerly associated with the synagogues were interacting with other gentiles who did not share the same interest in these Jewish practices. As gentiles joined the early Christ-believing movement, many of these newer “converts” would not have experienced synagogues life or at the level of other gentiles.

Das thinks that Paul is focused not on the Judean Christians but gentile Christians in the split of communities from the synagogues. He argues that the tension over Judaism brought about struggles in gentile Christian communities, so that a tensive relationship between “strong” and “weak” in Romans was described. According to Das, Paul’s view on “strong” and “weak” is not ambiguous even though he does not identify the strong as gentiles and the weak as Judeans. Such ambiguity, Das notes, is “understandable if the letter is addressed entirely to gentiles.”

63 Ibid., 262.

64 Ibid., 263.
The edict of Claudius can be a key starting point that explains a plausible process of the reconstruction of gentile Christian communities. It can be easily inferred that the edict had enormous impact on the Romans, not only Judean communities, but gentile communities. The Judean communities would have tried to search out “those who posed the greatest threat to their social cohesiveness, namely, Judean and proselyte advocates of Christ.”\footnote{Ibid.} On the other hand, the gentile God-fearers\footnote{A class of non-Jewish (gentile) sympathizer to Judaism mentioned in the New Testament and other contemporary sources such as synagogue inscriptions in Diaspora Hellenistic Judaism.: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God-fearer} would have been able to escape from the threat of the edict in the face of the imperial pressure since they were grouped into the gentile communities. As a result, the Judeans including Judean Christians and some God-fearers,\footnote{They can be grouped as proselytes who accepted and were promoting Jesus as the Christ.} were forced to leave Rome, but the rest of the gentile Christians would have been able to remain. Nevertheless, the remaining gentile Christians would have had to gather apart from the synagogues where no Judeans remained. They probably had to reconstruct their worshipping groups. Das describes those new groups as follows, “These new worshipping communities would have included both gentiles with a knowledge of Judaism and its customs from their prior, close interaction with the synagogues as well as gentiles without the same appreciation for Judaism, particularly among newer members.”\footnote{Das, \textit{Solving the Romans Debate}, 263.}

According to Das’s view on this context of the Roman church, it can be assumed that Paul would have written this letter, which is called Paul’s letter to the Romans, especially to
the gentiles who remained in Rome: the gentile God-fearers and the gentile Christians. Of course, they can be distinguished as two groups vis-à-vis consideration of the Judean communities and the appreciation of Judaism. Accordingly, Paul would have considered an identity crisis of gentile Christian as Christ-believers and tension that they would have sensed with relation to Judaism. Those crises and tensions are the foundational context and the factors that caused Paul to write the letter to the Romans. As a result, it can be said that Paul could not help but keep the gentiles in mind for the primary audience of the letter.

2. Through a Political Lens

With regard to the context of this letter to the Romans, some scholars pay attention to the socio-political context of the Roman Empire. They demonstrate that Romans was written to non-Judean Christians, namely, gentile Christians who were raised in the imperial culture of Rome. They explain that Paul wrote the letter to displace “the imperialist subculture” and firmly place “the reign of Jesus Christ above imperial power and authority.” Among those scholars, Neil Elliott sets out a different approach from the majority of scholars that one of Paul’s dominant purposes in writing Romans is not to censure “an inappropriate Jewish boast,” but to reveal Roman imperial arrogance and clarify the reign of Jesus Christ to the gentile Christians.

69 Ibid., 149-202.

70 Graydon F. Snyder, in reviewing Neil Elliott’s The Arrogance of Nations.

Elliott remarks on Paul’s political approach in Romans. He also has sympathy with those who read Romans through a socio-historical lens, but he believes that Paul wrote Romans with a political perspective. That is, Elliott regards Romans as a letter written with relation to the arrogance of the Roman Empire. He understands that throughout Romans Paul proclaims Jesus Christ who has already demolished the imperial arrogance.

One thing that needs to be observed is Paul’s primary focus on the gentiles. Elliott notes that Paul considered Judeans as those who had possessed their own tradition by which they could be protected from imperial arrogance. For Paul, that is, Judeans would not have been subconsciously influenced by arrogance of the imperial tradition. This opinion argues that such a grouping of the Judean’s own community is caused by the lack of notable Judean involvement in the public affairs of Rome. James Walters states that limited options were available to Judean communities so that they could not help seeking “a socialization wherein Judeans would have been keenly aware of their Jewishness.” Setting the correct reason aside, one thing undeniable was that Judeans tried to protect their own tradition and social group. Moreover, Paul recognized that Judeans would be incorporated with Christians so that both Judeans and gentile Christians could form a group of God’s people one day in the future. As a result, Paul’s focus would have inclined toward the gentile Christians who would have already been immersed in the imperial tradition. Paul paid attention to the

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possibility that for the gentiles such imperial arrogance would be a hindrance to their understanding of Paul’s gospel.

Within this political perspective, we can find two responses of the Roman Empire toward conquered people. One is a direct attitude and the other is an indirect attitude. In other words, on the one hand, the Empire tried to oppress them in offensive ways such as the edict of expulsion. On the other hand, however, Elliott points out that the Roman Empire tried to win the hearts and minds of the conquered through a paternalistic imperial policy. Paul would not have overlooked such political aspects. Elliott describes imperial arrogance by using five key terms: imperium (power), iustitia (justice), clementia (mercy), pietas (holiness) and virtus (virtue).75 According to Elliott’s political perspective, Paul wanted to contrast his gospel with imperial arrogance through his letter to the Romans. The Roman Empire politically demonstrated that the ruling elites were elected by the gods’ authority to rule the Empire and they were divinely empowered to govern the Empire. Warren Carter states that “offerings to images of imperial figures and street festivals celebrated Rome’s

75 Graydon F. Snyder, in reviewing Neil Elliott’s The Arrogance of Nations, remarks Elliott’s political understanding of Romans as follows: “Under the rubric imperium, Elliott contrasts the empire’s policy of winning the hearts and minds of conquered people by forced subjection, while Paul called for willing obedience to Christ. The Roman Empire maintained iustitia by ruling through compliant local aristocracies and spoke of the Caesar as the embodiment of divine justice. Although that meant that justice did not extend to the poor, Paul does not directly attack the empire. Instead, he speaks of the justice of God for all people in contrast to imperial justice for a few. Mercy was vital to the ideology of Rome. The empire was merciful— to those who submitted to its authority. The emperors, even Nero, were described as benevolent rulers. Paul argues that history has not reached a climax in Rome, for the time will come when God’s mercy will be known to all. The emperors were not only just and merciful, but they were known as holy. In many statuary examples Augustus frequently appeared clothed with the toga of sacrifice. Paul, on the other hand, named Abraham as the person whose piety led to Christ and the eventual incorporation of all nations. Roman imperial ideology placed Aeneas at the top of history, with unworthy people, such as Judeans, at the bottom, the virtuous and the wretched. Again, Elliott understands Paul’s apocalypticism to imply that the roles will someday reverse.”; RBL 03/2009
power and sanctioned its hierarchical societal order.” In this imperial society, Paul’s intention was to relocate the place of Jesus Christ above the imperial authority. As Elliott points out, Paul was primarily concerned about the gentiles who had been raised in the imperial context formed within political intentions of the Roman Empire.

However, Elliott demonstrates that Paul’s concern for the gentiles does not mean his defense of the gentile Christian communities against Judean arrogance. Rather, his concern was the arrogance of the gentile Christians against the Judeans. Elliott points out that gentile Christians were unconsciously dominated by the imperial political intentions. Paul would have worried that the imperial arrogance from the gentile Christian would permeate the understanding of Judean Christians and Paul’s gospel. Paul would have felt that such arrogance of gentile Christians needs to be prevented through a thorough understanding of the gospel. Moreover, Paul would have held a concern about gentile Christian boasting that might be caused by his gospel of “justification by God’s grace through faith.” Paul’s political perspective on the Roman Empire seems to give significant influence not merely to checking the imperial political arrogance, but also in delivering the true meaning of his gospel to individuals.

Reading Romans, from a political perspective, we should not overlook the political

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tension in the Roman context, but also Paul’s intention through the double character of Romans: a letter addressed to gentiles but dominated by Judean concerns, which are related to Judaism, “the Mosaic Law and Jewish customs in God’s saving plan for the nations.” As examined previously, Paul’s contextual concerns in Romans may be summed up in the following two issues: what political intention the Roman Empire has and to whom this letter is addressed. Yet, those two aspects of Paul’s concerns are intimately related to each other. Paul’s anti-imperialism played a critical role to determine the audience of his letter. At the same time, Paul’s gospel, his message to the addressees in the letter, clearly showed a deeply confrontational feature calling on them to recognize the reign of Jesus Christ versus the political aspects of the Empire.

John M. G. Barclay and N. T. Wright agree with each other: Paul was not “an apolitical figure with a privatized piety.” Paul was specifically concerned about politics and authority. Nevertheless, he did “not line up on either the right or left of political spectrum” then. His interest in power and politics influenced his own viewpoint so that he could clarify the target of his letter. Paul considered the universality of the gospel as significant in his letter, but at the same time he did not forget to protect the priority of Israel as well. In other words, it can be said that Paul’s overall intention throughout Romans was to deflate the arrogance of the gentile Christians and at the same time to reaffirm traditional concerns of

79 Brendan Byrne, Romans, Sacra pagina series v.6 (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1996), 3.; Das, Solving the Romans Debate, 261-64.

80 In the debate between John M. G. Barclay and N. T. Wright on “Paul and Empire” held at SBL in San Diego on November 19, 2007.
Judean Christians with regard to his gospel.\textsuperscript{81}

L. Ann Jervis proposes three solutions to the problem from the question as to the original purpose of Romans: Paul’s theological, missiological, pastoral purposes.\textsuperscript{82} It is generally understood that Romans was written with Paul’s dominant missiological purpose. In fact, the purpose of Romans has been assumed from a very practical perspective. However, Jervis proposes that Romans was written primarily with Paul’s theological purpose. Her theological purpose proposal regards Romans “as Paul’s setting forth of his gospel in written form.”\textsuperscript{83} According to her view, Paul intended to make the gentile Christians obedient to and sanctified by the gospel through preaching it in a written way. Paul did not write Romans simply to establish a bridgehead for his mission to Spain. He wanted to plant his gospel in the gentile Christians who had been accustomed to the imperial socio-cultural, theological tradition. Furthermore, with the pastoral purpose Paul also wanted to reform certain errors of Roman gentile Christian doctrines and behaviors.\textsuperscript{84}

B. Paul’s Understanding of the Law with Regard to Sanctification in Romans 7:7-8:4

1. Romans 7:7-8:4: Its Structure

An analysis of the entire flow of Romans reveals that it develops from the theme that


\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., 163.

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., 22-27.
human beings are justified by faith (Rom 1:18-5:11). The justified human beings come to be free from sinfulness (Rom 5:12-6:23). They experience freedom from the law in Rom 7 and 8. It is said in Rom 8 that those who come to be free live a new life with the Spirit. Further, we can see the concrete life ethics of those human beings in Rom 12-15. In this entire framework of Romans, Paul in particular focuses on the topic of the law, which can be a stumbling block for gentile Christians but may still have an important Judean value for Judean Christians. In Rom 6, Paul argues that those who are baptized into Christ Jesus should no longer be slaves to sin. In addition, yet, he maintains that those who are baptized and who gained freedom from the bondage to sin are not free from moral obligations. As Rom 6:19 says, they should no longer be slaves to impurity and wickedness, but should offer themselves in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. As Arland J. Hultgren remarks, “the person who has been baptized and has become a member of the body of Christ must oppose the power of sin and its consequent behaviors.” Moreover, they should be devoted to “a common and recognizable standard of teaching that has been received (Rom 6:17).”

However, Hultgren points out that the statements mentioned above do not give any solution to these questions: how can believers in Christ live in opposition to sin? What guidance can they follow? What is the standard of teaching? “The quickest and simplest response would be that the standard to follow is the law of Moses. If one is a Judean Christian, one should continue observing the ancestral law. If one is a Gentile Christian, one

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should adopt the law as the basis for a life of righteousness." Yet, that is not Paul’s answer. Paul’s response is given in Rom 6:14: “you are not under law, but under grace.” The law cannot play such functions that are given previously. Nevertheless, Paul could not be satisfied with his own answer to persuade all the Christians at Rome since he is also a Judean and he knows how valuable the law is to the people of God. Thus, Paul felt that he needed to deal with significant functions of the law from a Judean Christian perspective and at the same time show “no abiding authority” of the law in the life of the Christian from a gentile Christian perspective. He begins Rom 7 with those intentions.

Paul begins a new chapter, Rom 7, with an illustration from marriage in order to “repeat with respect to the law many of the same points that were made in Rom 6 with respect to sin.” Douglas Moo comments that Paul shows his understanding of the law and Christian freedom from the law in a way parallel to chap. 6.

As in chap. 6 the believer has “died to sin” (v.2) and thus been “freed from it” (vv. 18, 22) so that it no longer “rules” (v.14a), so in 7:1-6 the believer has been “put to death to the law” (v.4) and thus been “freed from it” (v.6) so that it no longer “rules” (v.1). As in chap. 6 this freedom from sin also means “serving” righteousness, or God, so that “fruit” pleasing to God may be produced (vv.18-22), so in 7:1-6 freedom from the law means being joined to Christ in a new “service” so that “fruit” pleasing to God may be forthcoming (vv.4-6).

Only in examining Rom 7:1-6 with parallel relationship to chap. 6, can we figure out what

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87 Ibid.
88 Ibid.
89 Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT., 434.
90 Ibid.
Paul intends to speak throughout chap. 7. That is, the primary task of 7:1-6 is not only to explain that the life is not under the law but under grace, but also to “state the positive consequences of being freed from the law, just as his earlier references to emancipation from death and sin were followed by statements of the positive results.” In particular, as Leander Keck remarks, verses 5 and 6 provide introductions of topics that will be discussed throughout chap. 7 to 8. Resultingly, moreover, 7:1-6 plays a role to set up the discussion following in the rest of chap. 7.

In 7:7-25, Paul develops another significant discussion. Many scholars analyze this part of chap. 7 as two arguments. Some scholars understand these two parts dividing into 7:7-12 and 7:13-25. Others divide this part of chap. 7 into 7:7-13 and 7:14-25. Arland J. Hultgren explains that the unit beginning at 7:7 ends at 7:12 in RSV and NRSV, or ends at 7:13 in NIV. In the Nestle-Aland Greek NT (27th ed.) the unit ends at 7:13 as well. Yet, John B. Cobb, Jr. and David J. Lull explain that 7:7-25 is “better understood as two stages of a single account of how the encounter with law affects people psychologically, existentially, or spiritually.” Verse 13 is generally considered as a rhetorical conversion point that

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92 Ibid., 177.

93 Of course, this text can be more concretely divided into several pieces, but in this paper I try to analyze this text as two parts. There are largely two views on a division of 7:7-25: one group proposes to divide into vv. 7-12 and vv. 13-25; the other group proposes to divide into vv. 7-13 and vv. 14-25.: C.E.B. Cranfield, Douglas Moo, Leander Keck, Jan Lambrecht, S.J., David G. Horrell, Charles H. Talbert belong to the first group. James Dunn, Heikki Räisänen, Terence L. Donaldson, Arland J. Hultgren, Edwin D. Freed, Stephen Westerholm, Hans Hübner, J.R.Daniel Kirk are in the second group.


connects between 7:7-12 and 7:14-25. That is, v.13 can be considered as a bridge between the two sections.\textsuperscript{96} Thus, it can be said that v.13 plays a role not only to conclude the first part, verses 7-12, but also to introduce the next stage in Paul’s singular discussion throughout 7:7-25.\textsuperscript{97} Explaining from the perspective of content, Hultgren points out that v.13 concludes “the discussion about the question whether the law brings sin and death, but to some degree it also anticipates the discussion about sin at work over against the law.”\textsuperscript{98}

According to several views on this division of 7:7-25, the location of v.13 is equivocal. The verse may be included as the last verse of the first section, but on the other hand may be located as an introductory verse of the second section. One fascinating argument is Jan Lambrecht, S.J.’s. He pays attention to a characteristic of vv.7 and 13 constituted by brief questions and answers. He stylistically elucidates structural functions of those verses in 7:7-25. Lambrecht calls the stylistic characteristic of vv.7 and 13 “diatribe.” He shows the fact that the style has been already met in several verses in Romans: Rom 3:1-8 and 6:1-2; 15-16.\textsuperscript{99} He understands that “the style with question-and answer often introduces a new pericope.”\textsuperscript{100} Seeing stylistically v.13 in the whole text unit of 7:7-25, with regard to v.7 as a verse with a similar function, it seems that v.13 is a beginning verse of the

\textsuperscript{96} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, NICNT, 449.

\textsuperscript{97} Cobb, Jr. and David J. Lull, \textit{Romans}, 106.


\textsuperscript{100} Ibid., 35.
second part in 7:7-25. Yet, Lambrecht does not ignore the fact of a tense shift between v.13 and v.14. Considering only the tense shift, a different opinion could be demonstrated. Nonetheless, he draws a clear conclusion on this issue. It seems to him better “not to add verse 13 to the first part, but to consider it as an introduction to the second.” This argument is persuasive.

In Rom 7:25a, Paul utters his thanks following frustrating confessions and a complaining question. It seems that he finally solves all the problems of the complaining situation and frustration in that verse. However, he once more confesses his wretched identity in 7:25b: “So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.” Paul resumes his previous reference to “bearing fruit for death (7:5)” throughout 7:7-25. In other words, Andy Woods remarks that Paul elaborates upon 7:5 in 7:7-25 and then elaborates upon 7:6 in 8:1-17. Romans chapter 8 becomes the climax of the discussion about sin, law and human limitation within the law of sin and death begun at 5:12. Leander Keck points out that chapter 8 “picks up and develops themes mentioned before; it also opens windows to the widest horizon in the whole letter, the impending redemption of creation itself.” Romans chap.8 can be generally divided into three sections: vv 1-17, 18-30 and 31-39. In particular, chap.8:1-4 has a transitional

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101 Ibid.

102 Andy Woods, “Romans 7 and Sanctification,” in Chafer Theological Seminary Annual Pastor’s Conference, 6.:http://www.spiritandtruth.org/teaching/topics_by_andy_woods/30_Sanctification_Can_Man_Obey_on_His_Own/20110309_30_sanctification.pdf?x=x

significance on the point that Paul elaborates what has already been talked in 7:24-25a. Moreover, it can be said that chapter 8:1-4 shows a way through which the true meaning of the law can be fulfilled and human wretchedness can be rescued.

2. The Identity of “I”

Before an exegetical study of Romans 7:7-8:4, it seems better that I first probe who the subject or speaker of Romans 7:7-25 is. In other words, who is the “I” in Romans 7:7-25? The identification of the “I” is a significant matter in this text. Douglas Moo clarifies its significance in this text as follows: “The identification of the “I” affects, to some extent, the way we understand Paul’s presentation of the law but, even more, the way we understand the Christian life. And certainly the identification of this “I” affects dramatically the interpretation of individual verses.” It can be said, moreover, that the identity of “I” in Romans 7:7-25 gives Christians profound impact on their understanding of practical sanctification with regard to Paul’s understanding of the law and sanctification in Romans chap. 7 and 8.

In general, three theories of identifications of this ἐγώ (“I”) have been proposed. First, some scholars have proposed the theory of rhetorical “I”. Moo understands the rhetorical “I” as “the existential direction” in interpretation. According to this view, the “I”

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104 Lambrecht, S.J., The Wretched “I” and Its Liberation: Paul in Romans 7 and 8, 93-98.
105 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT., 516.
106 Ibid., 450.
107 Ibid., 452.
cannot be any particular person. In other words, in this interpretational direction, the
pronoun cannot be autobiographically understood. Rather, the “I” in the text “serves as a
literary device that depicts all of humanity.”\(^{108}\) According to Moo, some interpreters maintain
from a psychoanalytic point of view, “Paul is using figurative language to describe the
confrontation between “a person,” qua person, and the demand of God.”\(^{109}\) However, this
theory of interpretation seems implausible. The “I” is rarely used without an intended
personal reference. Namely, Paul’s identification of the “I” seldom signifies an unspecified
person or all of humanity in his letter to the Romans except for a text such as Romans 3:7.\(^{110}\)

Second, some other scholars have argued that the “I” signifies Paul himself. That is,
the theory of the autobiographical “I” has been suggested.\(^{111}\) This direction could be a
seemingly easy solution of the identity matter because it is considered that the “I” in Romans
7:7-25 “depicts only Paul’s own personal experiences.”\(^{112}\) The fact itself that Paul speaks in
the first person in the text could be considered as the most plausible foundation for the
theory of the autobiographical “I”.\(^{113}\) Those who maintain the autobiographical interpretation

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\(^{109}\) Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT., 452.

\(^{110}\) Ibid.

\(^{111}\) Daniel Napier presumes that “the most common interpretation from Augustine to the last quarter of the
twentieth century is that Paul is writing a deeply autobiographical account of either his preconversion or his
Christian experience.”: Daniel Napier, “Paul’s Analysis of Sin and Torah in Romans 7:7-25,” Restoration

\(^{112}\) Woods, “Romans 7 and Sanctification,” 4.

\(^{113}\) Stephen Westerholm, Israel’s Law and the Church’s Faith (Eugene, OR: Wipf And Stock Publishers, 1998),
60.
of the “I” propose a few possibilities of the “I” described in 7:1-12. Moo introduces two main possibilities:

One possibility is the awakening of the sinful impulse at the time of Paul’s “coming of age,” or “bar mitzvah.” “I was living without understanding the real power of sin at one time, but when I became responsible for the commandment, sin sprang to life and I perceived myself to be under condemnation” (or “perceived myself to be unable to throw off sin’s power”). The other possibility is the realization of condemnation just previous to Paul’s conversion. “I thought myself to be ‘alive’ in the days, when, as a self-satisfied Pharisee, I thought I was fulfilling the law. But when the Spirit began to make clear to me the real, inward meaning of God’s law, I saw that I was far short of its demands and was, in fact, under condemnation.”

Moreover, Moo explains possibilities of the autobiographical interpretation in 7:14-25 from views of the autobiographical “I” theory defenders: “Paul is describing his experience as a Jew under the law, his immediate postconversion struggle with the law, or his continuing struggle to obey the law as a Christian.”

Third, still others have maintained that the “I” should be recognized as the representative “I”. That is, they propose the theory of the representative “I”. Andy Woods points out that “the pronoun “I” in Romans 7:7-25, according to this view, depicts the life experience of a representative figure that is typical of every person including the speaker.”

As an example, it can be said that the “I” may be pointing to Adam instead of Paul himself. According to this view, it could be concluded that “Romans 7:7-12 refer to the Fall of Adam

114 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT., 450-51.
115 Ibid., 451.
and verses 13-23 describe Adam’s condition after the Fall.”\(^{117}\) In other words, this interpretation considers the “I” as Paul in solidarity with Adam. Although few scholars currently think that Paul depicts Adam’s experience throughout Romans 7:7-25, this Adam interpretation has been held by several church Fathers and their followers since the earliest periods of the church. According to Moo’s comment on this view, “most contemporary interpreters, although not thinking that vv.7-11 describes only Adam, think that reference to Adam is present and prominent.”\(^{118}\)

Moreover, the “I” may also represent Israel or the Judeans under the law at the time of the proclamation of the law on Mt. Sinai. That is, the “I” depicts Paul in union with Israel and the people of Israel. Those who follow this proposal understand that in Romans 7:7-11 the law began to be misused and the people of Israel came to be deceived by sin after the law had been given on Mt. Sinai. Then, in 7:14-23 “the miserable, hopeless situation of all Jews under the law is described.”\(^{119}\)

As assessed previously, there are many possible theories for the “I” interpretation.\(^{120}\) It does not seem that only one of those views can work. Currently some scholars propose


\(^{118}\) Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT., 451.

\(^{119}\) Lambrecht, S.J., *The Wretched “I” and Its Liberation: Paul in Romans 7 and 8*, 64.

\(^{120}\) Moreover, then, these are not all the standpoints of the “I” identity. There is one more debatable issue: it is about whether the “I” is the Christian or the non-Christian (conversion experience or pre-conversion experience). By a view on the issue, Romans 7:7-25 can be differently interpreted especially about anthropological understanding. The issue of the “I” identity with regard to conversion experience and pre-conversion experience will be discussed in the later section of this paper.
that various interpretations of the “I” identity that combine more than one proposal can give
the best explanation on the “I” interpretation. Moo points out that many (perhaps most)
scholars now combine one or more of those identifications in their interpretation of Romans
chap.7. Lambrecht also admits that composite proposals are currently more persuasive.

3. Paul’s Understanding of the Law: Doing the Law or Fulfilling the Law

Thus far the identification issue of the “I” interpretation as one of the significant
matters in Romans 7:7-25 has been examined. However, the identity of the “I” is not the
primary issue in this entire passage. Rather, Paul’s primary concern in Romans 7:7-25 is the
law with relation to sin. Moo expresses Paul’s primary concern in the scriptural text as Paul’s
specific purpose in the text. Moo argues that the purpose is “to vindicate the law from any
suggestion that it is, in itself, sinful or evil; and to show how, despite this, the law has come
to be a negative force in the history of salvation.” Considering such principal concerns of

121 Moo concludes that “egō denotes Paul himself but that the events depicted in these verses [7:7-25] were not
all experienced personally and consciously by the apostle. It is in this sense that we argue for a combination of
the autobiographical view with the view that identifies egō with Israel. Ego is not Israel, but ego is Paul in
solidarity with Israel.”: Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT., 456.; Douglas Moo, “Israel and Paul in
Romans 7.7-12,” NTS 32 (1986), 122-35.

122 Lambrecht vividly explains the composite proposals of the “I” interpretation named a “fusion” style:
“Cranfield, for example, maintains that in verses 7-13 Paul refers to himself as the representative of all human
beings, while in verses 14-25 he speaks of Christians in general (Romans, p.345). We find more or less the
same position in Dunn who explicitly mentions Paul’s pre-Christian experience (Romans, p.382). Moo claims
that Paul, above all, deals with Israel but also, to a certain extent, is speaking of himself (p.123): Romans is
simultaneously an objective narrative and a subjective confession” (p.129). In his publications, John A. Ziesler
defends the position that, for Paul, Adam is the model, but that Paul uses Adam to allude to himself as a type of
all human beings. Finally, Lekkerkerker concludes: “The Urgeschichte [the history of the origin] which is
described in verses 7-12 is the heading above the life of all of us. It is the history of Adam and Israel and the
church and Paul himself” (Aan de Romeinen, p.304)”: Jan Lambrecht, S.J., The Wretched “I” and Its
Liberation: Paul in Romans 7 and 8, 67-68.

123 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT., 449.
Paul in the scripture, Paul’s understanding of the law should primarily be probed. Daniel Napier also demonstrates that a solid exegesis of 7:7-25 must begin with the appreciation that the law is the primary focus in chapter 7.124

a. Law and Sin (Romans 7:7-12)

Previously I have divided Romans 7:7-25 into two parts; the first part is 7:7-12. Seeing this part in its entirety, it seems that Paul has two purposes in 7:7-12: to exonerate the law from the charge that the law is sin or a source of it and to precisely depict the true relationship among the law, sin, and death.125

In vv.7-8, Paul begins with the rhetorical question and answer, using diatribe as a rhetorical technique,126 which has already been used in previous chapters of Romans (3:5-6; 6:1-2; 6:15-16): τί θέλετε μεν ἐρωτήσατε (“What shall we say, then?”). And then, Paul added one more question: ὁ νόμος ἡμῶν ἔμαρτσε (“Is the law sin?”). In other words, Paul asks: “are the law and sin the same thing?”127 Yet, this question does not signify what Paul wants to know in a practical way. He already has his answer. According to Hultgren’s explanation, rather, Paul intends to have “the opportunity to head off a false inference.”128 As Paul mentioned in 7:5, sinful

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125 Hultgren, Paul’s Letter to the Romans: A Commentary, 276.; Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT., 456.
126 http://farcountry.wordpress.com/: “Diatribe is a rhetorical technique where one creates a dialog with a fictitious opponent. In this dialog, there is a back and forth questioning between the two people. This rhetorical technique is advantageous because it highlights the strengths of one person’s views and the weakness of the others.”
127 Lambrecht, S.J., The Wretched “I” and Its Liberation: Paul in Romans 7 and 8, 44.
passions are aroused by the law, and this could cause the misunderstanding that the law is sin or its source. Paul elucidates his own opposing opinion of this view of the law in a radical negational expression: μηγένοιτο (“Certainly not, by no means, of course not”). Paul insists that the law is not sin, but he then mentions that sin is revealed only through the law. He admits the fact that the law might give nuance which brings about such a misunderstanding.

In fact, nevertheless, as David Capes, Rodney Reeves, and E. Randolph Richards remark: “The power of sin takes advantage of the commandments and incites all kinds of sins, leading to death. The real culprit for Paul is not the law; it is sin. The law is good, just and holy, offering covenantal means to find forgiveness for sins. The law could not overcome the power of sin (and thus death).”

In this short section, Paul leads the readers to realize that the law and sin are inseparably related to each other, but the law itself is not sin. Klyne Snodgrass remarks that Paul portrays the role of the law as that of a vicegerent. J. R. Daniel Kirk understands, “sin, the true ruler, uses the would-be-good under-ruler as a tool to effect its ends.”

According to Paul’s explanation in v.8, sin does not newly spring up through the law, but sin cannot be reckoned apart from the law. In other words, “before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law.” (Romans 5:13) These

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129 David Capes, Rodney Reeves, and E. Randolph Richards, Rediscovering Paul: An Introduction to His World, Letters and Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 188.


verses, vv. 7-8, speak of "the law as bringing sin to knowledge."\(^{132}\)

In vv. 9-11, the first person singular pronoun *ego* appears for the first time in Romans 7:7-25. Paul speaks of the "I" who was once alive apart from the law (χωρὶς νόμου). Here there can be a controversial issue with relation to the interpretation of the "I". As some scholars maintain, the "I" could be Paul himself in his own pre-Christian biography.\(^{133}\) With regard to the "I" interpretation some others argue that Paul here remembers the story of the fall of Adam. Moreover, it can be proposed that the "I" signifies the people of Israel between Adam and Moses.\(^{134}\) As S. J. Chester remarks, "he creates a fusion of the giving of the command not to eat in the Garden of Eden, the giving of the Law at Sinai, and his own experience."\(^{135}\) However, it is noticeable that Paul’s overall purpose in Romans 7:7-12 is neither to uncover “an era of his younger years with accuracy” with relation to Paul’s own experience nor to clarify the identity of the “I”, but “to construct an argument,”\(^{136}\) even though he holds the view that with regard to the "I" interpretation Paul speaks of himself. The primary focus in these verses, vv.9-11, should not be on “who is the “I”?” but on Paul’s

\(^{132}\) Valérie Nicolet Anderson, “Tools for a Kierkegaardian Reading of Paul: Can Kierkegaard Help Us Understand the Role of the Law in Romans 7:7-12?” David Odell-Scott, ed., Reading Romans with Contemporary Philosophers and Theologians (New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 263.


\(^{134}\) James Dunn gives his comment on this controversy: “Most interpreters now agree that it would be a mistake to treat the passage autobiographically and to look for matching stages in Paul’s own experience.”: James D. G. Dunn, Romans 1-8, World Biblical Commentary, vol.38 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 382.

\(^{135}\) S.J. Chester, Conversion at Corinth: Perspectives on Conversion in Paul’s Theology and the Corinthian Church (London: Continuum, 2003), 187. n.129.

\(^{136}\) Hultgren, Paul’s Letter to the Romans: A Commentary, 278.
statement, “the commandment came” and “sin sprang to life and I died” (v.9). It can be said that Paul decided to specify the power of sin over the law in a personified way through the “I”, whatever or whoever the “I” refers to.

In verse 12, Paul concludes the first section. What Paul intends to emphasize in the first part is well described in this verse. Paul does not overlook the point that the law essentially has been intended to bring life (v.10b). Lambrecht points out that “although sin misused the law in such a tragic way,”137 the law itself, for Paul, is neither sin nor a source of sin. Paul intends to clarify that the law and commandment are still “holy, righteous, and good,”(v.12) regardless of the relation with sin. Although the law was used as “sin’s tool in deception and death,” Paul clearly realizes the law is innocent. Frank Thielman summarizes Paul’s main point throughout 7:7-12 as follows:

Outside the law sin lay dead, but when the commandment came, sin was able to use it as an entry point for attack and, by means of deception, as an instrument to kill those within its power (vv.8, 11). The fault belongs entirely to sin; the commandment, whose purpose was to give life (v.10), remains “holy and righteous and good” (v.12). The basic point of the passage, then, is clear: the law is not sin, nor ultimately at fault, in the situation that Paul describes in 5:20-12, 6:14-15 and 7:1-6; instead sin used the law as a tool for accomplishing its own purpose of death.138

Valérie Nicolet Anderson also summarizes Romans 7:7-12 with respect to the law and sin:

The law is manipulated by sin. However, it is not assimilated to the negative pole of sin/flesh/death by Paul. Paul objects to its role as saving power in the salvation process. It is unable to lead human beings to life, as it promised. Because of that, it is criticized. It remains holy, good, and just because its intentions were good. Only sin perverted

137 Lambrecht, S.J., The Wretched “I” and Its Liberation: Paul in Romans 7 and 8, 48.

Likewise, in vv.7-12, Paul intends to repudiate the wrong inference about the law, made on the basis of the Pauline statement in 7:5. Moreover, he emphasizes the power of sin with relation to the law. Paul ardently testifies in these verses the fact that the law is holy, just, and good, and sin simply uses the good law for bad ends.\(^{140}\)


Paul begins the next part with another rhetorical query: “Did that which is good, then, become death to me?” (v.13) He follows this question with his emphatic expression of denial again: μὴ γένοιτο (“by no means!”). Hultgren understands that this question can fairly be asked.

Paul has already made it clear that although the law can arouse sinful passions (7:5), the law itself is not sin, i.e., not a power or agent that draws one into sinful behaviour (7:7). The law does, however, provide an opportunity for sin to carry out its mission, leading to death (7:8, 11). Can one say, then, that, in spite of the fact that it is good, the law turns out to be deadly? That would seem to be a possible conclusion. Even though the law promises life to those who keep it, its commandments bring death, since in fact no one can keep them (7:10; cf.3:20).\(^{141}\)

However, Paul is not satisfied with this view. He cannot overlook the wrong conclusion that what is good becomes death to me. Paul firmly believes that the culprit is

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sin. Paul understands, “what the law does is to make clear that sin is a recognizable reality, for sin can be documented by means of the commandments of the law.”\textsuperscript{142} Paul upholds the goodness of the law as the good commandment of God. On the other hand, sin is always bad and sinful. Sin becomes worse and much more sinful as it involves willful rebellion against the law as God’s good will. In other words, the formation of the law reveals sin and has the function of disclosing sin as violation of God’s will, but that God’s will is embedded in the law still remains. Moo points out, as in vv.7-12, that “Paul places full responsibility for the death of \textit{egō} on sin, absolving the law from blame by making it an instrument (\textit{διὰ τὸ ἀγαθὸν}, “through the good”) used by sin.”\textsuperscript{143}

Likewise, Paul gives “a short statement on the correct understanding of the relationship between sin, the law, death and self (v.13).”\textsuperscript{144} Many scholars agree with the view that v.13 is a bridge between the first unit, vv.7-12, and the second unit, vv. 13(14)-25, summarizing the three main points: “the law is good, sin is made manifest through the law, and sin works through the law to produce death.” And at the same time, v.13 functions as the starting point for the next part, vv. 14-25. As Thielman states, Paul engages in a long explanation of the short statement (v.13) with those following verses which elaborate on v. 13.\textsuperscript{145}

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\textsuperscript{142} Ibid.
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\textsuperscript{143} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, NICNT., 479-80.
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\textsuperscript{145} Ibid.
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In v.14, such a conflict between the law and sin becomes deepened into another tension: a conflict between the flesh and sin with regard to the law. Paul focuses on the point that the law is good and spiritual\textsuperscript{146}, so that the law comes from God, from the Spirit. Yet Following the statement of this point, Paul says, “I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin” (v.14b). That is, in comparison to the “spiritual” feature of the law, Paul illuminates himself as “of the flesh” (σαρκικός, RSV: “carnal”; NIV and NET: “unspiritual”) which signifies typical human weakness. By speaking of himself as a being of the flesh, Paul is admitting that he is not able to thoroughly follow the law by himself.\textsuperscript{147} Here, then, there is a debatable issue, the “I” identity previously discussed. Concerning this verse, several interpretations of the \textit{egō} are argued. Some scholars maintain that Paul simply depicts the “I” in this verse as a human being.\textsuperscript{148} However, some others pay attention to the contrasted meaning of σαρκικός (“fleshly”) with pneumatikos. According to Moo’s, σαρκικός means “carnal, subject to, and under the influence of, this world”\textsuperscript{149} Therefore, such a meaning of σαρκικός seems to prove that the “I” must be a non-Christian who is described as a being “in the flesh” in 7:5. Nonetheless, we must not jump to the conclusion that the “I” in v.14 is a non-Christian. As σαρκικός is applied to Christians in 1 Cor. 3:1, Moo points out, “it is clear that this adjective,

\textsuperscript{146} Moo explains that Paul chose the word, “spiritual,” to set up “the strongest possible contrast between the “pneumatikos” law and the σάρκινος (fleshly) egō.”: Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, NICNT., 480-81.

\textsuperscript{147} Hultgren, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans: A Commentary}, 286.


\textsuperscript{149} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, NICNT., 481.
σαρκικός, itself does not require that the “I” be unregenerate.”\textsuperscript{150}  

The debate of the “I” identity continually arises in the same verse with regard to the participial phrase, \textit{πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν} (“sold as a slave to sin”). Considering this phrase, some interpreters demonstrate that Paul is not speaking of himself. That is, it is regarded that this verse is not written from an autobiographical perspective since Paul already stated that those who are Christians have died to sin and have been set free from sin (6:2; 7; 18; 22). For Paul, those who believe in Christ are no longer slaves to sin and they no longer resubmit themselves to sin.\textsuperscript{151} Thus, as a Christian Paul cannot say that he himself is dominated by sin. On the other hand, seeing the reason that Paul is speaking of being “sold under sin,” it can be indicated that the “I” in this verse is not a Christian.

Likewise, v.14 may commonly conclude that the “I” cannot be a Christian, regardless of whether the \textit{egō} is Paul himself or not. However, Hultgren provides a different interpretation of the “I” identity in this verse. He admits that Paul as a Christian cannot say he is “sold under sin” in light of all the statements regarding to those in Christ and their freedom from sin. Yet, Hultgren does not overlook different possibilities:

But that concern for consistency should not preclude the actual introspective analysis that Paul has set forth here, for it is an analysis that applies not only to himself but to all who have experienced the presence of God as the Holy One. It is only by faith, not inner experience, that one knows the self to be delivered from the power of sin. And it is by that same faith that one has the freedom and the ability to speak of the self as known to one’s own mind and heart. It is precisely when one has the certainty of divine pardon that one can confess one’s own sinfulness (Ps. 51:3). Moreover, in spite of the declaration of freedom from sin for those who are in Christ, Paul nevertheless still finds it necessary to exhort his readers to consider themselves dead to sin (6:11) and to work

\textsuperscript{150} Ibid, 481.

\textsuperscript{151} Andy Woods, “\textit{Romans 7} and Sanctification,” 5.
at “actualizing this condition” (6:12-13). The history of Christian experience illustrates that those who know themselves to be justified and at peace with God continue to consider themselves in ordinary, empirical life as being in bondage to sin and in need of forgiveness and freedom.\textsuperscript{152}

C. E. B. Cranfield maintains that the “I” in v.14 can suitably be applied to the Christian because the Christian continues to have a sinful nature so that he/she can be considered as “sold as a slave to sin” and “under the power of sin.”\textsuperscript{153} As Andy Woods remarks, the fact that the “I” mentions the law as “spiritual” in v.14 is sufficient to indicate that Paul intends to express the Christian as the “I”.\textsuperscript{154}

As the above examination of the egô identity in v.14a demonstrates, the “I” cannot be confined to only one possibility. Moo brings up a significant question: “even though it is true that Christians are still much influenced by sin and will, perhaps, never finally overcoming sin’s influence in this life, we question whether Romans 6 allows us to say that the Christian is under the power of sin.”\textsuperscript{155} Considering earlier verses in Romans and other letters of Paul (3:9; 6:2, 6, 11, 18-22; Gal. 4:3; 21), Paul clarifies that those who are under sin are unregenerated people. The Christian is delivered from the condition of being, “under the power of sin.” Therefore, who the “I” signifies, not only in this verse but throughout 7:14-


\textsuperscript{153} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, NICNT., 481.; John M. Espy, “Paul’s ‘Robust Conscience’ Re-examined,” \textit{NTS} 31 (1985), 173.

\textsuperscript{154} Woods, “Romans 7 and Sanctification,” 10.

\textsuperscript{155} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, NICNT., 481.
25, is still controversial.

In the next verses, vv.15-20, Paul describes the experience of inner conflict in the “I”.

According to Leander Keck’s commentary, Paul reveals “the disparity between intention or will and the actual deed”\(^{156}\) in these verses. In v.15, Paul begins to show how the characteristic of being “fleshly” is displayed by way of confessing what the “I” does and what the “I” wills. The conflict, Moo explains, “between “willing” (\(\text{θέλω}\))\(^{157}\) and “doing” (\(\text{ποιέω, πράσσω, and καταργάζομαι}\)) dominates the narration of this conflict (vv.15-20) and the inference Paul draws from it (v.21).”\(^{158}\) Paul confesses that the “I” does not do what the “I” wants\(^{159}\) to do (v.15b). The “I” evidently has an idea of what the “I” truly wants to do, but the “I” is incapable of doing it. Rather, the “I” does what the “I” hates (v.15c). The “I”’s agony is in the fact that the “I” cannot understand such an ironical consequence.

In v.16, Paul compares the fleshly “I” with the law under the power of sin. As if the law cannot be obeyed, regardless of the original intention of the law, Paul confesses in this verse, the “I” is unable to accomplish what the “I” wants to do. In other words, Paul explains

\(^{156}\) Keck, Romans, 187.

\(^{157}\) Hultgren explains, “although he [Paul] does not use the noun “will” (\(\text{θέλημα}\)) or the full phrase “the will of God” (\(\text{τὸ \ Hebrew \ θέλημα τού \ θεοῦ}\)) in this section (a phrase that appears at Rom 12:2; Gal 1:4; 1 Thess 4:3; 5:18), he uses the active verb “to will” (\(\text{θέλω}\)), which is translated in modern versions (including the RSV, NIV, and NRSV) as “to want.”: Hultgren, Paul’s Letter to the Romans: A Commentary, 287.

\(^{158}\) Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT., 482.

\(^{159}\) Hultgren elucidates the slightly different meaning of “to want” from that of “to will”: “The verb “to want,” however, misses the intensity of the verb “to will’ something in the moral sphere. To want is to long for or to desire something, a matter of the heart as well as the mind, and often more so. But to will within the moral sphere is to have a mental resolve to do something, as expressed at 7:23 (referring to the “mind” in its capacity to delight in God’s law), or to refrain from something, in a conscious way. It requires effort.”: Hultgren, Paul’s Letter to the Romans: A Commentary, 287-88.
that the “I” does what the “I” hates, even if the “I” has the will to do goodness, as though, even if it is good, holy, and a delight, the law at most functions as revealing sin. Hultgren gives his comments on this confession of v.16, “the will to do good is frustrated by sin as a power that dwells within the self, so that he is incapable of doing the very thing that he wills. In this respect, Paul can say that the law is good, i.e., it teaches the will of God (cf.2:18).”

That is, the law seems to oppose God’s will, but such opposition is sin’s work. Rather, in fact, through the law, one can be guided into realizing the true, perfect will of God. In the same vein, Paul expresses the incapability of the “I” and the law.

In v.17, Paul clarifies that it is no longer the “I” oneself who does it, but sin dwells in the “I”. He makes two things clear: he admits to doing what he does not will, but the “doing” is not actually his own responsibility. However, I want to raise a question here: Should we, human beings, be exempted from responsibility for our wrong deeds, including moral behavior? It should not be overlooked that such an interpretation as that mentioned previously can make human beings ignore their roles in the process of accomplishing God’s will. Nevertheless, one noteworthy thing is that Paul does not transfer responsibility for doing wrong to external factors. In fact, he clarifies the fact that the cause of the “I”’s behaviours is inside the “I” oneself. In other words, Paul identifies the actual doer of the “I”’s wrong-doing. It is sin, resident in the self.

\[\text{160} \text{ Hultgren, } \textit{Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Commentary}, 289.\]

\[\text{161} \text{ Moo, } \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, \text{ NICNT.}, 484-85.\]

\[\text{162} \text{ Keck, } \textit{Romans}, 189.\]
not under the control of sin, this verse also supports the argument that the “I” in 7:14-25 is the non-Christian.

However, those who maintain that the “I” is a Christian in those verses present a different interpretation of this verse. This verse indicates: Paul understands that there is a distinction between the will of the “I” which wants to do good, and the power of sin which resides inside the “I”. As Paul mentions, the “I” is inhabited by the power of sin at present. Hultgren explains what the tension between the self and sin means for the Christian as follows:

The ἐγώ is not itself an instrument of sin, but sin as a power occupies the self and dominates one’s life so that one fails to do the good and does what one does not will to do. In the case of those who are “in Christ,” the self is liberated from that power in principle and is destined to share all that faith in Christ entails, but while living in the present era the power of sin is still real, and it makes itself known in one’s inability to do what God wills and even what the enlightened self wills in harmony with the will of God. Sin is not simply an external power that leads a person into disobedience to the conscience; it is a power that dwells within a person, cohabiting with the will and opposing the will, thereby causing one to fail to do the good that the will seeks to do.163

The “I” identity is also a debatable issue in verse 17.

In verses 18-20, Paul reconfirms the clear coexistence of the fleshly “I” and the power of sin within the “I”. After Paul analyzes “the human condition and the role of the law in relation to sin,” he firstly emphasizes that the “I” is divided into two aspects: the “I” who wills what is good and the “I” under control of sin, indwelling the fleshly “I”, which does evil. We can infer Paul’s anthropology from this division. According to this analysis, Paul

shows his dualistic anthropological understanding in these verses. In general, Paul’s anthropology is understood in a monistic way. Gundry maintains, however, “although Paul’s anthropology is essentially monistic rather than dualistic, there is an undeniable element of anthropological dualism as well.”\(^{164}\) Paul considers the flesh to be a part of the person which is especially unprotected from sin. On this view, as Moo explains, “τουτ’ ἐστιν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου (v.18a: “that is, in my flesh”)\(^{165}\) qualifies the absolute assertion that “good does not dwell in me”\(^{166}\) Thus, it can be said that Paul regards that the will to do good is a part of the ἐγό and the flesh under the power of sin is another part of the “I”.

In v.21, Paul discovers the law (the principle)\(^{167}\) that evil is close at hand when the “I” wants to do the good. And, in vv.22-23, he explains the principle he has discovered in v.21. The principle is in the same vein as Paul’s confession spoken in the previous verses. In these verses, vv.21-23, Paul contrasts “inner being” with “my members” as outer being.

\(^{164}\) “Paul usually regards people as wholes, in relationship to other things, instead of, as the Greeks did, as divided into two distinct parts, body (or flesh) and soul (or spirit, or mind).”: R.H. Gundry, *Sōma in Biblical Theology with Emphasis on Pauline Anthropology*, SNTSMS 29. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 137.

\(^{165}\) Moo explains two anthropological understandings of this phrase (“that is, in my flesh [in my sinful nature]”) with respect to the issue of the Christian or the non-Christian as the “I” identity: “Those who find in this passage [vv.14-25] a description of Christian experience think this phrase qualifies the statement that “good does not dwell in me” by leaving room for the Holy Spirit. On this view, *sarx* could mean “the whole fallen human nature” (Cranfield; cf. Nygren). Others, however, who think Paul is describing an unregenerate situation, take *tovt’ ἐστιν* as implying not that there is something besides *sarx* “in me,” but that *sarx* is what “I” am: “nothing good dwells in me, I who am a person fallen and alienated from God.””: Alexander Sand, *Der Begriff ‘Sarx’ in den paulinischen Hauptbriefen*, Biblische Untersuchungen 2 (Regensburg: Pustet, 1967), 190-91.: cited in Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT., 485-86.

\(^{166}\) Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT., 486.

\(^{167}\) Paul uses the term, νόμος, which is generally translated as law and means a principle. In the NASV, the term is translated as principle, but in RSV, NIV, and NRSV, it is translated as law.: Hultgren, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans: A Commentary*, 290.
James Dunn argues that “this inner division and contradiction of the “I” is matched by an equivalent division and contradiction in the law: the law as used by sin, and the law as indicating the will of God.”\textsuperscript{168} In other words, Paul describes in vv.21-23 that within the “I” there is a conflicting struggle between the law of God and the law of sin. Paul describes such an ongoing struggle as a war between “inner being” and “my members” (vv.22-23). Hultgren portrays the struggle as “a dichotomy between the delight in the law of God, located within Paul’s inner being (\textit{ἔσω ἄνθρωπος}), and some other law (\textit{ἕτερος νόμος}) that conducts warfare against the law of his mind (\textit{νοῦς}).”\textsuperscript{169}

Especially in v.23, Paul’s statement reaches a climax of his dual understanding of the law. As previously mentioned several times, the law for Paul is holy, spiritual, good, and just. Yet, at the same time, it plays functions to stimulate sin to work. Paul clearly shows his view on the duality of the law by contrasting the law of God (\textit{ὁ νόμος τοῦ θεοῦ}) with which the mind agrees (“the law of my mind,” \textit{τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ νοὸς μου}) with another law (\textit{ἕτερος νόμος}) as the law of sin (\textit{ὁ νόμος τῆς ἁμαρτίας}).\textsuperscript{170} Moo explains that this duality for Paul does not signify a distinction “between two different laws but between the different operations and effects of the same law.”\textsuperscript{171} Likewise, Paul begins to reveal the duality of the law in relation


\textsuperscript{169} Hultgren, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans: A Commentary}, 290.

\textsuperscript{170} Jan Lambrecht argues that there are fivefold uses of the law in vv.21-23. “In verse 21 \textit{nomos} is certainly not the Mosaic law but seems to mean (1) a “rule, principle” which can be recognized as such through experience. In verses 22-23 there are four more uses: (2) “the law of God” (=the Mosaic law; see also v.25b); (3) “the law of my mind;” (4) “the law of sin” (see also v.25b); (5) “another law.””: Lambrecht, S.J., \textit{The Wretched “I” and Its Liberation: Paul in Romans 7 and 8}, 53-54.

\textsuperscript{171} Klyne Snodgrass, “Spheres of Influence: A Possible Solution for the Problem of Paul and the Law,” \textit{JSNT} 32
to sin in vv.7-12 followed by expressing the duality of the “I” with regard to “willing” and “doing,” and reaffirming the duality of the law which has the two different functions within the “I.” In other words, Paul describes fierce conflict in the “wretched (ταλαίπωρος) I” through the three steps (vv.7-12; 13-20; 21-23). This passage culminates in Paul’s concern about the wretchedness of the “I” in vv.24-25.

In v.24, Paul keenly feels the distress of the “I” in the same vein as what has been confessed throughout the previous verses of Romans 7 and the “I” now pleads for rescue from “this body of death.” In particular, the debatable issue of the “I” reaches the peak of discussion in this verse. Most exegetes have their own views on this issue. In general, these may be summarized in two exegetical understandings of the “I”. According to Lambrecht, some exegetes demonstrate that this “I” is the Christian and the outcry of the “I” in v.24a signifies the present condition of the Christian. Those who consider the “I” as the Christian, moreover, interpret the future tense expression, “who will rescue me?” in v.24b from an eschatological perspective. That is, they understand that “rescue” means final salvation.

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172 Frank Thielman summarizes this flow in his own way: “In Romans 7, Paul’s purpose is to show that the law is not evil but holy and righteous and good. In order to do this he shows how the law multiplies sin by bringing certain sinful actions to mind but providing no possibility of overcoming them (7:7-13) and how the individual is so dominated by the flesh that on his or her own strength it is impossible to do the law (7:14-25). The first observation is indeed made from the standpoint of the solution rather than from the standpoint of the plight, for it views the law in a new perspective unknown in the Jewish world; but it neither argues against legalism nor implies the abrogation of the law. The second section, likewise, is not motivated by an attack on Jewish legalism but simply makes a familiar observation – that it is frequently difficult to do what one knows to be right – in order to show that it is the individual and sin, not the law, which are responsible for the human plight of disobedience to God.” Frank Thielman, *From Plight to Solution: A Jewish Framework for Understanding Paul’s View of the Law in Galatians and Romans* (New York: E.J. Brill, 1989), 110-11.
They believe “this body of death” signifies “the “I”’s failure as a Christian to satisfy God’s righteous demands in the present moment.”173 They understand, moreover, that “when the “I” cries out for deliverance from “this body of death,” the “I” is crying out for deliverance from everything that constrains in this life, including physical death as well.”174

On the other hand, however, other exegetes who regard the wretched “I” as the non-Christian, interpret “the deliverance from this body of death” (v.24b) as “Christ’s redeeming death on the cross and its fruit: our justification, already now, in history.” Lambrecht points out, “that deliverance is no longer future in the real sense, only from the narrative point of view.”175 Moo considers the latter standpoint more persuasive than the former. “It might be asked whether, if a Christian were speaking, the question would have been “who (τίς) will rescue me?” A Christian, longingly anticipating his or her final deliverance from the sins and woes of this life, would not have been expected to ask about the identity of the deliverer.”176 Although the identity of the “I” is controversial, it is clear that Paul primarily focuses on the wretchedness of the “I” in this verse.

Nevertheless, in verse 25a, Paul makes a confusing statement: “Thanks be to God – through Jesus Christ our Lord!” The anguish and plea of the wretched “I” in v.24 is immediately replaced by Paul’s own thanksgiving. This seems a sudden conversion, from


175 Lambrecht, S.J., The Wretched “I” and Its Liberation: Paul in Romans 7 and 8, 54-55.

176 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT., 495.
plight to solution. A more puzzling statement appears in v.25b, that does not seem to be natural since “after the gratitude for rescue expressed in the first part, the restatement of the plight is unexpected.”¹⁷⁷ Some scholars pay attention to “the apparent awkwardness of this sequence”¹⁷⁸ [of verses 23-25], namely, the locus of verse 25b. They demonstrate that the second part of verse 25 might have been misplaced. That is, verse 25b should come before verse 24. Following this argument, the order of the passage should probably be rearranged as follows: vv.23-25b-24-25a.¹⁷⁹ Other scholars maintain that verse 25b is “a copyist’s marginal comment that was added later.”¹⁸⁰ Of course, most scholars disagree with the view that the verse was added by a copyist, and the statement of v.25b is generally considered as part of the original text. Yet, Cranfield demonstrates that “a mature Christian who looks forward to full deliverance from the current “not yet” of salvation”¹⁸¹ would not interpret the statement of v.25b as “an altogether appropriate conclusion”¹⁸²

How then can verse 25b be understood? Many biblical scholars have discussed the “I” identity, especially whether it is that of the Christian or the non-Christian in vv.14-25. In

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¹⁷⁷ Keck, Romans, 191.

¹⁷⁸ Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT., 495.

¹⁷⁹ A. Jülicher and Rudolf Bultmann make the suggestion that “v.25b is a secondary gloss intended as a summary of vv.15-23, which should therefore be omitted.”: Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans, 368.; C.H. Dodd, The Epistle to the Romans, MNTC (New York & London: Harper & Bros, 1932)

¹⁸⁰ Keck, Romans, 192.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans, 369.
particular, verse 25b raises a crucial question about the “I”. However, such tension between interpretations can never be clearly resolved since each interpretation could be appropriate according to the perspective from which the verse is interpreted. Moo’s explanation of the controversial issue in v.25 provides a suitable example. Moo understands two possible views of the “I” in verse 25, and he maintains that one can justify one’s view on it according to one’s own standpoint as follows:

On either view, the thanksgiving is anticipatory of a victory yet to come: on the regenerate view, anticipatory of the final deliverance from the “mortal body” depicted in 8:10, 23; on the unregenerate view, anticipatory of deliverance from sin and death depicted in 8:2-4. Still, this is less of a problem for the regenerate view, because it allows for both the thanksgiving and the confession of dividedness to occur at the same moment. On the unregenerate view, it must be assumed that Paul, the Christian, has at this point interjected his own thanksgiving. And perhaps it could be argued that the use of the plural (“our”) rather than the “I” style of the surrounding context signals the presence of such an interjection.183

Clearly controversy still exists. It is impossible and meaningless to try to determine the only identity of the “I”. Rather, what we need to primarily focus on is discovering what Paul truly speaks of in this verse. Regardless of the “I” identity, the “I” is troubled with one’s own wretchedness. That is, the “I” discovers its incapability of fulfilling the law of God in Romans 7:7-25. As Stephen Westerholm remarks, Paul intends to demonstrate in this passage as a whole “the utter moral impotence of humanity under the law” in gloomy contrast to the glorious picture of redemption in Romans 6 and 8.184 We can properly conclude that in this last verse Paul intends to recapitulate the “I”’s helplessness toward the

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183 Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT, 495-96.

law, which he has stated throughout those verses. We may be reasonably sure that Paul wants to conclude this chapter by summarizing the entire argument of verses 13-25.

In sum, through this passage, Paul reminds the Roman Christians, especially gentile Christians, of the original positive nature of the law which is consistently good, holy, and just. The law may be considered as a stumbling block for gentile Christians, but he does not overlook the positive aspect of the law that God leads and instructs them through God’s ongoing voice embedded in the law. Nevertheless, at the same time, Paul shows the total impotence of the law that cannot help humans under the power of sin with regard to the Judean doctrine of the law. Paul here denies all the optimistic views on humans that reside outside the grace of Christ and the power of the Spirit. From the Christian perspective, he obtains this conviction of human helplessness through thorough anthropological analysis. According to Paul, no one can be righteous and holy by observing the law (Romans 3:20a). Rather, humans come to awareness of their own identity as sinners. By probing the mutual relations among the law, sin and death, Paul evidently shows human effort, which intends to become righteous through the law, is of no use. Likewise, Paul places Romans 7 right before Romans 8, which speaks of Christian self-understanding, since one’s self-understanding as a sinner is important and is well connected to self-understanding of the Christian. Moreover, through this close connection between chapters 7 and 8, Paul intends to present the possibility of Christian sanctification in spite of human moral, spiritual impotence.

c. Christian Sanctification: Fulfilling the Law through the Spirit (8:1-4)

It can be said that Romans 7 corresponds to the bottom part of Eugene Lowry’s plot
To be more precise, we experience a moment right before the stage of *aha*, which “discloses the clue to resolution.” The next chapter needs to be lifted up toward good news. Romans 8 has such a function. As Leander Keck summarizes Romans 7, “in chapter 7 Paul argues that in the self sin is a resident power stronger than the will to do the good required by the good law (7:12, 17, 20, 23). The situation is so dire that he characterized the self as sin’s slave (7:14) and as a prisoner of war needing rescue (7:24).” And it can be explained by Keck’s remark on the connection between 7:25 and 8:1 that the first subunit of Romans 8, vv.1-4, is designed as an elaboration of what Paul has mentioned in Romans 7: “Now the deliverance “through Jesus Christ our Lord” (7:25) is spelled out, first by explaining how it occurred through Christ (8:1-4), then by portraying the role of the Spirit as God’s power now residing in the self.”

Romans 8:1-4 can be divided into two units: vv.1-2 and vv.3-4. Lembrecht argues that, considering their content, the expressions “now no condemnation” (v.1) and “set me free from” (v.2) are connected with v.24b. A verbless proclamation in v.1 is warranted by v.2 (indicated by “because”). Those verses 1-2, moreover, are warranted by verses 3-4. Keck

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188 Ibid., 195.

elucidates that “these verses first state the soteriological import of God’s act in Christ, then its moral purpose/result – living according to the Spirit rather than according to the flesh.”

In verse 1, Paul asserts that “there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” Paul declares “the gospel in the idiom of a courtroom.” Those who are in Christ Jesus are acquitted of their guilt through their participation within Christ. In verse 2, Paul speaks of the foundation that there is “no condemnation for those who are in Christ.” “No condemnation” means liberation from the bondage of sin. Moo interprets that “a liberation has taken place through the Holy Spirit, and this liberation is the basis on which the person “in Christ” is forever saved from condemnation.” John Bertone remarks, “the Mosaic law in the previous epoch intended to produce life when it was observed (7:10) but fell desperately short of its potential because of its nexus with sin (7:7-9, 11, 13); this had the opposite and adverse effect of producing death (7:9-11, 13).” However, Bertone pays attention to the new era of the Spirit (Romans 8). “As 7:6 indicates, the new era of the Spirit has replaced the former era of the law. This idea is precisely what Paul resumes in 8:2.”

Yet, at the beginning of verse 2 there is ambiguity. What is the law of the Spirit of life? Various interpretations of the law (νόμος) in this verse are proposed. The law of the Spirit of life in this verse is, on the one hand, interpreted as “binding authority” of the Spirit

190 Keck, Romans, 195-96.

191 Ibid., 196.

192 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT., 504.

or “power” of the Spirit as an ordered and regular behavior of the Spirit. This understanding indicates there is “discontinuity between the new era of the Spirit and the old era of the law in that the Spirit replaces the law as the basis of ethics.”\textsuperscript{194} E.P. Sanders affirms that Paul here is using wordplay, a metaphorical uses of a term.\textsuperscript{195}

On the other hand, it is demonstrated that the law (νόμος) does mean the Mosaic law.\textsuperscript{196} Scholars who maintain this interpretation, according to Moo’s analysis, view the Mosaic law from two perspectives:

In the context of the flesh, it is misunderstood as nothing more than a series of demands. As such, the law becomes an instrument of sin, leading to death (7:5, 7-13). However, in the context of the Spirit, the law is seen in all its dimensions – as promise and as calling for faith – and becomes an instrument of righteousness leading to life. This dual understanding of the law, in fact, is said to be found in the immediately preceding paragraph where Paul contrasts the “law of God” with “the law of sin” (7:22-23, 25b). What Paul is saying here is that the Spirit for the first time puts the law of God in its proper focus and context, and enables it thereby to free the sinner from the narrow and death-dealing misuse of the law.\textsuperscript{197}

However, this second interpretation is strongly rejected by Heikki Räisänen. He argues that the first law, that is, the law of the Spirit of life, cannot signify the Mosaic law. In particular, he emphasizes the point that verse 3 is saying that God fulfills “what the law was powerless

\textsuperscript{194} Ibid., 179.


\textsuperscript{196} Those who argue that the term νόμος means the Torah include U. Wilckens, J. Dunn, E. Lohse, Peter von der Osten-Sacken, Eckart Reinmuth, Eberhard Jüngel, Bo Reicke, Klyne Snodgrass and R. Jewett. Those who reject that view and maintain that the term is used metaphorically to express a figure of speech include C. Cranfield, J. Fitzmyer, D. Moo, H. Räisänen, L. Keck and M. Winger.: Hultgren, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans: A Commentary}, 297.

\textsuperscript{197} Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, NICNT., 505.
to do” through God’s own son. As Brendan Byrne states, for him and other scholars, who support this interpretation, it is evident that “the ethical possibility in the Spirit” is shown up “against the impossibility under the law.” However, I believe that we need to refer to Moo’s view on the new ethical standard. Although Moo belongs to the scholarly group that support the first interpretation of νόμος, he believes that “Romans 8:2 does not advocate the idea of a new ethical standard of the Spirit that [totally] takes the place of the Mosaic law.” “He does not use νόμος to suggest that the Spirit is, or conveys, a norm that functions like, or can be substituted for, the Mosaic law.” That is, even though νόμος is not identified as the Mosaic law, it must have “an association with the Mosaic law with respect to ethics.” As Bertone states, accordingly, “the phrase “the law of the Spirit of life” designates the Spirit’s life-giving function in continuity with the Mosaic law in that the Spirit is associated with ethics.”

In verses 3-4, Paul explains that the law is still holy, good, and spiritual, but human sinful nature and incapability of observing the law cause the law to “be frustrated, made ineffective, and thus weakened as a force in human life.” Eventually, God’s entering into


200 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT., 507.


the human realm by sending his son is substituted for the weakness of the law. That is to say, “God condemned (κατέκρινεν, “He condemned”) sin in sinful man” by sending his Son and allowing crucifixion of the Son. Lambrecht points out that in 8:1-3 Paul answers his own question in 7:24 and responds to the statement previously addressed in 7:25.

In 8:1-3 the deliverance of the Christian from the law of sin and of death, as well as the condemnation of sin in the flesh, is attributed to God himself. God has effected this by sending his Son Jesus Christ in a flesh similar to our sinful flesh. All this constitutes a lengthy answer to the question of 7:24b and, at the same time, a development of the short thanksgiving in 7:25a.203

Verse 4 can be interpreted as the purpose or the result of the previous verse. In verse 3, Paul addresses the inability of the law and God’s action of condemning sin that weakens the law. In verse 4, Paul states what the condemning action of God intended or resulted in. In particular, Paul places another significant idea in the forefront. Paul gives his attention to the righteous requirement of the law in verse 4. He pays attention to a hidden message embedded in the saving act of the Son Christ on the cross. He maintains that the fulfillment of the requirement of the law is also what God in his saving act truly intends: “so that [in order that] the just requirement [δικαίωμα] of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk [live] not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit”(v.4). Leander Keck explains that the just requirement [δικαίωμα] “refers to what the law rightly requires, namely, conformity to God’s will and character, what the law as such is all about.”204

203 Lambrecht, S.J., The Wretched “I” and Its Liberation: Paul in Romans 7 and 8, 98.

204 Keck, Romans, 200.; On the question of what behaviour is appropriate for those who are members of God’s people, E.P. Sanders answers, “the law’s demands must be fulfilled, not in all its particular requirements (specifically circumcision, food laws and Sabbath observance), but in its basic demand of love for one’s neighbor (Rom 8:4; 13:8-10; Gal. 5:14).”: Sanders, Paul, the Law and the Jewish People, 93-135.; David G.
Paul then presents another key concept along with the just requirement (δικαίωμα): that is the concept, “fulfillment.” Paul uses the term “fulfillment” with relation to the requirement. Moo argues that “Paul does not separate the fulfillment of the law from the behavior of Christians. But this does not mean that Christian behavior is how the law is fulfilled.” Keck points out the fact, rather, that “the text [v.4] does not speak of our doing the requirement (δικαίωμα), but of its being fulfilled in us.” That is to say, God fulfills the requirement of the law through the Spirit which resides in us, and, moreover, enables us to live [walk] according to the Spirit.

Considering the entire book of Romans, Paul knows better than anyone the fact that the requirement of the law cannot be fulfilled by the human capability of obeying the law. Paul thus implies in this verse that sin should be replaced by the Spirit in order that the law of God is fulfilled. In other words, through the enabling Spirit, Christians should be able to live not according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit. Moreover, “Christian behavior is the necessary mark of those in whom this fulfillment takes place. God not only provides in Christ the full completion of the law’s demands for the believer, He also sends the Spirit into his or her heart to empower a new obedience to His demands.”


Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT., 517.

Keck, Romans, 200. Keck continues to explain, the fact that the passive voice, “fulfilled” is used indicates that “God is the doer who actualizes the right requirement of the law in us.”

Ibid., 197-200.

Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT., 517.
requirement of the law is fulfilled only by the Spirit, but the fulfillment of the law comes to be embodied through their behaviors.

4. Summary: The Law and Sanctification

Paul’s understanding of the law shows the dual impact of the law in the order of justification and sanctification. According to Paul, the law itself is not a dominating device. Yet, when the law is related to sin, it seems to come up with a negative impact to the Christian life. On the other hand, when the law is reilluminated by the Spirit, it positively works in the journey toward the sanctified life. It is evident that the law plays a dynamic role in justification and sanctification. In this short paragraph, the core theological meanings embedded in Paul’s understanding of the law in Romans 7-8 will be summarized.

First, the law for Paul seems to contain a tension between Judean conviction on the law and Christian conviction on the law, but the tension has continuity. Some scholars assert that Paul struggles with contradiction and disconnection between Judean understanding of law and Christian understanding of law. That is to say, they maintain that for Paul the native conviction on the law is completely different from the new conviction on the Spirit. Thus, it is argued that Paul cannot help but struggle to hold together the former with the latter.²⁰⁹

As Dunn and Thielman demonstrate, however, it can be understood that the textual

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²⁰⁹ Sanders contend with his conviction of covenantal nomism that “the textual tension is evidence of Paul’s struggle to hold on to two sets of convictions: one from his previous commitment to covenantal nomism and the other from his current convictions on the Spirit.” However, mistakenly, “both Sanders and Räisänen have taken an extreme position on this and explain the textual tensions as straightforward contradictions, the direct result of a conflict between Paul’s Christian present with his Jewish past.” Bertone, “The Law of the Spirit:” Experience of the Spirit and Displacement of the Law in Romans 8:1-16, 308-09.
tension (in Romans 7 and 8) is explained “as a description of the two-sided perspective of law observance operating in two separate epochs: Law observance impeded by the power of sin in the previous epoch and Law observance enabled by the new power of the Spirit in the present epoch.”\textsuperscript{210} In other words, Paul understands that those two convictions on the law and the Spirit are continuously related each other in the same flow.\textsuperscript{211} As in Romans 8:4, Paul shows “how the role of the Spirit is harmonious with the role of the law.”\textsuperscript{212} For Paul, the law is not a distinct element for Christian sanctification from the Spirit.

Second, the interpretation of the “I” in Romans 7 should not focus on a certain object or group. Rather, it would be better that we embody more extensive possibilities in order to solve an everyday conundrum which will follow below. Most contemporary biblical scholars assert that the “I” in Romans 7 is not the Christian, but the pre-Christian. Their argument seems reasonable referring to Paul’s previous verses in Romans. However, the more their interpretation of the “I” as the pre-Christian gradually obtains its validity, the more “the question remains why so many Christian formerly and nowadays find in Romans 7 a telling description of dimensions of their own Christian existence.”\textsuperscript{213} Most Christians would not be

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{210} Ibid., 226-46, 309.
\item \textsuperscript{211} Thomas Thielman remarks that “Paul does not criticize ‘doing’ the law, but only failure to do it. … Paul has nothing against ‘doing’ or against the concept of human as ‘doer,’ but claims that outside the believing community it is impossible to keep the law. Paul’s assessment of human plight of disobedience is not inconsistent with Jewish ideas.”: Thielman, \textit{From Plight to Solution: A Jewish Framework for Understanding Paul’s View of the Law in Galatians and Romans}, 120-21.
\item \textsuperscript{212} Bertone, \textit{“The Law of the Spirit:” Experience of the Spirit and Displacement of the Law in Romans 8:1-16}, 245.
\item \textsuperscript{213} Lambrecht, S.J., \textit{The Wretched “I” and Its Liberation: Paul in Romans 7 and 8}, 88.
\end{itemize}
able to deny the fact that they themselves sense the existential struggling as the “I” in Romans 7.\textsuperscript{214} Why? Exegetically it may be important to interpret the “I” as a certain object. But such an elaboration on interpreting the “I” in a single way may miss the possibility of broader understanding of what Paul intends to present through the meaning of the “I”. From a different perspective on this issue, Christians would be included in the “I”. As a result, the inner struggling of the “I” may be considered and interpreted with relation to “\textit{simul iustus et peccator}.”\textsuperscript{215} Yet, even in the case that it is maintained that the “I” is the pre-Christian, the Christian cannot be satisfied with being freed from sin and the law. As spoken of in Romans 7-8, it should be preached and emphasized that the Christian, who is freed from sin and the law, needs to bear fruits of new life through the Spirit.\textsuperscript{216}

Third, we should not be satisfied with only knowing and observing the law. That is, those who seek sanctified lives should be concerned about fulfilling the law. Veronica Koperski writes in her research of Paul’s view of the law, Paul points out that “knowledge of God’s will does not ensure right standing before God; obedience to God’s will is also necessary.”\textsuperscript{217} Human roles in the law are to know the law and make efforts to observe the law.

But those steps cannot be considered as the fulfillment of the law. Moreover, we

\begin{footnotes}
\item[214] Lischer, \textit{A Theology of Preaching: They Dynamics of the Gospel}, 38.
\end{footnotes}
humans cannot expect a mark of the sanctified life only through those steps. The fulfillment of the law is the role of the Spirit. The Christian finally steps into the journey of sanctification within the process of fulfilling the law by the role of the Spirit. Sanctification is not accomplished only through knowing and observing the law. Sanctification becomes possible not only when we grasp God’s will embedded in the law through the Spirit, but also when we live in union with Christ Jesus who fulfilled the law.

The formation of the law plays a function to disclose sin against God’s will, but God’s will implanted in the law remains. Christians begin to be sanctified when they discover God’s will and live according to God’s guidance. As Jouette M. Bassler argues, the Holy Spirit resolves a final puzzle of the law. In my own way of thinking, the Spirit also accelerates the journey of sanctification. “Paul indicates in several places that in some say the law will be the standard of judgment for everyone, even for those who are not ‘under’ it. It is now clear that this is so because the law’s function as an expression of God’s righteous will does not change. Those who are led and empowered by the Spirit will fulfill this righteous will.”218

Conclusion

For Christian ethical living, this chapter has introduced several terms, and has focused on the law and examined its various implications for ethics. Yet, this thesis does not seek for a methodological technique through the law for ethics in preaching. Rather this

thesis intends to discover the significant locus and potential of the law for Christian ethical living with dynamic relation to various theological, homiletical foundations: justification and sanctification, law and gospel. In that sense, the next chapter turns to theological concepts with regard to a life-long process of Christian ethical living. What then do we need to explore in order to build up a sound theological foundation for a further discussion of ethical living and the law?
Chapter II
Theological Perspective of the Christian Ethical Living:
Justification and Sanctification by Martin Luther

Justification and sanctification are significant theological concepts which need to be preferentially probed for a deeper discussion of Christian ethical living and homiletical approaches for ethics. Christian life is formed and grown on the foundation of God’s transforming grace of justification and sanctification. Unfortunately, however, many sermons seem to fail in connecting justification with sanctification with relation to divine grace embedded in both concepts. This chapter will examine justification and sanctification as a life-long process through which the Christian life as “the free personal appropriation of God’s grace in faith, love, and hope”\(^{219}\) is formed and becomes mature. In this theological framework, the law may find its new potential for ethics in preaching with inseparable relation to the gospel.

Martin Luther is a key theologian who contributed to the doctrinal clarification of both theological concepts. One can say that he seems to integrate the doctrine of sanctification into justification and to diminish the significance of sanctification to prioritize justification over sanctification. That evaluation may be caused by his strong intention to be separated from the medieval soteriological flaws. For Luther, in fact, justification and sanctification are in an inseparable relationship. While tracing Luther’s understanding of the inseparable relationship between the two doctrinal concepts from his primary works and

\(^{219}\) Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 175.
secondary resources about his theology, this chapter will reframe his twofold dialectic using theological concepts such as faith, righteousness, and justification. Such a twofold framework of his doctrinal concepts may help explicate the inseparable relationship of justification and sanctification. Furthermore, through exploring Luther’s understanding of justification and sanctification, a theological foundation for ethical implications in homiletics will be discussed. Moreover, divine and human roles in sanctification and their homiletical implications will be probed primarily through Luther’s anthropological principle, *Simul Iustus et Peccator*.

A. Luther’s Understanding of Justification: Through the Historical Development of Luther’s Doctrine of Justification

As most theories and doctrines are developed through a process of evolution, Luther’s doctrine of justification had also been developed in the evolution process. In the first section of this chapter, I examine the evolution of his doctrine of justification. I start this chapter with by exploring the historical development of his doctrine of justification because Luther was in a context where he encounters a biblical tension between antinomianism and semi-Pelagian legalism.\(^{220}\) He needed to resolve the tension. For him, how he resolves the biblical tension and how he defines divine/human role in salvation were soteriologically important.\(^{221}\)

\(^{220}\) *Luther’s Works* (hereinafter cited as LW), vol. 40, 280.

Moreover, Luther was located on the borderline between the late medieval and the Reformation periods. The fact that he had both backgrounds of the two major eras may imply a clear transformation of his doctrine. I propose to make his doctrine of justification clear through examining the development of the doctrine.

1. From *Via Moderna* to *Iustitia Dei*²²²

Initially, Luther’s doctrine of justification in his early period, 1508-1515, is rooted in the medieval tradition as an old soteriology through the views of the *via moderna* (the *pactum* theology). He was under the influence of the medieval understanding of salvation. In the medieval sense of salvation, God had established a *pactum* (covenant) between Oneself and mankind. Through the covenant, a minimal precondition for justification is given human beings. According to Olli-Pekka Vainio’s expression, in other words, “when a person does everything that is in himself (*facere quod in se est*), God infuses his grace of salvation into this person.”²²³ Though Luther admitted a function of human acts as a minimal precondition for justification, for him the human works can get meritorious validity only through God’s gracious *pactum*. Luther contended that man can do a certain role for justifying grace so that he can be involved in justification. “Though man could not prepare himself for grace in a manner which is meritorious *de condigno*, he may do so in a manner which is meritorious *de congruo* on account of this promise of God and the covenant of mercy.”²²⁴ In the early

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²²² From the Modern Way to God’s Righteousness


²²⁴ LW 11.396.; Alister McGrath explicates meanings of *Meritum de condigno* and *Meritum de congruo* in the
period, Luther affirmed that man cannot perform truly meritorious works for justification, but can reach at justification through non-meritorious works of man as man’s proper response to God’s *pactum*. Such works of man are not meritorious, but play a meritorious function for justification.

According to Luther’s *First Lectures on the Psalms* (*Dictata super Psalterium*, 1513-1515), his soteriological concern in his early years was not Reformer’s yet, but was still Catholic. That is, he had formed his doctrine of justification under the structure of the *via moderna* soteriology. According to Gabriel Biel, a late medieval nominalist:

Actually, two things are required if man is to be “dear and acceptable to God”; first, that he be in such a condition that God is willing to reward him with eternal life, that is, he must be baptized and must not have rendered the state of grace null and void by voluntary sins; second, that he actually deserve, by reason of an *actum meritorium* (that is, by a morally good deed), to be rewarded with eternal life.

Of course, *pactum* theology expresses God’s initiative as the primary work. Bernhard Lohse notes that without God’s covenantal actions, man’s works, such as humility, become

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Glossary of theological terms in his work, *Luther's Theology of the Cross*, as follows: The former means “merit in the strict sense of the term – i.e., a human moral act which is performed in a state of grace, and which is worthy of divine acceptance on a *quid pro quo* basis.” The latter means “merit in a very weak sense of the term. A human moral act which is performed outside a state of grace which, although not meritorious in the strict sense of the term, is nevertheless deemed ‘appropriate’ or ‘congruous’ by God in relation to the bestowal of the first (i.e., justifying) grace. Within the context of the theology of the *via moderna*, man’s doing *quod in se est* is regarded as meritorious *de congruo*, under the terms of the *pactum*, so that the notion of congruous merit provides the link between the moral and meritorious realms.”: McGrath, *Luther's Theology of the Cross: Martin Luther’s Theological Breakthrough* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985), 192.


nothing.\textsuperscript{227}

At the same time, however, it is presupposed that man is given the preconditions of justification through God’s covenant as God’s general grace. Man’s freely chosen acts are shifted to something meritorious. “Luther understands humans to be capable of making a response towards God without the assistance of special grace, and that this response of \textit{iustitia fidei} is the necessary precondition (\textit{quos in se est}, which is demanded of humans) for the bestowal of justifying grace.”\textsuperscript{228} In both senses of God’s \textit{pactum} and mankind’s preconditions of justification, man, for Luther in this early period, has an active role to prepare the justification. Alister McGrath comments on such characteristics of young Luther’s understanding of justification as follows: “Of particular importance is the observation that in this period he developed an understanding of human involvement in justification which is clearly based upon the \textit{pactum} theology of the \textit{via moderna}.”\textsuperscript{229}

2. New Understanding of \textit{Iustitia Dei}

However, Luther’s understanding of justification underwent “a radical alteration.”\textsuperscript{230} This change of his view on justification is, in fact, still in controversy. Nevertheless, many

\textsuperscript{227} Bernhard Lohse, \textit{Martin Luther’s Theology: Its Historical and Systematic Development} (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 54-55.


\textsuperscript{229} McGrath, \textit{Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification}, 218; idem, \textit{Luther’s Theology of the Cross: Martin Luther’s Theological Breakthrough}, 85-92.

\textsuperscript{230} McGrath, \textit{Iustitia Dei}, 218.
Lutheran scholars pay attention to his autobiographical fragment of 1545 in which the year of 1519 as a significant year of the radical alteration is explicitly stated.\textsuperscript{231} Traditionally, Luther’s formative experience of alteration of his view on justification has been regarded as radically developed by the year 1519\textsuperscript{232} after his lectures on the Psalter (1513-15), on Romans (1515-16), on Hebrews (1517-18), and on Galatians (1516-17). According to McGrath’s summary of Luther’s early understanding of justification before this change, “humans must recognize their spiritual weakness and inadequacy, and turn in humility from their attempts at self-justification to ask God for his grace.”\textsuperscript{233}

Yet, in his \textit{Lectures on Romans}, a little earlier, in 1515-16, Luther already began to recognize “the limitation of man’s free will.”\textsuperscript{234} In other words, free will of mankind is polluted by sin so that any works of man chosen by free will cannot be acceptable to God. Man can be justified only through “the sure imputation and promise of God.”\textsuperscript{235} Any human works cannot give an influence on justification of mankind.\textsuperscript{236} Therefore, humans are passive

\textsuperscript{231} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{232} E. Gordon Rupp maintains that the date of Luther’s rediscovery of justification is 1517. Ronald Bainton also seems to suggest this period of 1516-17. Even more radically, Heinrich Böhmer maintains that it took place in 1513, that is, even before his first lecture on the Psalms. Interestingly Hans Küng, the Roman Catholic theologian, also considers Luther’s rediscovery year is 1513.: E. Gordon Rupp, \textit{Luther’s Progress to the Diet of Worms} (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1951), 39; Ronald Bainton, \textit{Here I Stand} (New York: The New American Library, 1955), 45-46; 87-117. Robert H. Fife, \textit{The Revolt of Martin Luther} (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1957), 197-208.

\textsuperscript{233} McGrath, \textit{Iustitia Dei}, 220.

\textsuperscript{234} Fong, 67.

\textsuperscript{235} LW 25.260.

\textsuperscript{236} Robin A. Leaver writes, Luther rediscovered justification in the verse Romans 1:17 in his book, \textit{Luther on Justification} (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1975), 9-11. Luther writes in his later life as follows: “Though I lived as a monk without reproach, I felt that I was a sinner before God with an extremely disturbed
in their justification. It is God who plays an active role for human justification and converts human beings. Anyhow, it began to be perceived that for Luther the precondition of justification underlying the soteriological framework within the pactum theology of the via moderna is abandoned.\textsuperscript{237} It is generally regarded that Luther’s understanding of justification began to be altered over the period 1514-1519. It is an axiom that any theory can rarely be radically altered in an instant. It is clear that an important alteration in Luther’s understanding of justification took place around 1515 when he gave a lecture on Romans.

Then, what is concretely the change of Luther’s understanding of justification? That may be called his new understanding of the concept of \textit{iustitia Dei} (Righteousness of God). Initially Luther had the meaning of \textit{iustitia Dei} as \textit{iustitia activa}.\textsuperscript{238} In other words, humans can be justified and become righteous through God’s special grace given a person who meets the minimum preconditions within God’s promise. It was his early understanding of \textit{iustitia}. However, in Luther’s new understanding of \textit{iustitia Dei} God is no longer a God who can justify the godly only with respect to their deeds. “Man is now understood to be passive towards justification.”\textsuperscript{239} Of course, he does not deny human roles in justification. He argues that man is passively given divine grace, but needs to keep it just as if a pregnant woman

\textsuperscript{237} McGrath, \textit{Iustitia Dei}, 221.

\textsuperscript{238} McGrath, \textit{Luther’s Theology of the Cross}, 106-13.

\textsuperscript{239} Ibid., 130.

[...] conscience. I could not believe that He was placated by my satisfaction… At last, by the mercy of God, meditating day and night, I gave heed to the context of the words, namely, ‘In it the righteousness of God is revealed, as it is written, “He who through faith is righteous shall live,”’ Here I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered Paradise itself through open gates.”; LW, 34. 336-37.
Nevertheless, Luther obviously denied the idea that man can do ‘quod in se est.’ In other words, it is impossible that man cannot be justified with what lies within his powers. The previous theological framework of justification by the *via moderna* was broken down. Luther built up his new framework of justification.

Moreover, Luther’s new understanding of *iustitia Dei* needs to be noted in order to expound his radical alteration of an understanding of justification. His early understanding of *iustitia Dei* is based on the Aristotelian-Ciceronian definition of justice. That is, *iustitia Dei* is considered as God’s faithfulness within God’s *pactum* given to those who meet the preconditions of justification or God’s condemnation given to those who do not. However, Luther began to recognize the trouble of his early understanding of justification that God can justify only the godly, not the others. In his new understanding of justification, the concept of God’s righteousness is understood within a special divine grace. The divine grace is not limited by human preconditions. *Iustitia Dei* is no longer regarded as what can be grasped through human free will.

In sum, the reason Luther’s understanding of justification is radically changed is that he could find out the fact that the righteousness of God is *fides Christi*, which does not belong to human individual natural ability, but arises from the full divine grace. For him, the

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240 *Luther’s Werke* (hereafter cited as WA) 56. 379.; McGrath, *Luther’s Theology of the Cross*, cit., 130.


gospel cannot be a conditional grace which is given only to those who meet a certain condition. Such a conditional gospel, for him, is completely at variance with the authentic message of the gospel. For that reason, his radically new concept of *iustitia Dei* could make his “theological breakthrough” possible.

B. The Inseparable Relationship between Justification and Sanctification

1. The Twofold Function of Faith: Inseparable Relationship between Faith and Good Works

By Luther’s doctrinal alteration of justification and righteousness, his understanding of faith was humility of faith as an indispensable preparation or disposition before justification. According to young Luther, in other words, the righteousness of faith can be actively attained. Faith was considered as a fruit of human free choice. However, such an understanding of faith began to be denied by Luther. For Luther, faith began to be no longer regarded as what one can obtain through one’s own decision and actions because one recognizes that human will is polluted by sins. The righteousness of faith can never be attained actively. It is a passive righteousness. In this vein, Oswald Bayer properly indicates from *Luther’s Works* that faith is a God’s work not partly, but entirely.

Yet, this understanding of faith as a God’s totally active work and denial of human

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244 McGrath, *Luther’s Theology of the Cross*, 97-147.

245 Fong, 96.

free will seems to bring about the necessity of speaking explicitly about human responsibility in the Christian life. That is because the divine total initiative completely removes any role and participation of mankind. Consequently Luther comes to explain the human active role in a life-long progress of justification that may be overlooked with respect to the perspective of God’s total activity in justification.

For Luther, it is considered that faith has a twofold nature: “in the outward level of justification and in the inward level of sanctification.”\(^{247}\) To put it another way, Luther has a concept of the inseparable relation between faith and good works. In *the prefaces to New Testament*, Luther talks about the relation between them as follows:

Faith, however, is a divine work in us which changes us and makes us to be born anew of God, John 1(:12-13). It kills the old Adam and makes us altogether different men, in heart and spirit and mind and powers; and it brings with it the Holy Spirit. O it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith. It is impossible for it not to be doing good works incessantly. It does not ask whether good works are to be done, but before the question is asked, it has already done them, and is constantly doing them. Whoever does not do such works, however, is an unbeliever. He gropes and looks around for faith and good works, but knows neither what faith is nor what good works are. Yet he talks and talks, with many words, about faith and good works.\(^{248}\)

Likewise, Luther is concerned simultaneously about faith and good works. Of course, it is obviously not true that he puts another emphasis on good works since it is believed that faith itself is not enough for one’s salvation and justification.\(^{249}\) Nevertheless, Bayer correctly


\(^{248}\) LW 35.370.

catches Luther’s dialectical balance of faith and good works. According to Bayer, Luther believes that human works can never make man righteous, but the righteousness given by grace through faith naturally creates human works.\footnote{LW 31:55-56., Bayer, Living by Faith, 22.; Bayer, Martin Luther’s Theology: A Contemporary Interpretation (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 288.} Therefore, he could not help but consider both faith and human good works at the same time. Luther represents faith and good works by metaphors of “a sound tree and good fruit (Matthew 7:17).”\footnote{LW 26. 154-55.} Faith cannot help but bear works.

Of course, Luther acknowledges that good works have no place for justification. Yet, he does not overlook the realm of the Christian life in which human good works as fruits of faith play a significant role.\footnote{LW 30.34.} For Christians who are justified by God’s grace through faith, good works can never be separated from faith in their lives. Even though good works cannot play any function for justification, Luther pays attention to the fact that the good works testify whether or not faith in a human being is authentic, perfect.\footnote{LW 34.190.} According to Bernhard Lohse, “Luther at times stated that where works are absent one may conclude that faith is dead.”\footnote{Bernhard Lohse, Martin Luther’s Theology: Its Historical and Systematic Development (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 265.} Considering such a sense, it can be said that faith without works is nothing. It is clear for Luther that faith is naturally followed by good works. As Paul taught in the first chapter, Luther may have considered the law that is God’s good will and commandment as a
way to grace that is realized and embedded through faith.

However, such an understanding of the inseparable relation between faith and good works brings about a puzzling concept. Lutheran theologians such as Paul Althaus and Gerhard Ebeling show different interpretations of Luther’s understanding of the term “spontaneity” in a process from faith to works. According to Fong’s analysis on different understandings of both theologians, for Althaus spontaneity means that Christians must have an “ethical, inner impulse to do good works.” To put it another way, Christians must imperatively realize the necessity of works that follow faith “as if faith gave the power to act.” This concept of Althaus puts more weight on human responsibility for works following faith than on pure human spontaneity.

On the other hand, Ebeling claims that human spontaneity should never be a result of a coercive, driving force. For him, the human spontaneous works signifies human willingness and joy of good works. Such a willing heart does not arise from strong human will, but is rendered by the grace of God through the Holy Spirit. Man of faith may be able to do good works which God enjoys only through God’s grace. Ebeling gives a proper statement about the relation of faith and good works: “Faith is not the power to act which makes good works, but is the power of the good which makes works good.”

255 Fong, 114.
256 Ibid.
weight on Ebeling’s view, we may understand that faith does not signify a simple power with
which Christians must make good works. Faith is already the power rendered to them
because it is God’s free grace upon them. Christians possess the power which makes their
works good by divine grace through faith so that they can do what truly satisfies God
without the imperative ethical, inner impulse to fulfill the good works.

For Luther, then, what do good works mean? The significance of good works can be
grasped within Luther’s dialectical framework of theology. That is, good works are
understood with relation to faith. That relation can be described like the relationship of lord
and servant, that is, to borrow Oswald Bayer’s words, “the freedom and spontaneity of the
new obedience.”\(^{259}\) In particular, he represents good works as a word, \textit{love}, according to
Galatians 5:6.\(^{260}\) Bayer writes, Luther deals with the relationship between faith and love in
\textit{the Freedom of a Christian} under the following two propositions: “A Christian is a perfectly
free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to
all.”\(^{261}\) These two propositions seem to be inconsistent with each other, but for Luther they
could be harmonized and simultaneously fulfilled.\(^{262}\)

Bayer mentions the dialectical framework of these two realms, faith and love, as
follows: “With faith we receive freedom for service in love so that we have no law nor owe

\(^{259}\) Bayer, \textit{Living by Faith}, 39.

\(^{260}\) “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.”

\(^{261}\) LW 31.344.

\(^{262}\) Ibid.
anyone anything except love."²⁶³

We are to do good things for our neighbors just as Christ has done for us through his blood. Hence all the laws, works, and commandments that are required of us to serve God do not come from God… Yet these laws, works, and commandments that are required of us to serve our neighbors are good and we should do them, such as obeying the government of the secular power, following it and serving it, feeding the hungry, helping the needy.²⁶⁴

Likewise, for Luther, good works are a perspective shift from self-centered concerns to good things for neighbors. They do not mean just a good deed itself, but love toward others outside themselves. The good works as love naturally follow true faith. As Luther stated, “True faith is not idle. We can, therefore, ascertain and recognize those who have true faith from the effect or from what follows.”²⁶⁵ Seeing Luther’s idea of the relationship of true faith and good works as loving neighbors, it can be said that the relationship is a dialectic framework which implies his understanding of the inseparable relationship between justification and sanctification.

The bottom line is that such a harmonized fulfillment is his holistic understanding of the realms of justification and Christian life concerning faith and good works, alien righteousness and subsequent righteousness, and justification and sanctification. His holistic understanding of justification and sanctification is framed on the basis of such a dialectic twofold function of his theology.

²⁶³ Bayer, Living by Faith, 39.

²⁶⁴ LW 37:365; Bayer, Living by Faith, cit., 39-40.

²⁶⁵ LW 34.183.; Lohse, 265.
2. The Two Kinds of Christian Righteousness

Faith is regarded as a crucial means for justification. Yet, faith itself cannot justify us, human beings. Due to a misunderstanding, it has been stated that we are justified by faith. The phrase, “justification by faith” is not a proper statement. More correctly and concretely, human beings are “justified by God’s grace through faith.”\(^{266}\) Strictly speaking, faith itself cannot justify us as if any human faithful work cannot save us. Only the grace of God can justify us. Robert A. Kelly clearly notes the matter of by and through as follows:

Faith is the instrument through which grace is communicated to us and becomes active in the life of the disciple community. It is not faith per se which justifies us, but faith in Christ is the means through which God justifies us by grace. Faith is received through the action of the Holy Spirit working in, with, and under the Word preached and the sacraments celebrated in community.\(^{267}\)

Faith is a very important means through which justification can be explained. Peter Toon notes that faith is a form within which God justifies a human being as a sinner and justification is received.\(^{268}\) It is a means of communication through which God’s grace of justification flows. Furthermore, for Luther, “faith is the activity of God in the heart of man which produces a new relationship between God and that man”\(^{269}\) However, justification


\(^{267}\) Ibid.

\(^{268}\) Peter Toon, Justification and Sanctification (Westchester: Crossway Books, 1983), 58.

\(^{269}\) Leaver, Luther on Justification, 26.
cannot be grasped only with faith itself. With respect to Luther’s concepts of righteousness the twofold function of faith may be more clearly and richly grasped.\textsuperscript{270} At the same time, moreover, with regard to faith, God’s giving man the righteousness as God’s naming may provide a sound understanding of justification. If it would be considered that the faith is the pathway for justification, it would be said that righteousness signifies the transformation of identity, from a sinner to a forgiven being, by grace through faith.

For Luther, righteousness can be scrutinized in two dimensions, that is, divine righteousness and human righteousness. First, Luther understood that divine righteousness was usually regarded as a judge with sword in hand. In other words, Luther believed that God’s righteousness was generally formed from an image of a righteous judge. However, Robert Kolb points out that Luther discovered, “what makes God God is not his justice or wrath but rather his steadfast love and mercy.”\textsuperscript{271} According to his new discovery, the righteousness of God is wonderful not because it makes of God a righteous judge, but because it reveals God as the steadfast loving God, “who wants to use his righteousness not to judge but to justify and absolve sinners.”\textsuperscript{272} God’s righteousness is based on God’s own consistent love and mercy.

For Luther, then, what does human righteousness mean? Luther obviously tries to

\textsuperscript{270} Luther listens attentively to Paul’s describing the whole of the Christian life with relation to the twofold function of faith: “inwardly it is faith toward God, and outwardly it is love or works toward one’s neighbor.” LW 27.30.

\textsuperscript{271} Robert Kolb, “Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness; Reflections on His Two-Dimensional Definition of Humanity at the Heart of His Theology,” Lutheran Quarterly Vol. XIII(1999), 450.

\textsuperscript{272} LW 12.392.
make a distinction between “the first and alien righteousness and the subsequent and proper righteousness.” Above all, Luther claims that the primary dimension of human righteousness is passive righteousness which is “the righteousness of grace, mercy, and the forgiveness of sins,” that is, which is instilled from the divine righteousness mentioned previously. Luther had been influenced under the doctrine of active righteousness which emphasizes human performance or activities before the God’s judgment. However, he renounced the old concept of human righteousness before long, and claimed, “he put himself beyond all active righteousness or all righteousness of his own.” This new understanding of the human righteousness may simply be clarified in Kolb’s theological parable as follows:

Although by the definition of his (Luther’s) own theology Thomas Aquinas had sufficient merit to proceed directly to heaven, without having to work off temporal punishment in purgatory, the Dominican saint dallied along the way, visiting old friends and doing research among those who still had purgatorial satisfactions to discharge there. He arrived at Saint Peter’s gate some 272 years after his death, on February 18, 1546. After ascertaining his name, Saint Peter asked Thomas, “Why should I let you into my heaven?” “Because of the grace of God,” Thomas answered, ready to explain the concept of prevenient grace should it be necessary. Peter asked instead, “How do I know you have God’s grace?” Thomas, who had brought a sack of his good deeds with him, was ready with the proof. “Here are the good works of a lifetime,” he explained. “I could have done none of them without God’s grace, but in my worship and observation of monastic rules, in my obedience to parents, …, you can see my righteousness – grace-assisted as it may be.” The next person in line stepped up. “Name?” “Martin Luther.” “Why should I let you into my heaven?” “Because of the grace of God.” Peter was in a playful mood, so he went on, “How do I know you have God’s grace? Thomas had his works to prove his righteousness, but I don’t see that you have brought any proof along that you are righteous.” “Work?” Luther exclaimed. “Work? I didn’t know I was supposed to bring my works with me! I thought they belonged on earth, with my neighbors. I

273 Fong, 117.

274 LW 26.6.

275 Ibid.
left them down there.” “Well,” said Gatekeeper Peter, “how then am I supposed to know that you really have God’s grace?” Luther pulled a little, well-worn, oft-read scrap of paper out of his pocket and showed it to Peter. On it were the words, “Martin Luther, baptized, November 11, in the year of our Lord 1483.” “You check with Jesus,” Luther said. “He will tell you that he has given me the gift of righteousness through his own blood and his own resurrection.”

Primarily, Luther emphatically asserts that human righteousness is not dependent upon humans’ own works. Human beings must first become righteous by God’s grace through faith without a human’s own merit. To put it another way, the alien, passive righteousness definitely belongs to the righteousness of God that signifies steadfast, unfailing love of God. It means that God’s righteousness actively works in us human beings.

However, Luther did not consider only the alien righteousness as a possibility of the righteousness for humans. That is the reason Luther calls the passive righteousness “the first type of righteousness.” Luther calls the second kind of righteousness “the proper righteousness.” The second type of righteousness is not rendered to us not because we properly work, but because we work with the first, passive righteousness. As written in the book of Galatians, “the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” Human practices as the proper righteousness are suitable consequences as fruits of the first righteousness first received.

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276 Kolb, 454-55.

277 LW 26.8.

278 LW 31.299.

279 Galatians, 5:22.

280 LW 31.300.
passive righteousness is externally embodied in a visible way of the human active righteousness. Moreover, this double focus on human righteousness clarifies Luther’s dialectic framework of faith and good works with respect to justification and sanctification.

The twofold function of faith examined previously with regard to justification and sanctification may be apparently spelled out through Luther’s understanding of the distinction between the two types of human righteousness. It is because there is a mutual, intertwined significance between those two: faith and righteousness. The concept of justification cannot be grasped only within a structure of faith and good works. This is why Luther puts his emphasis on the concept of righteousness as well. According to Luther’s understanding of the relationship between faith and righteousness, faith is formally righteousness.\footnote{LW 26.229;: According to Luther, “for Christian righteousness consists in two things, namely, faith in the heart and the imputation of God. Faith is indeed a formal righteousness; but this does not suffice, for after faith there still remain remnants of sin in the flesh. … Therefore the second part of righteousness has to be added, which perfects it in us, namely, divine imputation.”} Faith is a gift granted divinely. Through faith human beings can trust in God’s promise and rely on God of steadfast, unfailing love.\footnote{LW 44.33; 48.} According to Luther, however, even if faith itself is a gift from God, faith in human beings does not suffice because “after faith there still remain remnants of sin in the flesh.”\footnote{LW 26.229.} As long as the nature of sin still remains in us human beings, faith is not enough by itself for justification. In Ebeling’s view, for that reason, Luther points out the necessity that God’s imputation of righteousness must be added on faith.\footnote{Ebeling, Luther: An Introduction to his Thought, 122-24.} Finally faith becomes perfect though it is within human beings, who
still possess remnants of sin, because God makes the imperfect faith perfect through God’s own work. For Luther faith becomes perfect by God’s imputation of righteousness and should be regarded as a divine work.  

Thus, according to Luther, it seems that both “inward faith” toward God as the first function of faith and the alien righteousness as a divine imputation have a close relationship. Both of them are caused by divine active works. On one hand, justification based on faith and righteousness is initiated by God’s work of grace. On the other hand, Luther acknowledges that God does not intend human total passivity in the progress of justification. As mentioned previously, transformation of identity takes place throughout alien righteousness. Faith can finally play a proper function within the transformed identity, that is, the new identity as a righteous one. Moreover, Bayer concludes that such an identity change resultingly brings about external changes in the outward level of the Christian life. To put it another way, true faith through the passive righteousness from God changes us human beings and brings us life anew.  

For Luther the consequences of faith accomplished through alien righteousness cannot justify humans. Those are good fruits that not only must be produced from a good

\[\text{285 LW 26.130.; 31.299.}\]

\[\text{286 Fong, 120.}\]

\[\text{287 Bayer, Martin Luther’s Theology, 287.; LW 35.370.}\]
tree, but are also produced freely.\textsuperscript{288} That is, for Luther, the faith in which the righteousness is passively imputed is not simply the only condition that justifies humans, it is also the only way for Christian growth and renewal.\textsuperscript{289} It is usually considered that Luther’s concept of justification is framed in a structure of justification through faith and then good deeds. That is, it seems to be understood as a structure of justification, “from faith to works.” However, such an understanding of Luther’s justification seems not to be proper. Rather, his position of justification is framed in a structure of faith only, that is, “from faith to faith.”\textsuperscript{290} With respect to this understanding, Luther remarks, “Good works will never make a good, pious man, but a good man produces good, pious works.”\textsuperscript{291}

The bottom line here is that faith and righteousness, for Luther, are related to each other within a twofold framework with regard to justification. That is to say, concepts of faith and righteousness are closely intertwined for understanding of justification. Moreover, Luther contends that in the process of justification both faith and righteousness dialectically work with active human deeds as outward faith and proper righteousness. However, he knows a tension between faith and human works, alien righteousness and proper righteousness. He does not consider the twofold framework as distinctive, progressive steps. In other words, for him the twofold structure does not signify ‘A, and then B,’ but ‘A

\textsuperscript{288} Bayer, Martin Luther’s Theology, 288.; LW 34.111.
\textsuperscript{289} Fong, 129.
\textsuperscript{290} Ibid., 128.
\textsuperscript{291} Bayer, Martin Luther’s Theology, 288.
throughout’ even though there exist ‘a’ and ‘b’ in A. The two elements in A, ‘a’ and ‘b,’ are inseparable from each other, but they keep on working distinctively in the whole process of A. For Luther, in short, faith and righteousness mutually work, and each concept maintains distinction of two dimensions and at the same time clarifies dialectical inseparability within its twofold structure.

3. The Two Parts of Justification: Divine and Human Roles in Sanctification

The above concepts of faith and righteousness raise here a question about how justification is understood with respect to faith and righteousness. For Luther, it would be remarked that justification is a forensic declaration derived from Christ’s righteousness, whereas faith functions as the only way for justification and salvation, and righteousness signifies a new identity which is instilled into a Christian in order to make imperfect faith perfect.

Luther’s theological framework in the twofold concept may also be examined in his understanding of the term, ‘justification.’ In other words, Luther understands justification in two ways. He divides the concept of justification into two parts. Of course, the two parts of justification should not be conceived as two events in a gradual, continuous process. The first part of justification, for Luther, is divine forgiveness of human sins. He first identifies the term, justification, with forgiveness of sins so that he comprehends that “we, Christians,

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292 “A” signifies the life-long process of justification, and “a” and “b” indicate justification and sanctification as elements in the process.

293 Luther identifies the term “to be justified” with “to be declared righteous.”; Fong, 132.
can be justified daily by the unmerited forgiveness of sins and by the justification of God’s mercy.\textsuperscript{294} This means God’s forensic declaration as divine forgiveness of human original sins and sinful deeds. No human works can be involved in the first part of justification, forgiveness of sins. This is totally a result of the divine active imputation in God’s sight, and simultaneously of the divine alien righteousness in human sight.\textsuperscript{295}

According to Luther’s understanding of the first part of justification, therefore, justification cannot be regarded simply as a process in which a transformation “from the state of injustice to the state of justice”\textsuperscript{296} through human deeds and efforts takes place. Justification is a grace of God itself by which we Christians are proclaimed righteous not through our works, but merely through our given faith.\textsuperscript{297} With relation to faith and alien righteousness, in his first concept of justification Luther also advocates God’s active work as the only agency of justification or salvation. In the same way of faith and alien righteousness, justification primarily points out that any human work cannot be ahead of divine work.

Luther’s theology of justification does not ignore the place of good works in justification. McGrath states that Luther maintains the second part of justification related to “the gift of the Holy Spirit.”\textsuperscript{298} For Luther, the two parts of justification are not understood

\begin{enumerate}
  \item \textsuperscript{294} LW 34.267. Italics mine.
  \item \textsuperscript{295} LW 26.123.
  \item \textsuperscript{296} Johann Heinz, \textit{Justification and Merit: Luther vs. Catholicism} (Michigan: Andrews University Press, 1981), 37.
  \item \textsuperscript{297} LW 26.137.
  \item \textsuperscript{298} McGrath, \textit{Iustitia Dei}, 224.
\end{enumerate}
as divided sequentially within a framework of time order. They are distinguished from each other, but they have an inseparable relationship because both parts of justification are fulfilled by divine active works. With reference to a doctrine of double justification, Luther contends that a Christian is righteous and at the same time should always become righteous \textit{(iustificatuset semper iustificandus)}. He does not argue simply the external transformation of human inner quality as the second part of justification. It is because there is no way that humans can become righteous by themselves. His concern about justification is divine works which can give his righteousness. McGrath underscores Luther’s focus on the argument that “the gospel destroys all human righteousness.” Human righteousness has no justifying resources. Thus, Luther understands that human righteousness can never be the agent for justification.

However, considering his interpretation of \textit{semper iustificandus} (at the same time, should always become righteous) as “ever to be justified anew,” it is evident that he does not make the distinction between justification and sanctification. On the contrary, according to McGrath’s analysis on Augustine’s concept of the words, Augustine interpreted \textit{semper}

\begin{footnotes}
\item LW 12.377.
\item McGrath, \textit{Iustitia Dei}, 227.
\item With regard to this, McGrath remarks that “humans are forced to recognize that they are totally devoid of soteriological resources, and thus turn to receive these resources \textit{ab extra}. Humans are justified by laying hold of a righteousness which is not, and can never be, their own – the \textit{iustitia Christi aliena}, which God mercifully reckons to humans. ‘The Christ who is grasped by faith and lives in the heart is the true Christian righteousness, on account of which God counts us righteous and grants us eternal life.’”; McGrath, \textit{Iustitia Dei}, 227; WA 40/1 229.28.
\item McGrath, \textit{Iustitia Dei}, 227.
\end{footnotes}
iustificandus as becoming more and more righteous. He understands the second part of justification as a process of reaching the perfection of the righteousness. However, Luther does not try to be quantitatively more righteous throughout the process of justification. He does not indicate that humans constantly obtain upgraded righteousness by their deeds throughout the life-long process of justification.303 It is because he totally understood humans’ complete sinfulness. It is because he recognized that such sinfulness cannot thoroughly accomplish human righteousness. He tries to be continually justified anew, and await in hope (in spe) the attainment of his righteousness.304

Likewise, Luther believes that he can have hope for the consummation of his righteousness even if presently he is still a sinner in the process of justification. It is because he does not have a simple doctrine of double justification, which is simply divided into two parts, but has a special understanding of justification. According to Karl Holl, Luther has a proleptic concept of justification. Holl illustrates this notion with respect to the sculptor, who has his own vision of the final product from the beginning of his work. Similarly to the sculptor, “God’s present justification of sinners is based upon his anticipation of their final sanctification, in that the present justification of human takes place on the basis of their foreseen future righteousness.”305 In this understanding of justification, it may be inferred that Luther’s doctrinal position of justification is to be continually justified anew recognizing

303 LW 31.349-50; 365.
304 McGrath, Iustitia Dei, 227.
305 Ibid., 224-25.
his identity as a total sinner and to participate in God’s righteousness in hope until reaching the moment of death.

As examined previously, justification and sanctification seem not to be separated from each other. Rather, it could be said that in a life-long process justification and sanctification work together as one process. Justification, for Luther, is a broad doctrinal concept that consists of two parts, “God’s saving grace and the gifts of the Spirit.” They are inseparable and complete each other. In other words, the two parts of justification (justification and sanctification) are framed in a twofold concept. Chun-Ming Abel Fong states the inseparable relationship of the two parts of justification as follows:

They represent the exterior and the interior aspects of God’s action upon man. The first part of justification is God’s extrinsic or forensic pronouncement that our sins are forgiven. The second part of justification denotes the real change of man’s inner quality (i.e. new birth) through the actual presence of the Holy Spirit and its gifts. With respect to this second part Luther, as a dynamic preacher rather than a systematic thinker, was not concerned with distinguishing clearly between initial and progressive sanctification. For him their inseparable relationship is obvious. The latter is the necessary consequence of the former, as good fruits are the effect of a good tree. Luther thus regarded them as a unified and inseparable whole.

Luther has distinctive concepts of justification and sanctification, but he does not intend to separately understand them because he believes that justification and sanctification is in the same life-long process and both of them are made possible through God’s (Christ’s) indwelling. That is to say, both of them are fruits of divine works of indwelling. This is the

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306 Fong, 141-42.
307 Ibid., 142.
308 Olli-Pekka Vainio, Justification and Participation in Christ, 46.
reason Olli-Pekka Vainio states, “Christ’s inhabitation in the heart of the believer is not only related to sanctification and good works but also to justifying faith itself.”

Luther does not mix up the distinction between justification and sanctification. Even though he conceives sanctification within the broad idea of justification, he clearly distinguishes the two. Fong properly remarks on Luther’s distinction between the two parts of justification.

For Luther there is a logical sequence between God’s grace and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, between forgiveness of sins and rebirth, between God’s forensic declaration of man’s righteousness and the change of the inner quality of man, or between declaring righteousness and making righteousness (sanctification). Luther explained that although the first and the second parts of justification are inseparable, they are distinct. The first part is the foundation or the presupposition of the second part…. The second part is the effect of the first part. The second part cannot be the precondition of the first part, as Roman Catholicism suggests.

For Luther, what is the difference between justification and sanctification? Luther maintains that justification as forgiveness of sins does not imply “qualitative change” of believers, but “relational change.” He is firmly conscious of the fact that the believers still have remnant of sins. In other words, Vainio stresses, “Qualitatively, the Christian will always remain full of sin.” Through alien righteousness the believers can be acknowledged as a holy human being since God no longer ascribes sins to them. That is, in the relationship

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309 Olli-Pekka Vainio, Justification and Participation in Christ, 46.

310 Fong, 143-44. However, he does not overlook primacy of the first part over the second part. “The first foundation is the stronger and more important, for although the second amounts to something, it does so only through the power of the first.”: LW 32.239.

311 Olli-Pekka Vainio, Justification and Participation in Christ, 43.
with God justification brings them a transformation of identity. To use Vainio’s expression, Luther considers the transformation of identity as relational change. Luther uses a term, “relation,” to oppose justification as a qualitative change. According to Luther’s understanding of justification as forgiveness of sins, justification signifies an epochal relational change. If justification (the first part) produces an obvious qualitative change in believers, they would not feel any necessity for sanctification.

However, for Luther, justification involves a relational change. Accordingly, the justified properly participate in their relationship with God. To put it another way, they take part in God’s righteousness which is steadfast love. Some scholars call this relationship “participation” in God’s righteousness, and some others call it union with Christ. According to Tuomo Mannermaa, a representative scholar of the Finnish school, the concept of participation in God is foundational for Luther’s theology. Moreover, “Luther employs other terms as well to describe this idea of participation, such as unification with God or the transformation of man.”

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312 Ibid.; WA 39 II, 141, 1-6 (Die Promotionsdisputation von Joachim Mörlin, 1540.)


314 The Finnish School argues that justification as forgiveness (favor) and the real presence of God (donum) in faith should not be separated by the one-sidedly forensic doctrine of justification. The school understands that “both of those motifs are closely united in Luther’s understanding of the person of Christ.” For the school, “it is one of the main themes of Luther’s theology that only the crucified and risen Christ himself as present can mediated salvation.” In short, the organic connection between the doctrine of justification and christological themes in the Luther’s theology must be noted.; Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson, Union with Christ: The New Finnish Interpretation of Luther, 28-29.

315 Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson, Union with Christ: The New Finnish Interpretation of Luther, 9.: Mannermaa states that the concept of participation is expressed as well in the notion of theosis (participation in God), or divinization.; “The divinization rests more profoundly on the presupposition that a human being can
the transforming aspects of justification that are distinctive from the forensic concepts of justification as forgiving of sins. Finnish Lutheran research stresses the idea of participation in God (theosis) in connection with Luther’s concept of love. That is, when believers realize and believe that they are in real union with God through a relational change, they can fruitfully love their neighbors, which is to participate in God’s righteousness which is steadfast love.

Likewise, those who are justified through faith and ascertain this relational change naturally love their neighbors genuinely and practically. Such is the true, complete participation in God’s righteousness which Luther implies in his doctrine of justification and sanctification. Simo Peura remarks in his article, “What God Gives Man Receives: Luther on Salvation,”: “Both aspects of justification, imputed righteousness as well as effective, transforming righteousness, are based on the indwelling of Christ and on our participation in him.” In short, it can be said that Luther in a broad sense understands that justification and sanctification are distinct elements of his doctrine of justification. Through our passive and active participation in the righteousness of God both justification and sanctification are

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319 Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson, 91.
dialectically achieved.

4. Luther’s Conundrum in His Concept of Sanctification in Light of Justification

From Luther’s understanding of justification as explored previously arises the question, “where is the locus of sanctification in Luther’s doctrine of justification and sanctification?” Sanctification seems to be integrated into his doctrine of justification. It seems that Luther does not clearly distinguish between justification and progressive sanctification.\(^{320}\) It seems that sanctification and its actualization in life as a goal are not located at the heart of his theology. Rather justification is emphasized as a theological concept that includes a fulfilled and sanctified life. In other words, for Luther sanctification in the Christian life seems to be considered as insignificant.\(^{321}\) How does Luther place his concept of sanctification for a holistic sanctified life with relation to justification?

Contextually speaking, according to George H. William, Luther’s externally unbalanced development of his doctrine of sanctification with relation to justification was due to Luther’s awareness of influences of fanatics in his time. They generally emphasized empirical, visible sanctification and probably were regarded as a huge challenge and danger by Luther. William concludes that as a result Luther gave strict precautions on such a view of sanctification as legalism.\(^{322}\) Moreover, theologically speaking, Luther considers that...

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\(^{321}\) Toon, 93.

Christian growth comes from how seriously believers are conscious of their sinfulness, not from what they do.\textsuperscript{323} Given such contextual, theological conditions, it seems natural that Luther put his primary focus on justification and understood sanctification in light of justification.

However, Luther’s understanding of sanctification in the light of justification never diminishes the significance of sanctification. Thomas Oden points out that sanctification begins with active receptivity of faith as an activity in response to grace. That is, sanctification begins to be embodied through actively receiving faith as a free gift. This free activity of faith brings about giving and receiving appropriate Christian behaviors.\textsuperscript{324} Oden remarks that Luther rightly grasps the receiving/acting or gift/task dynamic:

\begin{quote}
Christ as a gift nourishes your faith and makes you a Christian; but Christ as an example exercises your works. These do not make you a Christian but are performed by you, who have previously been made a Christian. Christ is set before us and given to us as an example and pattern which we are to follow. For when we possess Christ through faith as a free gift, we should go on and do as He has done for us and imitate Him in our entire life and sufferings.\textsuperscript{325}
\end{quote}

For Luther, the doctrine of justification reveals sanctification in a dynamic relationship of the two.

Then, another question arises here, “for Luther, is Justification an event or a process?” Peter Toon states, “Luther was quite clear that there is a moment when the sinner

\textsuperscript{323} Fong, 147-48.; LW 30.43.; 30.228.


\textsuperscript{325} E. Plass, ed., \textit{What Luther Says}, vol 1 (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), 199.
is actually justified by faith.”  

Yet, Luther cannot admit that the onetime event fully accomplishes justification in human beings. This is because he regards justification not only as the forgiveness of sins through the imputation of the alien righteousness, but also as the constant creation of a new nature in the Holy Spirit. That is, this understanding is the result of Luther’s dialectical concept of justification in relation to sanctification. As Karl Holl asserts, for Luther, “justification was not something that works itself out automatically once it has been experienced. It was rather an ever-recurring event that receives its special meaning and increasing profundity from the particular impressions of the respective moment.”

Likewise, it is necessary to consider sanctification in the light of justification in order to understand Luther’s concept of justification as an event and a process at the same time. In the journey of justification, at the same time a believer continuously realizes his/her status as a sinner and as a justified, human being: “a sinner in relation to the law and justified in

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326 Toon, 58.

327 Peter Toon uses a journey metaphor for Luther’s justification and sanctification. He uses the term, justification, but his statement implies a dialectical dynamic of justification and sanctification in a life-long journey: “Justification by faith is both an event and a process. What later Protestants were to divide, Luther kept together. He was quite clear that there is a moment when the sinner is actually justified by faith. He then has the righteousness of another, the alien righteousness of Christ, imputed to him. But this is the beginning of a journey towards a time (following the resurrection of the dead in the age to come) when he will in fact possess a perfect righteousness created in him by the Spirit of God. For we perceive that a man who is justified is not yet a righteous man, but is in the very movement or journey towards righteousness. And, our justification is not yet complete… It is still under construction. It shall, however, be completed in the resurrection of the dead. It is an event and process because faith, the gift of God, receives both the forgiveness of sins through the imputation of righteousness and also in the Spirit creates the new nature, the very nature which finds its fulfillment in the resurrection body.”: Toon, 58-59; Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, 227, 237.

relation to the gospel.”\textsuperscript{329} That is to say, the believer keeps what Luther maintains in mind, “In the moment when God converts a person to him by faith, this person is not moved from a state of only being sinner to a state of only being a righteous person. The old Adam has not been totally abolished.”\textsuperscript{330} According to Theodor Dieter, Luther regards the remnants of original sin differently from scholastic theologians’ understandings of original sin.\textsuperscript{331} The place of sanctification is wherever there is fighting against these remnants of original sin. To put it another way, when believers experience the justified moment through the everlasting grace of God, they realize that they are still sinners, and come to know that they must keep fighting against sin in themselves until the resurrection of the dead when they will obtain a perfect righteousness through the Holy Spirit. As Apostle Paul maintains that human sinfulness revealed through the law cannot be completely replaced by perfect righteousness until the law is fulfilled through the Holy Spirit in union with Jesus Christ, the locus of sanctification is this fervent, life-long journey where justification is being fulfilled in the dialectical relationship of the two parts of justification.

However, there still exist criticisms of Luther’s more or less ambiguous distinction between the realms of justification and sanctification. Such criticisms point out that Luther’s understanding of sanctification in the light of justification may blur human moral


\textsuperscript{330} Theodor Dieter, “Justification and Sanctification in Luther,” 90.

\textsuperscript{331} “The scholastic theologians do not regard the remnants of original sin as sin unless they become manifest as explicit acts against the law of God.”: Milan Opocenský and Páraic Réamonn, 90.
responsibility and holiness. At this point, we need to carefully consider Karl Barth’s criticism of Luther’s doctrine of sanctification cited in Barth’s *Church Dogmatics* by Chun-Ming Fong:

Justification is not sanctification. If we do not take care not to confuse and confound, soteriology may also suffer by allowing sanctification to be swallowed up in justification. It may be because of the overwhelming impression of the comfort of the grace which is effective and has to be understood as justification. It may be in view of the true consideration that justification is in any event the dominating presupposition of sanctification. It may be with the correct insight that even in his best works the sanctified man still stands in continual need of justification before God. … Can we ignore the fact that in the Bible the work of the sovereign grace of God as a work of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit includes the sanctification of man as distinct from his justification? … Is it not advisable to make sanctification, even in its connection with justification, genuinely sanctification, instead of trying to understand it from the very outset merely as a paraphrase of justification?332

This kind of criticism on Luther’s doctrine of sanctification in the light of justification may generally be raised. If his doctrine cannot reasonably answer this criticism, Luther’s doctrinal understanding of justification and sanctification will fall into antinomianism. This is a crucial criticism of Luther. How would Luther respond? He uses the dialectical principle of “*simul iustus et peccator*”333 to rationalize his profound concept of sanctification in relation to justification. He tried to develop his answer to that criticism through his anthropological understanding contained in the statement, *simul iustus et peccador*.

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332 Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1956), IV/2.504.; Fong, 150.

333 A believer is simultaneously righteous and a sinner. According to Luther’s Work, “the believers are sinners; however, they are righteous by the reckoning of a merciful God (re vera Peccators, sed reputatione miserentis Dei iusti). They are sinners in fact, but righteous in hope (peccatores in re, iusti \'utem in spe).”: WA 56.343.16-19.; McGrath, *Iustitia Dei*, 226.
C. Luther’s Principle of *Simul iustus et Peccator* as a Theological Foundation for Homiletics: His *Totus Homo* Theology

Luther’s understanding of theological anthropology becomes a key foundation for his interpretation of justification and sanctification. Yet, the paradoxical statement, *Simul iustus et Peccator*, has three different interpretations.\(^{334}\) Those interpretations come to be differentiated according to whether the principle is interpreted quantitatively or qualitatively. The quantitative understanding of the dialectical principle means that the believer is partly sinful and partly righteous in the Augustinian sense. On the other hand, the qualitative understanding signifies that the believer is fully sinful and at the same time fully righteous. The latter is generally regarded as Luther’s interpretation of the dialectical principle.\(^{335}\)

For Luther then, what does this paradoxical statement, *Simul iustus et peccator*, mean? This principle represents a theological anthropology that consists of two perspectives: the believer is righteous, and at the same time the believer is a sinner just as the existential struggle with the “I” is confessed by Paul in Romans 7.\(^{336}\) This principle shows Luther’s idea

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\(^{334}\) According to Fong’s analysis on Luther’s formula, *Simul iustus et peccator*, G. C. Berkouwer claims that “the quantitative interpretation of Luther’s dialectical formula has no basis.” He concludes that for Luther “there is no such thing as a gradual purification by which our need for the forgiveness of sins would diminish.” T. George, yet, contends that, although the mature Luther interprets his dialectical principle of *Simul iustus et peccator* qualitatively, the early Luther regarded the principle quantitatively. John R. Loeschen takes a position between these two positions and maintains that by combining the two interpretations Luther’s teaching of the principle can be completely grasped: “the Christian is at the same time (*simul*) wholly (*totus*) and partly (*partim*) sinner and justified.”: John R. Loeschen, *Wrestling with Luther: An Introduction to the Study of His Thought* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1976), 75; G. C. Berkouwer, *Faith and Sanctification*, trans., John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 75.


\(^{336}\) “… I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.” *Romans* 7:25.
which intends to “break the continuity involved in the emphasis that God has committed Himself to reward man’s best efforts, the Nominalist teaching regarding the facere quod in se est.” 337 This seems to show an example of his “dialogical theology” 338 which dialogues with opposite theological positions. In fact, these two statements cannot coexist because they are contradictory to each other. Through his “totus homo anthropology” 339 which expresses his understanding of the whole nature of man, Luther advocates this seemingly contradictory principle.

Augustine also taught the assertion, simul iustus et peccator, on the basis of his view on sin: “A sin is forgiven in baptism, not so that it no longer exists, but so that it is no longer imputed.” 340 Yet, Augustine had a different concept of the paradoxical principle compared with Luther. He divided a human being into two levels of life, that is, “the lower life of nature and the higher life of the spirit.” 341 Because Augustine necessarily wanted to distinguish between flesh and spirit in order to explain the presence of sin in the believers. Following Neo-platonic lines, he assigns righteousness to the spirit and sin to the flesh. 342

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338 Koenker defines Luther’s theology as a “dialogical theology.” “Luther’s entire theology is a dialogical theology – dialoguing with the heretics, with the papists, with Erasmus, with the Biblical writers, and with himself.”: Ernest B. Koenker, “Man: Simul justus et peccator,” in Accents in Luther’s Theology, 101.

339 McGrath, Iustitia Dei, 236.

340 LW 32.209.


342 McGrath, Iustitia Dei, 226.
From such a distinction of flesh and spirit, Augustine produces his understanding of *simul iustus et peccator*. That is, he meant that the believer is partially righteous and partially sinful. One thing significant in Augustine’s Neo-platonic understanding of humans is the meaning of “partially” in the “*simul*” principle. According to Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt who adopted the Augustinian anthropology, “justification is conceived as a renewal of human nature through a gradual eradication of sin.”$^{343}$ For Augustine, the journey of justification is a progress in human spiritual growth. To put it another way, the realm of the flesh gradually diminishes and at the same time the realm of spirit gradually enlarges. Thus the quantitative portion of a believer’s righteousness becomes larger than the portion of his/her sinfulness.

Basically, Luther agrees with Augustine’s view that due to the original sin, human beings are sinful and incapable of their own salvation, but they are forgiven and can be justified for Christ’s sake. Luther stresses that even though they are forgiven and justified, they are still *simul iustus et peccator*. $^{344}$ In this sense, he concurs with Augustine’s motif of the dialectical principle. However, Luther has a different perspective, seeing a human being as *simul iustus et peccator* compared with Augustine’s. For Luther, mankind absolutely cannot help him/herself to be justified because he/she is under the control of the flesh in

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$^{343}$ Ibid., 236.

$^{344}$ To put it another way, “in as far as sinners are reckoned to be holy before God, for Christ’s sake, they are righteous; yet, insofar as they continue to sin until death, they are sinners.”: Vitalis Mshanga, “*Simul Iustus et Peccator*: Ecumenical Reflections on the Lutheran-Roman Catholic *Simul* Controversy,” (doctoral article at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium, 2008), 6.: available athttp://www.acu.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0012/197688/Mshanga_Justus_et_Peccator.pdf, accessed on Nov. 14. 2010.
his/her life. The only agency who can make human justification possible is God. Through divine imputation, human beings become righteous. However, human beings cannot escape from their sinfulness even after they are justified and regarded as a new creation. Luther indicates that sin is a constant in human life.

Sin, which in substance is not being removed, shall be imputed as having been removed and shall be absorbed by the goodness of God who conceals it on account of Christ who overshadows it, although it remains in nature and substance…. On no condition is sin a passing phase, but we are justified daily by the unmerited forgiveness of sins and by the justification of God’s mercy. Sin remains, then, perpetually in this life, until the hour of the last judgment comes and then at last we shall be made perfectly righteous.

Humans are intrinsically sinners so that they cannot overcome the inner conflict caused by the struggle between their old-selves and the Holy Spirit within them. No matter how many good works humans do, they are still sinners from a human perspective. In other words, they are totally sinners regardless of their progress in a sanctified Christian life. Luther explicates his perspective on such a wholly sinful nature of the believer in his work as follows:

The saints are always sinners in their own sight, and therefore always justified outwardly. But the hypocrites are always righteous in their own sight, and thus always sinners outwardly. I use the term “inwardly” (intrinsice) to show how we are in ourselves, in our own eyes, in our own estimation; and the term “outwardly” (extrinsice) to indicate how we are before God and in His reckoning. Therefore we are righteous outwardly when we are righteous solely by the imputation of God and not of ourselves or of our own works. For His imputation is not ours by reason of

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346 LW 34.166-67.

347 LW 32.212.

anything in us or in our own power. Thus our righteousness is not something in us or in our power. ... But inwardly we are sinners according to the law of mutual relationship. For if we are righteous only because God reckons us to be such, then it is not because of our mode of living or our deeds. Thus inwardly and of ourselves we are always unrighteous. 349

For Luther, consequently, the believers must not expect progress in righteousness through outward works because their external deeds cannot ultimately accomplish their righteousness.

So far Luther’s understanding of mankind seems to have been negative because no hope seems to exist from the intrinsic perspective. That is because even the believer is still wholly a sinner. However, Luther points out that such recognition of one’s own unchangeable sinfulness itself is also possible by the grace of God through faith. 350 That is, it is God’s grace that we, human beings, can recognize our own identity as total sinners. Luther affirms the role of faith in making humans realize their own sinfulness:

Even though we recognize no sin in ourselves, we must nevertheless believe that we are sinners. This is why the apostle writes: “I am aware of nothing against myself, but I am not for that reason justified” (1 Cor. 4:4). For as through faith the righteousness of God lives in us, so through the same faith sin, too, lives in us, i.e., by faith alone we must believe that we are sinners because it is not obvious to us; on the contrary, more often we are not aware of it. Therefore we must stand before the judgment of God and believe His utterance when He tells us that we are sinners, for He cannot deceive us. 351

Luther notes the fact that even the realm of the flesh is governed by divine grace through faith. This view naturally connects one aspect of the believer as a total sinner to the other

349 LW 25.257.

350 Bernhard Lohse, Martine Luther’s Theology, 262-63.

351 WA 56.231.6-12.; Koenker, 106.
aspect of Luther’s anthropology as a totally righteous person.

For Luther, however, even if the believer has an inward human nature which is always totally sinful, the believer (the justified) is in fact wholly “righteous and holy through divine imputation.”352 Considering only human total sinfulness from the human perspective, the believer has no hope. Yet, Luther asserts that the believer is completely righteous and can always be kept in God’s righteousness, that is, the grace of God, from the divine perspective. The believer may not be righteous coram hominibus (before man), but the justified is righteous coram Deo (before God) through the alien righteousness of God.353 In short, according to Luther’s entire understanding of the two dimensions of the principle, human beings are sinners with their own merits and works, but can overcome their limits through God’s grace. Moreover, the alien righteousness of Christ imputed by grace through faith vitalizes and accepts human good works if they are done in faith. In other words, through regarding humans as totus iustus from the divine, extrinsic perspective, humans happily come to do their good deeds for their neighbors.354

Likewise, it can be said that Luther’s concept of the assertion, simul iustus et peccator, gives a clear understanding of the journey of the Christian life and its direction. His interpretation of the principle, that is, his understanding of simul, is definitely caused by his totus homo anthropology resisting Augustinian dichotomous understanding of flesh and

352 WA 39.521.5-522.3.; cited in Ebeling, Luther, 163-64.
353 McGrath, Iustitia Dei, 226-27.
354 Fong, 156-58.
spirit. These anthropological interpretations can be deeply scrutinized in a similar vein to ontological concepts. For Luther, his anthropological interpretation may more clearly be explicated through “substance ontology” and “relational ontology.” To put it another way, his anthropological understanding of simul may effectively be grasped with those ontological approaches. Vitalis Mshanga explains Luther’s interpretation of the twofold principle in relation to those two ontological concepts.

Lutherans maintain that the justified is totus righteous and totus sinful from the point of view of relational ontology. That means the identity of the Christian is now no longer defined in terms of the believer’s nature, but in terms of his or her relationship to Christ. Thanks to this relationship, one can now be considered as totus righteous, however, not on account of what is in oneself but on account of what is found in Christ. On account of oneself, that is, to speak, in terms of substance ontology, one is still totus a sinner.

Likewise, Luther’s organizing principle of simul iustus et peccator is clarified through his totus homo anthropology and ontological concepts. Then, we can find here the significance of the principle with regard to justification and sanctification. In particular, Luther’s view on sanctification in the light of justification is effectually illuminated through his organizing principle of simul iustus et peccator. As the formula indicates, all humans

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355 McGrath, Iustitia Dei, 226-41.

356 “Substance ontology is a view of the identity of a being of something (esse) in terms of its own properties rather than their relation to other beings. Relational ontology, then, refers to an identity of a being of something in terms of its relationship with other beings.”: Mshanga, “Simul Iustus et Peccator: Ecumenical Reflections on the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Simul Controversy,” 9.


358 Toon explains concepts and relationship of justification and sanctification with respect to simul iustus et peccator as follows: “While on earth, the position of the Christian does not change. He is totally righteous through faith, and he remains always and completely a sinner. With reference to Christ he is righteous; but with
are incapable of accomplishing the completion of the sanctified life. That is, considering unchangeable sinful human nature, the Christian responsibility for doing good deeds can seem to be meaningless. Moreover, as Reformed theologians have criticized, Luther’s principle seems to underscore the presence of the remnant of original sin, that is, undeniable human sinfulness rather than victorious Christian life in the process of sanctification.\textsuperscript{359} Accordingly, the believer’s sanctification seems to be understood as insignificant or unattainable.

However, Luther’s understanding of the assertion, \textit{simul iustus et peccator}, does not ignore human responsibility for a holy life. Rather, Luther stresses the human role in the process of sanctification on the basis of the \textit{totus iustus} principle.\textsuperscript{360} According to Fong’s conclusion about the dialectical formula, “God has already provided the solution to resolve the presence of sin in the Christian life.”\textsuperscript{361}

It is \textit{sola fide, sola gratia, soli Deo gloria} that man can grasp the presence of the reference to his fallen nature he is sinful. Yet this apparent contradiction does not imply a static situation. The very faith that draws Christ into the heart and creates the new nature gladly and freely allows Christ to do battle against the old, sinful nature (=”the flesh”). The result of this spiritual conflict (described by St. Paul in Romans 7, 8) should be that “Christ is constantly formed in us and we are formed according to his own image.” Each and every day faith is to grasp anew the word of promise which is the gospel and appropriate Christ, who is our righteousness. Further, each and every day sin, the devil and temptation must be fought. Yet despite all the daily battles, the old nature remains with us until death. There is not escape from it, nor from the possibility of sin. So Luther has no doctrine of progressive holiness or growth in sanctification (as there terms were later used). The flesh or old nature does not change; rather, Christ (or really the new nature) grows within the believer. Justification includes the daily renewal of the new nature. The believer can never say he is less sinful than he was at any earlier time!” Toon, \textit{Justification and Sanctification}, 59.

\textsuperscript{359} A. C. George, \textit{Martin Luther’s Doctrine of Sanctification with Special Reference to the Formula ‘Simul Iustus et Peccator’ : A Study in Luther’s Lectures on Romans and Galatians}, (Ph.D. diss., Westminster Theological Seminary, 1982), 246.

\textsuperscript{360} Theodor Dieter, “Justification and Sanctification in Luther,” 94-96.

\textsuperscript{361} Fong, 172.
Spirit raising war against the flesh, and the presence of God’s forgiving grace providing assurance for the conscience. It follows that man becomes willing and joyful to perform good works for his neighbors according to the demands of the Law. He also desires spontaneously to conform to the example of Christ. On this account, it is unnecessary to talk about the concept of merit, but rather of the spontaneous, sanctified effect of Christ’s alien righteousness.\(^{362}\) Seeing such a dialectical harmony between \textit{totus iustus} and \textit{totus peccator}, for Luther, justification through alien righteousness is underlined with respect to the relationship between justification and sanctification. Though he employs the dialectical formula of \textit{simul iustus et peccator} in order to justify his unique understanding of sanctification, it can be said that for Luther the passive righteousness of God is the only motif and dynamics of all sanctified human works.\(^{363}\) For Luther, it is quite obvious that the justification of Christians must be continued. According to Jonathan D. Trigg’s expression, “there is no possibility of progress away from the start point.”\(^{364}\) From continuous starting points of justification as forgiveness of sins, sanctification can continually work out in the life-long dialectical process of justification and sanctification. This properly shows Luther’s understanding of sanctification in the light of justification. Trigg expresses such an understanding of

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\(^{362}\) Ibid., 172-73.

\(^{363}\) George W. Forell underscores the significance of the alien righteousness of God with regard to Christian sanctified works as follows: “For Luther the Christian life is not a human achievement but a gift of God’s grace. But it is an empowering gift because it enables the recipient to be free from the self-concern, the obsession with his or her own interest for the real needs of others. Christian ethics in the more restricted sense is only possible on the basis of this liberation. There are all kinds of good works that people can do. They are works of the law which may contribute to the earthly welfare of human beings. But the life that makes a woman or man into a Christ to others is only possible for those who have been made one with him and thus can say with Paul: “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me” (Gal. 2:20). But it is God’s deed that makes it possible. That is the essence of Luther’s thought.”: George W. Forell, “The Essence of Luther’s Thought,” \textit{Theology and Life: Luther’s Theology}, No. 17-19 (1996): 14.

sanctification with an image of “a spiral, which combines the circular pattern with a linear element.”\(^{365}\) According to Trigg’s study, sanctification is not a single event, but a continuous movement or process\(^{366}\) which has a specific direction. However, for Luther, such a direction is absolutely opposite to the human merit centered perspective which shows a progression, from justification to sanctification through human good works. In other words, Luther’s direction of sanctification signifies a movement which continually refers back to the beginning such as passive righteousness, grace, Christ and so on in order for the believer to reconfirm the fact that authentic sanctification cannot be accomplished without justification as the foundation of the sanctification process.\(^{367}\)

In sum, Luther clarifies his understanding of sanctification in the light of justification through his dialectical principle of *simul iustus et peccator*. For him, sanctification is never overlooked in favor of justification. Both doctrines inseparably work together. The reason why justification as forgiveness of sins is truly necessary is that all humans are unchangeably sinful beings. Moreover, for the sinful man, justification shows what the direction of authentic sanctification should be. Likewise, justification and sanctification inseparably coexist as Luther’s theological foundation for the Christian life which is “a continuous struggle, conflict and tension between the righteousness of God and the sinfulness of

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\(^{365}\) Trigg, *Baptism in the Theology of Martin Luther*, 171.

\(^{366}\) Trigg indicates that the process of sanctification is a movement “from law to grace, from active righteousness to passive righteousness, in short, from Moses to Christ.”: Trigg, 168.

\(^{367}\) Theodor Dieter, “Justification and Sanctification in Luther,” 96.
Conclusion

Luther offers important theological foundations for Christian ethical living regarding justification and sanctification. In particular, their inseparable relationship discloses the necessity of a balanced theological stance with respect to homiletical approaches for ethical living. Luther’s theological concepts of justification and sanctification can be explained in light of concepts of faith and righteousness with regard to their twofold functions. Nonetheless, his theology of justification and sanctification seems to lean toward justification, and it seems to be an inclusive concept that sanctification is understood.

However, this conundrum in his theological concept of sanctification may be quite solved through his understanding of theological anthropology. His principle of Simul Iustus et Peccator shows his theological concerns about dual aspects of justification: justified life and sanctified life.

Regarding dynamics of transformation in ethical living, there may be something lacking in Luther’s theology of justification and sanctification. The next chapter continues to reflect upon justification and sanctification as theological foundations for a discussion about Christian ethical living. Yet, the chapter focuses more on sanctification and its ongoing expansion of grace toward a larger world through an important devise. Now let us go deeper into the primitive forest of justification and sanctification with a new theologian in order to

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368 LW 32.212.; Fong, 160.
explore how the law as the significant devise can newly function for ethical living.
Chapter III

Sanctification in Christian Ethical Living: the Third Use of the Law by John Calvin

A. Calvin’s Understanding of Sanctification

Luther stresses that justification and sanctification are inseparably related to each other and so does John Calvin. He also emphasizes that the two should be understood within one broad framework.\textsuperscript{369}

It is indeed true, that we are justified in Christ through the mercy of God alone; but it is equally true certain, that all who are justified are called by the Lord, that they may live worthy of their vocation. Let them the faithful learn to embrace him, not only for justification, but also for sanctification, as he has been given to us for both these purposes, lest they rend him asunder by their mutilated faith.\textsuperscript{370}

While Luther’s primary focus is on justification over sanctification, Calvin points to the different roles both justification and sanctification play. His focus is not primarily on justification as it was with Luther, but rather Calvin illuminates the hidden significance of sanctification in “the inseparable works of God,”\textsuperscript{371} elevating sanctification to the level of importance as justification.


\textsuperscript{370} Calvin’s \textit{Commentary on Romans} 8:13.

1. Inseparable and Distinctive Relationship between Justification and Sanctification: Luther and Calvin

In essence, Calvin’s stance on justification and sanctification finds its roots in Luther’s. For Calvin, justification as forgiveness of sins and sanctification as renewal of life are gifts wholly given by God in the order of salvation. Thus, he contends that each gift in some aspect needs to be understood in the light of the other. His concern about the inseparability of justification and sanctification does not ignore issues of balance that may arise when one is understood in the context of the other. He points out the pitfalls that one might fall into when the two are not considered in balanced. He understands there needs to be a balance maintained in the dynamic relationship between these two gifts, justification and sanctification.

In practice, Calvin adheres to a well-balanced stance between justification and sanctification. But it can also be said that his stance is directly opposed to two viewpoints that interpret one radically in light of the other. The first position involves arguments of the Sophists who understand justification in light of sanctification. The second position is held by German Reformer Andreas Osiander who denies human role in sanctification and interprets it radically in light of justification. Calvin departs from these two perspectives

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to defend a balanced theology of justification and sanctification that precludes legalism and antinomianism.\textsuperscript{374}

Calvin’s concern for a well-balanced relationship based on the inseparability between justification and sanctification is somewhat different from Luther’s understanding of the inseparable relationship between the two. Calvin tends to focus on the distinctive significance between the two whereas Luther stresses on their inseparability in light of justification.\textsuperscript{375} Luther understands justification “as a broad concept comprising two inseparable parts: forgiveness of sins, and spiritual rebirth together with progressive sanctification.”\textsuperscript{376} Conversely, Calvin makes a clear distinction between justification and sanctification within his concept of the inseparability of justification and sanctification\textsuperscript{377} where each concept is grounded in grace resulting in a duality of grace.

Calvin acknowledges that justification by faith alone is crucial when comprehending one’s salvation, and lays the necessary foundation for the Christian life. John Leith expresses Calvin’s understanding of justification with relation to regeneration (sanctification): “There

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\textit{Thought} (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1995), 96. : In chapter xi, paragraphs 5-12 contain a “refutation of Osiander’s doctrine of essential righteousness; paragraphs 13-20 mention a “refutation of Scholastic doctrines of good works as effective for justification.”


\textsuperscript{375} Leith, \textit{John Calvin’s Doctrine of the Christian Life}, 96.


\textsuperscript{377} For Calvin, sanctification is understood in a term, “regeneration.” William Stacy Johnson explains the meaning of \textit{regeneration}, it is “the act of God’s grace whereby we are enabled to die unto sin, live unto righteousness, and be renewed in the image of Jesus Christ.”: William Stacy Johnson, \textit{John Calvin, Reformer for the 21st Century} (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 139.
\end{flushleft}
is no true knowledge of regeneration apart from a knowledge of justification by faith alone.\textsuperscript{378} Leith states, “Calvin regarded the confidence which comes from the experience of justification by faith alone as the only possible basis for real sanctification.”\textsuperscript{379} In other words, for Calvin, justification provides human beings with the confident experience of forgiveness. This grace offers the inner dynamic for the Christian to experience regenerated life. He stresses the significance of the role which justification plays in the Christian life, by distinguishing sanctification from justification. Essentially, Calvin believes that sanctification in the Christian life functions distinctly from justification and requires greater thought and consideration in the discussion of one’s salvation and life in Christ.

For Calvin, sanctification is regarded as a dominant element in the Christian life whereas Luther is concerned about human awareness of unrighteousness and the divine grace through forgiveness of sins as the core element of the Christian life.\textsuperscript{380} Calvin considers that the human struggle for the manifestation of Christlikeness as prominent in the Christian life.\textsuperscript{381} Therefore, for Calvin, the life goal of Christians is to externally manifest the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ by God’s grace. The direction of Calvin’s logic with regard to justification and sanctification is explained conversely to Luther’s: not sanctification into justification, but justification into sanctification.\textsuperscript{382} As a result, it may be

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\textsuperscript{378} Leith, \textit{John Calvin’s Doctrine of the Christian Life}, 87.

\textsuperscript{379} Ibid., 97.

\textsuperscript{380} \textit{Institutes} III.11.1.

\textsuperscript{381} Harro Höpfl, \textit{The Christian Polity of John Calvin} (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 74-75.

\textsuperscript{382} Geoffrey W. Bromiley, \textit{Historical Theology: An Introduction} (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 238.
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concluded that Calvin’s primary concern for the Christian life and the order of salvation could be developed and theorized in his understanding of sanctification.

2. Sanctification in Union with Christ

As examined above, Luther and Calvin show similarities in how they interpret in understanding the inseparable nature of justification and sanctification. But, Calvin’s stance between the two and his special concern about sanctification can be more clearly explicated and distinguished from Luther through Calvin’s theology of union with Christ.383 They show clearly different stances toward the inseparability of justification and sanctification. Luther tends to understand sanctification in the context of justification. He also regards union with Christ as a key doctrine through which justification as a significant concept penetrating through the soteriological journey of life can be interpreted. Yet, for Calvin, justification and sanctification are inseparable, but cannot be casually understood in terms of a logical, temporal sequence such as justification as logically or temporally prior to sanctification or the reverse. In other words, Calvin argues that the two elements in the order of salvation are equally important and they cannot be precisely understood apart from each other since they are inseparable branches of the same theological root, that is, the union with Christ.384

Calvin has a clear sense of the double grace385 that can necessarily be understood in

383 *Institutes* III.11.1.


385 Calvin defines the double grace in terms of justification and sanctification. For him, this double grace is fully related to Christ and the union with him. Calvin states, in *Institutes* III.11.1., “By partaking of him, we
union with Christ. For him, justification and sanctification are inseparably related to each other and the two are harmoniously formed and simultaneously take their dynamic shapes in union with Christ.

Although we may distinguish them [justification and sanctification], Christ contains both of them inseparably in himself. Do you wish, then, to attain righteousness in Christ? You must first possess Christ; but you cannot possess him without being made partaker in his sanctification, because he cannot be divided into pieces [1 Cor. 1:13]. Since, therefore, it is solely by expending himself that the Lord gives us these benefits to enjoy, he bestows both of them at the same time, the one never without the other. Thus it is clear how true it is that we are justified not without works yet not through works, since in our sharing in Christ, which justifies us, sanctification is just as much as included as righteousness.386

Likewise, Calvin stresses the significance and the oneness of Christ in order to clarify the dynamic dialectic of the inseparability and distinction between justification and sanctification.

By participation in Christ through faith, believers enter into a Trinitarian drama of encouraging a gracious Father who pardons our sin because of Christ’s blamelessness (justification) and a powerful Spirit who sanctifies believers for new life (sanctification). Both of these aspects are accessed through participation in Christ [union with Christ]; but both aspects would be damaged if the two sides of the double grace were mixed or collapsed into one another.387

Calvin’s emphasis on union with Christ with regard to justification and sanctification principally receive a double grace: namely, that being reconciled to God through Christ’s blamelessness, we may have in heaven instead of a Judge a gracious Father; and secondly, that sanctified by Christ’s spirit we may cultivate blamelessness and purity of life. Of regeneration, indeed, the second of these gifts, I have said what seemed sufficient.” Institutes III.11.1.

386 Institutes III.16.1.

arises especially as a strong reaction toward Andreas Osiander’s radical understanding of union with Christ. Osiander, who converted to Lutheranism as a Catholic priest, denied Lutheran understanding of forensic justification. He maintains that the righteousness of Jesus Christ is infused in believers by grace through faith “such that they participate in the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4) through union with Christ.” According to J. Todd Billings, Osiander contends that Christ’s righteousness “is infused and not forensically imputed.” Billings states, furthermore, Osiander’s understanding of the infusion of Christ’s righteousness results in the loss of the doctrine of forensic justification by faith as a key Reformed feature. In other words, there is no longer ground to clearly distinguish between justification and sanctification as a result. For Osiander, as a result, justification and sanctification become “both part of a process of the infusion of Christ’s righteousness, received in union with Christ.”

Calvin critiques Osiander’s understanding of union with Christ, which he conceptualizes as what is formed by the infusion of Christ’s divine nature. For Calvin, Osiander’s concept of union with Christ as a union of essence cannot be accepted. Calvin

\[\text{388 Ibid., 60.}\]

\[\text{389 Ibid.: Billings points out that Osiander’s argument for infusion of Christ’s righteousness brought about the loss of forensic imputation. “With the loss of forensic imputation, a key Reformational feature of the doctrine of justification by faith was lost, and there was no longer ground to clearly distinguish between justification and sanctification: they were both part of a process of the infusion of Christ’s righteousness, received in union with Christ.”}\]

\[\text{390 Ibid.}\]

\[\text{391 Ibid.}\]

\[\text{392 Institutes III.11.5.}\]
argues that union with Christ cannot be essential, but historical, ethical, and personal.\textsuperscript{393} Calvin maintains that Christians are “united with Christ through the secret power of his Spirit.”\textsuperscript{394} In other words, for Calvin, union with Christ is understood as a consequence of dynamic works of the Spirit which happens to individuals.

Moreover, Calvin points out that Osiander erroneously combines righteousness (justification) with regeneration (sanctification). Osiander’s concept of the infusion of Christ results in a confusion regarding double grace. According to Calvin, “Since God, for the preservation of righteousness, renews those whom he freely recons as righteous, Osiander mixes that gift of regeneration with this free acceptance and contends that they are one and the same.”\textsuperscript{395} For Osiander, the infusion of Christ’s divine essence in believers completes both kinds of grace. However, Calvin strongly criticizes Osiander’s absurdity of ambiguous distinction between justification and sanctification in union with Christ. Calvin maintains that justification and sanctification should be clearly distinguished from each other. In particular, his concern about sanctification makes clear the distinction between the two kinds of grace on the basis of his ethical emphasis, but his distinction is caused by his belief in the dynamic works of Christ with regard to his understanding of union with Christ. He speaks of two ways in which Christ lives in Christians in his commentary on Galatians 2:20 as follows:

Christ lives in us in two ways. The one life consists in governing us by his Spirit, and directing all our actions. The other makes us partakers of his righteousness, so that while we can do nothing of ourselves, we are accepted in Him in the sight of

\textsuperscript{393} Leith, \textit{John Calvin’s Doctrine of the Christian Life}, 99.
\textsuperscript{394} \textit{Institutes} III.11.5.
\textsuperscript{395} \textit{Institutes} III.11.6.
God. The first relates to regeneration, the second to justification by free grace.\textsuperscript{396}

For Calvin, union with Christ is the same root in which justification and sanctification can work inseparably and at the same time distinctively. Therefore, for Calvin, the ongoing Christian life seen through the lens of double grace is interpreted as union with Christ.

Furthermore, regarding Calvin’s concern about Christian ethics, “the radical transformation of the human heart that enables sinners to understand and embrace God’s moral order for their lives is the result of union with Christ.”\textsuperscript{397} That is, for Calvin, when human beings are engrafted into the bond with Christ, he comes and dwells in them and communicates his life to them through the secret energy of the Spirit so that they can have communion with Him. In this new life and new identity, they can come to know how to live their lives in accordance with Christ’s will.\textsuperscript{398} Ultimately, for Calvin, union with Christ by the work of the Spirit becomes an important theological foundation for Christian regeneration.

3. The Goal of Sanctification: Recovering \textit{Imago Dei}

As examined previously, for Calvin, sanctification can be defined as “the spiritual


\textsuperscript{398} \textit{Institutes} III.2.24.
growth that occurs as a result of union with Christ.” Spiritual growth occurs solely by the act of God’s free grace so that Christians can be empowered to die unto sins, live unto righteousness, and be regenerated in *Imago Dei* (the image of Christ). For Calvin, it can be also said that the end of Christian life is the restoration of the image of God in the individual which has been defiled and distorted by human transgression. At the core of the restoration process, there is sanctification.

The righteous nature of this restored image is evident in the person of Jesus Christ. His life is set before Christians “as an example, whose pattern” they ought to express in their lives. He is the image or universal rule to guide the godly in living a righteous life that is pleasing to God. … [That is,] “the Christian life receives its strongest motive to God’s work through the person and redemptive act of Christ.”

To put it another way, through the restoration process of the image of God, Christians are called to be conformed to Christ’s own life. The recovery of *Imago Dei* stems from their union with Christ. They need to actively pursue Christ’s life and try to imitate Christ himself. For Calvin, sanctification is not simply about outward behavior, but also inward affection for Christlikeness. He believes that a Christian’s active participation in union with Christ leads to his/her life conforming to the pattern of Christ’s life. He contends that the outward behavior should be the reflection of the inner-workings of one’s understanding and

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400 Ibid.

401 Parker, *Calvin: An Introduction to His Thought*, 86.


experience of Christ. However, there is the danger that believers are compelled to imitate mere actions of Christlikeness, forsaking regular and active communion with Christ himself. For Calvin, sanctification is not just imitated actions. It is a progressive journey of Christian life in which the image of God is embodied and is gradually restored in the believers through their union with Christ. That is, sanctification, for Calvin, can be defined as the ongoing process of mortificatio of the flesh and vivificatio of the Spirit. His framework of sanctification is composed of two aspects. First, mortificatio (the mortification) can be explained “as sorrow of soul and dread conceived from the recognition of sin and the awareness of divine judgment.” Second, vivification (the vivification) can be not only understood as the consolation that arises out of the goodness of God, but also expressed as “the desire to live in a holy and devoted manner, a desire arising from rebirth,” that is, by ‘doing good.’

Strictly speaking, for Calvin, sanctification begins with “a transformation for the soul” and “godly sorrow which hates sin.” Yet, sanctification is embodied through the

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404 Calvin, in a section about repentance concerning our regeneration by faith, mentions about mortification and vivification. “Mortification … as sorrow of soul and dread conceived from the recognition of sin and the awareness of divine judgment… is the first part of repentance, commonly called “contrition.”” Vivification is understood “as the consolation that arises out of faith. That is, when a man is laid low by the consciousness of sin and stricken by the fear of God, and afterward looks to the goodness of God – to his mercy, grace, salvation, which is through Christ – he raises himself up, he takes heart, he recovers courage, and as it were, returns from death to life. … It means … the desire to live in a holy and devoted manner, a desire arising from rebirth; as if it were said that man dies to himself that he may begin to live to God.” *Institutes* III.3.3.

405 Ibid.

406 Ibid.

407 Parker, *Calvin: An Introduction to His Thought*, 85-86.

408 Ibid., 85.
mortification and the vivification in the union of Christ with Christians. Chun-ming Abel Fong divides sanctification into two aspects: “the inauguration of the Christian life and the continual renewal in the Christian life (progressive sanctification).” For Calvin, sanctification begins with self-examination which is enabled by the initial work of the Spirit. The process of sanctification continues towards the restoration of the image of God in the believer through the power of the Spirit. Moreover, in the process they are empowered “to desire the will of God, to obey God’s righteousness, to perform good works according to the demand of the law, and to imitate the example of Christ in order to be like Christ.” Likewise, for Calvin sanctification is a consistent process of the Christian life ultimately for recovering the image of God.

B. Calvin’s Theology of The Third Use of the Law

Calvin pays attention to a divine perspective (or role) of sanctification, that is, the significance of sanctification in relation to union with Christ. This divine aspect helps to form a balanced relationship between justification and sanctification. Yet, for Calvin, sanctification also needs to be understood from a human perspective (or role). Hence, Calvin turns his eyes toward the law of God, the so-called third use of the law (usuus tertius legis) as

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the principal and proper use of the law.\textsuperscript{411}

1. Calvin’s Theological Concept of the Third Use of the Law

As examined, the Apostle Paul’s understanding of the law in the first chapter of this thesis is that the purpose of the law is originally good and just regardless of its functions. Calvin intends to not only make its functions clear, but to also restore it back to its original standing as symbolizing divine grace in which God’s will is embedded.

As Luther distinguishes functions of the law, Calvin is aware of its distinctive uses.\textsuperscript{412} Calvin follows Philip Melanchthon, one of Luther’s colleagues, who spoke of three uses of the law whereas Luther mentions a twofold use: “a civil use, to restrain wrongdoing, and a theological use, to bring about conviction of sin and drive the sinner to Christ.”\textsuperscript{413} For Calvin, the first function of the law (the theological use of the law) is what Luther calls the second use:

The first part is this: while it shows God’s righteousness, that is, the righteousness alone acceptable to God, it warns, informs, convicts, and lastly condemns, every man of his own unrighteousness. For man, blinded and drunk with self-love, must be compelled to know and to confess his own feebleness and impurity. If man is not clearly convinced of his own vanity, he is puffed up with insane confidence in his own mental powers, and can never be induced to recognize their slenderness as long as he measures them by a measure of his own choice. But as soon as he begins to compare his powers with the difficulty of the law, he has something to diminish his

\textsuperscript{411} \textit{Institutes} II.7.12. While Luther and Melanchthon consider the second use of the law (for Calvin the first use of the law) as the “proper and principal use,” for Calvin his third use of the law principally functions.

\textsuperscript{412} Calvin writes about a brief analysis of his threefold uses of the law in Book II.7.6-13 of his \textit{Institutes}.

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According to Calvin, the first use of the law (\textit{Usus Elencticus}) is to unmask Christians, reveal their sins, and lead them to seek salvation within Jesus Christ. Calvin likens the use of the law to using a mirror which is one of his favorite metaphors.\textsuperscript{415} Through the mirror of the law, Christians come to “contemplate our weakness, then the iniquity arising from this, and finally the curse coming from both – just as a mirror shows us the spots on our face.”\textsuperscript{416} For Calvin the law exposes one’s sinfulness and weakness so that he/she can see his/her existential realities through the mirror of law. Thus, believers come to acknowledge the necessity of something on which they are dependent. Calvin believes that only when the law discloses a person’s disease of iniquity in light of the mirror of law, will she/he come to be aware of the necessity of the gospel in her/his life and see it as vital medicine to treat her/his condition. According to Hesselink’s elucidation, therefore, “the first function of the law is to vanquish these deadly ills so that the heavenly physician may perform his gracious work in us.”\textsuperscript{417}

Calvin also speaks of the second use of the law which Luther calls the first. The second use of the law is “to maintain and preserve external discipline and order in society.

\textsuperscript{414} \textit{Institutes} II.7.6.


\textsuperscript{416} \textit{Institutes} II.7.7.

\textsuperscript{417} Hesselink, \textit{Calvin’s Concept of the Law}, 219.
This is known as the political use (*usus politicus*) or civil use (*usus civilis*) of the law, although the word ‘political’ has a much broader connotation than is usually understood today.\footnote{Ibid., 238-39.}

The second use of the law cannot be limited to non-Christians since the civil law may also serve its social-disciplinary function for pre-converted Christians. Moreover, it cannot be assumed that the second use of the law does not apply to post-converted Christians since its civil characteristics do not mechanically give influences only to a limited group of people.\footnote{Hesselink states that the second use of the law applies primarily to unbelievers, and is also for believers prior to their conversion.: Hesselink, *Calvin’s Concept of the Law*, 239.} The civil or political aspect of the second use of the law is not related merely to unbelievers or pre-converted believers. For Calvin, this use of the law is related to all of humanity, addressing the basic human condition.

The second function of the law is this: at least by fear of punishment to restrain certain men who are untouched by any care for what is just and right unless compelled by hearing the dire threats in the law. But they are restrained, not because their inner mind is stirred or affected, but because, being bridled, so to speak, they keep their hands from outward activity, and hold inside the depravity that otherwise they would wantonly have indulged.\footnote{Institutes II.7.10.}

For Calvin, the civil use of the law functions to “curb evil impulses and help to keep citizens in line, whether they are Christians or not.”\footnote{Johnson, *John Calvin, Reformer for the 21st Century*, 74.: William Johnson describes the second use of the law as follows: “We have civil laws that aim to restrain evil doers in our society, whether they are Christians or not. No matter what our religious beliefs, when we are driving a car down the highway and see a police officer, we usually slam on the brakes and sorry that we will be pulled over. Even if we were not speeding, our instinct is to slow down. We believe the “law” is going to condemn us.”}
These two functions of the law were already asserted by Luther. Yet, Calvin accepts and develops one more function of the law, the third use of the law which Philip Melanchthon began to use before Calvin started to use it. Calvin regards the third use of the law as most important for believers. As William Johnson writes, for Calvin, “the law not only convicts people of sin (first use) and restrains people from unrighteousness (second use).” Calvin notes that those two uses cannot fully restore the original meaning of the law. According to Hesselink, the twofold use of the law reflects divine identities as the Creator and the Redeemer, but without the other identity, the Sanctifier, it cannot fully show the Triune God.

…the three uses of the law correspond roughly to the three persons of the Godhead and their respective offices: the usus politicus and God the Creator; the usus elenchticus and God the Redeemer: the usus in renatis and God the Sanctifier. However, whereas the first two functions of the law are essentially negative in that they either restrain, condemn, or reveal the nature and power of sin, the “third and principal use pertains more closely to the proper purpose of the law,” for it “finds its place among believers in whose hearts the Spirit of God already lives and reigns.”

422 Luther formally lays stress on the twofold law concerning functions of the law. Yet, it can be said that Luther also precisely understands the third use of the law. Paul Hoyer states, “Here Luther stresses that if we could be completely controlled by our “new man” after conversion, we would not need the law, for we would naturally do what pleases God. But as long as we live on this earth we are tied to the “old Adam,” and often we believe that “our ways are God’s ways.” So, we do works that please man rather than God. Luther submits that we should use the law as our guide in choosing what actions please God.” In Luther’s Works, vol.26, Luther writes, “… anyone who wants to exert himself toward righteousness must first exert himself to the gospel. Now when he has heard and accepted this, let him joyfully give thanks to God, and then let him exert himself in good works that are commanded in the law; thus the law and works will follow hearing with faith. Then he will be able to walk safely in the light that is Christ; to be certain about choosing and doing works that are not hypocritical but truly good, pleasing to God, and commanded by Him; and to reject all the mummery of self-chosen works.”: Paul M. Hoyer, “Law and Gospel: With Particular Attention to the Third Use of the Law,” Concordia Journal (September, 1980): 198; Luther’s Works, Am. ed., vol. 26, 214-15.


424 Johnson, John Calvin, Reformer for the 21st Century, 74.

425 Hesselink, Calvin’s Concept of the Law, 251.; Institutes II.7.12.
For Calvin, the first two uses of the law cannot adequately explain the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. As such, the law cannot clearly reflect the transformative aspect of the Christian life since it tends to have a negative impact on the Christian life when it is related to human sinfulness as Paul notes. Therefore, Calvin focuses on a third use and elucidates its transforming role by the Spirit in the Christian life that is in line with Paul’s argument that the law can work positively for the sanctified life when it is interpreted by the Spirit. William Johnson remarks, “By grace, it [the law] gives believers positive guidance concerning the will of God for their lives. Calvin calls this third use the principal use of the law.” It seems to me that the third use is favored for sanctification because it recovers the original intent for which it was designed. He believes it was originally designed by the Creator for those created beings who are in relationship with God.

According to Calvin, the Christian life consists of a dialectical double process: mortification and vivification. He considers the process of the Christian life as a dynamic race of faith and spiritual growth. He is also assured that Christian can make progress in the Christian life not only through the law as a norm and a guide, but also through the Spirit as the sanctifying source of power. Calvin notes that in the process the Spirit illuminates the truth and the divine will embedded in the law. Calvin suggests that through the third use

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426 Johnson, John Calvin, Reformer for the 21st Century, 74.

427 Institutes III.3.3-8.

428 Institutes III.3.9.
of the law the dynamic transformation of believers in the Christian life can be observed.

Calvin’s third use of the law is intended for believers, who are keenly experiencing the phase of ‘mortification’ and who firmly believe the dynamic works of the Spirit in themselves.\textsuperscript{429} Calvin argues that believers can see and experience deeper and more insightful meaning in the third use of the law for faithful and ethical living than in the first two uses. The primary aim of the law, for Calvin, is for believers to comprehend the original will of God embedded in the law and guide them to gladly obey and follow God’s divine will. To put it another way, from the perspective of the third use of the law, the law “admonishes believers and urges them on in well-doing.”\textsuperscript{430}

The third and principal use, which pertains more closely to the proper purpose of the law, finds its place among believers in whose hearts the Spirit of God already lives and reigns. For even though they have the law written and engraved upon their hearts by the finger of God [Jer. 31:33; Heb. 10:16], that is, have been so moved and quickened through the directing of the Spirit that they long to obey God, they still profit by the law in two ways. Here is the best instrument for them to learn more thoroughly each day the nature of the Lord’s will to which they aspire, and to confirm them in the understanding of it. … Again, because we need not only teaching but also exhortation, the servant of God will also avail himself of this benefit of the law: by frequent meditation upon it to be aroused to obedience, be strengthened in it, and be drawn back from the slippery path of transgression.\textsuperscript{431}

Believers who already possess the righteousness of God given by grace through faith, no longer need try to obtain the righteousness through their works. It may be taken for granted that believers as justified are in union with Christ and are led by the Holy Spirit, thus

\textsuperscript{429} \textit{Institutes} II.7.12.

\textsuperscript{430} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{431} Ibid.
they act in righteous ways. Therefore, it might seem that the third use of the law is designed for believers. However, Calvin is convinced that believers are those who indeed require the law as a lens to guide them to discern and obey God’s will. In sum, considering this concept of the law by Calvin, “this emphasis on the role of the law in the Christian life is a corollary of Calvin’s accent on sanctification.” For Calvin, the third use of the law has an integral purpose that seeks to mature Christians, that is, for the sanctification of Christians.

2. The Third Use of the Law and Sanctification

As probed in the previous section, Calvin tries to find intersecting points where sanctification and the Christian life meet. In other words, Calvin devises a dialectical, theological way to explain how the divine and human roles in sanctification mutually work, utilizing the third use of the law as a primary focus in his theology. Calvin believes that the Christian life can be ideally lived out within proper boundaries. Humans require structure and rules to stray on a consistent moral track since the human heart can be easily led astray,

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432 Hesselink, Calvin’s Concept of the Law, 253-54.

433 Ibid., 251.

434 According to I. John Hesselink, Calvin does not discuss much about the third use of the law in his Institutes, but Calvin rather alludes to it in incidental ways through. Hesselink details Calvin’s discussion of the third use of the law in the Institutes as follows: “The three uses of the law are discussed briefly in book 2 of the Institutes; but whereas the civil or political use is taken up again in chapter 20 of book 4 (“Civil Government”), at first glance it appears that the third and “principal use” is dropped after the brief treatment in sections 12 and 13. (There also an allusion to this function of the law in 3.19.2.) This, however, is not actually the case, for Calvin takes up the third use of the law again in his discussion of the Christian life in book 3, particularly chapters 6 and 7. There is no explicit reference to the third use of the law in either of these chapters, but rather incidental references to the law at the beginning of both chapters indicate that Calvin is presupposing the discussion of the law in book 2, chapter 7.” I. John Hesselink, “Christ, the Law, and the Christian: An Unexplored Aspect of the Third Use of the Law in Calvin’s Theology,” Donald K. McKim, ed., Readings in Calvin’s Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 187.
and is “deceitful above all things.” (Jer. 17:9) Calvin, in his commentary on Jeremiah, writes, “For unless he [God] prescribes to us what his [God’s] will is and regulates all the actions of our life according to a certain rule (certam regulam), we would be perpetually going astray.” As I. John Hesselink says, this is why God’s law as revealed in the Scripture, for Calvin, becomes a crucial concept for living the Christian life with relation to sanctification. To be more specific, as Paul Jacobs denotes, “The treatment of the doctrine of sanctification, the so-called ethic of Calvin’s, is an unfolding of the doctrine of the tertius usus legis [the third use of the law].” Likewise, through the third use of the law, Calvin gives shape to his theological concept of regeneration in the Christian life and restoration of the image of God. He believes that regeneration is to “manifest in the life of believers a harmony and agreement between God’s righteousness and their obedience.” Furthermore, he notes that the law of God contains a pathway through which the image of God can be restored in believers.

However, Calvin points out that because human “slowness needs many goads and helps, it will be profitable to assemble from various passages of Scripture a pattern for the conduct of life in order that those who heartily repent may not err in their zeal.” Therefore,

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435 Calvin’s Commentary on Jeremiah, 32:33 (CO 39.20).


438 Institutes III.6.1.

439 Ibid.
in order to be holy as God, who adopts believers as God’s sons and daughters, Calvin argues that Christians need to dwell on Scripture in which they are exhorted to live holy and righteous lives. Yet, Calvin acknowledges that this exhortation to live holy and upright lives is closely tied to partaking in the grace of communion with God by infused holiness of God rather than “the Scriptural warning that we [Christians] must be made holy” since God is holy (Lev. 19:2; 1 Peter 1:15-16). Such merciful scriptural exhortations, for Calvin, become the motives for the Christian life.

Yet, Calvin notes that Christians can find a more compelling motive to live lives set apart for God in the redemptive act of Christ. For him, Scriptural exhortation becomes meaningful in light of Christ and his example of sanctified living.

…to wake us more effectively, Scripture shows that God the Father, as he has reconciled us to himself in his Christ [cf. II Cor. 5:18], has in him stamped for us the likeness [cf. Heb. 1:3] to which he would have us conform. Now, let these persons who think that moral philosophy is duly and systematically set forth solely among philosophers find me among the philosophers a more excellent dispensation. They, while they wish particularly to exhort us to virtue, announce merely that we should live in accordance with nature. But Scripture draws its exhortation from the true fountain. It not only enjoins us to refer our life to God, its author, to whom it is bound; but after it has taught that we have degenerated from the true origin and condition of our creation, it also adds that Christ, through whom we return into favor with God, has been set before us as an example, whose pattern we ought to express in our life. What more effective thing can you require than this one thing? Nay, what can you require beyond this one thing? For we have been adopted as sons by the Lord with this one condition: that our life express Christ, the bond of our adoption. Accordingly, unless we give and devote ourselves to righteousness, we not only revolt from our Creator with wicked perfidy but we also abjure our Savior

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440 Hesselink, “Christ, the Law, and the Christian: An Unexplored Aspect of the Third Use of the Law in Calvin’s Theology,” 188.

441 Institutes III.6.2.

442 Institutes III.6.3.
himself.443

Through Christ and his forgiveness of sins, Calvin finds a principal motive for Christian sanctification. Accordingly, he notes that Christians, who want to be regenerated, first need to pay attention to Christ as the model of a Christian sanctified life. Christ becomes the best interpreter of the law through love and forgiveness of his life.444

As Hesselink states, “Calvin’s high estimate of the Decalogue and praise of the law in general can be grossly misunderstood,”445 and it could be maintained that his “whole outlook on life is tinctured with the spirit of Moses rather than Christ.”446 Yet, Calvin’s true focus should be maintained as being Christ-oriented. It can be asserted that “Calvin has so Christianized the law that the norm of the Christian life is not so much the Ten Commandments as the teaching of Jesus.”447 For Calvin, Christ becomes the interpreter of the law so that it can no longer be punitive or a heavy load for human sanctification. Rather, the law provides a portal through which Christians see and experience God’s will so that they can find a direction for the regenerated life.448 As the law is interpreted through Christ

443 Ibid.

444 Institutes II.8.7.


448 To clarify it more, for example, Jesus came to fulfill the law himself by giving the Golden Rule (Love the Lord your God and your neighbor as yourself) summing up the Decalogue. Through the law in the Scripture
and his life, the law can reveal its principal significance as the third use.\textsuperscript{449}

In conclusion, for Calvin, his concept of the law, especially the third use of the law, is given a primary role in his ethics.\textsuperscript{450} That is, his understanding of sanctification is closely related to his concept of the third use of the law. Considering the relationship of the law with Christ, the principal function of the law is interpreted primarily through love and forgiveness of Christ so that the third use of the law can be understood as grace which is gifted to believers by Christ. For example, by the forgiveness of my own sins through love and forgiveness of Jesus, I am free to forgive my enemies. The law becomes realized as God’s grace through Christ. Therefore, for Calvin, the third use of the law cannot be understood apart from the gospel through Christ, and it is divine grace itself that serves as the impetus for Christian sanctification.

3. Calvin’s Theological Principle of Simul and Its Theological Implications with Respect to the Third Use of the Law

As examined in the previous section, Calvin develops his concept of the third use of the law in relation to sanctification and his views on ethics. As in Luther’s understanding of the inseparable, concomitant relationship between justification and sanctification, for Calvin, sanctification cannot be fully understood without his theological concept of the third use of the law. Calvin’s concept of the third use of the law is closely related with his theology of


sanctification. Furthermore, for Calvin, the third use of the law may be also comprehended by his understanding of anthropology he posits that justification and sanctification are directly related to the lives of Christians from the soteriological perspective. As with Luther, for Calvin, anthropology becomes foundational in the development of his theology.

a. Calvin’s *Simul*: Anthropology in Simultaneity of Justification and Sanctification

Luther’s Christian anthropology is based on the statement, *simul iustus et peccator*. According to the statement, Luther contends that believers are justified people, while simultaneously being sinners.451 Luther emphasizes this simultaneous principle of the believer’s anthropological identity. Through this principle, he describes a two-fold identity of believers in his *totus homo* theology. For Luther, this phrase, *simul iustus et peccator*, not only shows his anthropocentric understanding of the believer’s identity, but also clarifies the divine grace perpetually offered in the Christian life.452

According to George Hunsinger, Calvin pays attention to a different approach with *simul*. Unlike Luther, the phrase, *simul iustus et peccator*, does not appear in Calvin’s *Institutes*. Calvin does not seem to consider believers as an unchangeable being who is a justified person and simultaneously a sinner. Rather, he focuses on the believer as one who


452 Lohse, *Martin Luther’s Theology: Its Historical and Systematic Development*, 262-64.
gradually grows up in Christ. He admits that humans have the two-fold status as *simul iustus et peccator*, yet he contends that the human existential portrait could be gradually and dynamically restored into *Imago Dei* within the dialectic of justification and sanctification. Of course, he does not argue that those who are getting restored into the image of God require less God’s grace because they essentially become less sinful. Calvin’s *simul* denotes an emphasis on the simultaneity of justification and sanctification. “The Lord freely justifies his own in order that he may at the same time restore them to true righteousness by sanctification of his Spirit.” His stress on sanctification could be understood well in a structure formed in simultaneity of justification and sanctification. That is, for Calvin, simultaneity of justification and sanctification can be explicated through his use of *simul*.

Do you wish, then, to attain righteousness in Christ? You must first possess Christ; but you cannot possess him without being made partaker in his sanctification, because he cannot be divided into pieces [1 Cor. 1:13]. Since, therefore, it is solely by expending himself that the Lord gives us these benefits to enjoy, he bestows both of them at the same time, the one never without the other. Thus it is clear how true it is that we are justified not without works yet not through works, since in our sharing in Christ, which justifies us, sanctification is just as much included as righteousness.

Sanctification, for Calvin, signifies divine grace which is provided to those who are justified

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455 *Institutes* III.3.19.

456 *Institutes* III.16.1.
by Christ. “For Calvin, sanctification, like justification, is always the free gift of God. It is not a human work, and it has no basis in human merit. It is the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life.”

Sanctification is “the Spirit’s gradual impartation to the believer of Christ’s own righteousness.” Therefore, for Calvin, the order of salvation is considered a gradual process whereas Luther regards it as a perpetual process. Luther maintains that humanity as simul iustus et peccator needs to be dependent on “the perpetual advent of grace, which confronts sin continually afresh, and continually overcomes it as a whole.” Yet, Calvin sees “the existential aspect of salvation” as “a process of ‘more and more’.” In other words, for Calvin, salvation is a process which gradually makes progress in the dynamic journey of the Christian life. As a result, for Calvin, the gradual process of salvation comes to a place of primary focus in regards to sanctification as it implies inevitable recovery of the image of God.

b. The Third Use of the Law in Calvin’s Simultaneity

Luther is attentive to the human role in the process of sanctification on the basis of the totus iustus principle. Sanctification is not overlooked in favor of justification.

457 Hunsinger, “A Tale of Two Simultaneities: Justification and Sanctification in Calvin and Barth,” 69-70.
458 Ibid., 70.
459 Ibid., 75.
460 Ibid.
Justification and sanctification work together inseparably. Moreover, Luther believes that for the sinful man, justification as forgiveness of sins leads to authentic sanctification. Nevertheless, Luther’s *simul* in his anthropology results in human’s primary focus on justification as perpetual grace of God.

For Calvin, humanity can live in the dynamically changeable life. To put it another way, humans in Christ can live a life that is not static but ever-changing through the sanctifying work of the Spirit within the dynamic simultaneity of justification and sanctification. Through Luther’s anthropocentrical concept, that is, humanity’s state of *simul iustus et peccator*, he foregrounds human existential realities of identity. In contrast, Calvin elucidates the gradual growth of the Christian life through his concept of simultaneity of justification and sanctification. To put it another way, believers gradually grow up and more and more sanctified in the order of salvation, that is, in the dynamic relationship of justification and sanctification. Accordingly, Christian sanctification can be more clearly understood through Calvin’s simultaneity. Luther and Calvin’s distinctive perspectives of theological anthropology reveal different frameworks of doctrines and practical application for the sanctified Christian life.

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463 According to Fong’s remarks on doctrinal and practical concreteness for the sanctified Christian life, “Calvin’s emphasis on the outward expression of Christian faith is much stronger than Luther’s.” Paul Tillich also describes the difference between Luther’s and Calvin’s doctrinal, practical concreteness with regard to sanctification: “What describes the Christian life for Calvin is not Luther’s view of the ups and downs, the ecstasy and despair, in the Christian. For Calvin the Christian life is a line going upward, exercised in methodical stages.”; Fong, “Luther, Melanchthon and Calvin: The Dynamic Balance between the Freedom of God’s Grace and the Freedom of Human Responsibility in Salvation,” 419.; Paul Tillich, *A History of Christian
Furthermore, Calvin proposes his theological approach of the third use of the law with regard to the gradual sanctified life of believers. For Calvin, it is asserted that the third use of the law helps to produce the fruit in the believer’s life which are born through the dynamic simultaneity of justification and sanctification.\textsuperscript{464} Here, it is significant to point out that the third use of the law is understood within the relationship of justification and sanctification.

It can also be demonstrated that the third use of the law is understood in a larger framework of the gospel. Basically, for Calvin, the law plays a significant function in the dialectic of law and gospel so that the gospel can be clearly embodied and elucidated within the theological tension of the two. Furthermore, he notes that the law also functions as a form of the gospel and a divinely articulated form of rule that speaks to the continual regeneration in the Christian life.\textsuperscript{465} After the gospel is heard and experienced, believers come to face the law in a different way. That is, the law can be a vehicle through which God’s goodness toward humans can be made known.\textsuperscript{466} Calvin calls this vehicle the third use of the law.

According to Calvin, the law can be viewed “as an indispensable part of the gospel”\textsuperscript{467} because the law becomes an active expression of God’s will. William Johnson states, “To be Christian, for Calvin, had a strongly ethical edge: it was to live out the

\textsuperscript{464} Hesselink, \textit{Calvin’s Concept of the Law}, 283-85.

\textsuperscript{465} Johnson, \textit{John Calvin, Reformer for the 21st Century}, 73.

\textsuperscript{466} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{467} Hesselink, \textit{Calvin’s Concept of the Law}, 285.
purposes of God. It stands to reason that if we seek to serve God, then we should be eager to conform to the will of God.” In order to follow God’s purpose in the Christian life, Calvin maintains that Christians can turn their eyes toward the law of God since “the law is not just an arbitrary set of rules but an expression of God’s very own character.” Calvin asserts, therefore, that believers can see divine love as one aspect of God’s will which is embedded in the law. Through the third use of the law, believers’ gratitude is motivated in their lives of sanctification. Thus, Guenther H. Haas writes, “the Christian ethic is the response of thankfulness.”

In justification, where the gospel clearly stands, there seems to be no longer any place for the law. Yet for Calvin, it should not be deduced that the law is superfluous for believers. For Calvin, the law remains significant since God’s will and purpose for the Christian life are embedded in it. The law is to be obeyed not under compulsion, but as an immediate and glad response to God’s will. For Calvin, the framework of the gospel is revealed and formed through the dialectical relationship of the law and the gospel. The gospel extends its power of divine grace to the third use of the law so that the believers, who experience the gospel, can willingly obey the law and experience God’s will as grace in the law.

468 Johnson, John Calvin, Reformer for the 21st Century, 73.

469 Ibid.


471 Parker, Calvin: An Introduction to His Thought, 105.

472 According to Hesselink’s view of the correlation between the law and God’s will, the law as its third use is a concrete way to reveal the will of God: “Calvin in various connections either speaks of the law as an expression
Furthermore, Calvin keeps the third use of the law at the forefront for the recovery of *imago Dei* with respect to his theological anthropology. For him, the law as the third use “functions as a positive instrument to enable believers to understand and embody the will of God in their lives.”\(^473\) The law helps believers stay on the path to the recovery of the image of God. Calvin asserts that the law leads them into the holy life, in which the image of God is revived, in two ways.

First, the law is the best instrument to provide thorough instruction for believers in the nature of the Lord’s will, and to confirm their understanding of it. If people embody what it enjoins, they will express the image of God in their lives. Second, because believers still struggle with sin, the law has the power to exhort them to holiness, especially when they become weary, complacent, or apathetic.\(^474\)

In this recovery of *imago Dei*, Calvin pays attention to both the soul and body.\(^475\) For Calvin, the law as the third use is concerned, not only with “outward honesty” and behavior, but with “inward and spiritual righteousness.”\(^476\) As Jesus Christ preaches in the Sermon on the


\(^{474}\) Ibid., 101.


\(^{476}\) *Institutes* II.8.6.
Mount, “the law is fulfilled, not simply by outward works, but by spiritual purity.”

Conclusion

Calvin admits with Luther that justification as forgiveness of sins and a free gift of righteousness is a key doctrine for salvation. Yet Calvin believes that humanity consists of mutable beings with regard to Calvin’s concept of simultaneity in the relationship of justification and sanctification. In particular, his understanding of the dynamic simultaneity of justification and sanctification focuses on a gradual process of salvation comparing with Luther’s concept of a perpetual process of grace which continually confronts sins and overcomes them as a whole. For Calvin sanctification is emphasized as an important concept in the gradual process for salvation.

Furthermore, Calvin notes that the law plays an important role with regard to sanctification as well as justification in Luther’s theology. He proposes the third use of the law as another grace of God through which the image of God can be more and more recovered by the Spirit. For him, the third use of the law is regarded as an indispensable part of the gospel and its inseparable fruit, sanctification, is inseparable from justification. The law is not just a rule for Christians. In the law are embedded God’s very own character and will. Thus, for Calvin the third use of the law inspires a sense of Christian ethics and provides ethical implications in Christian sanctification. As Paul notes, Calvin has a clear understanding of the law that plays a dynamic role in justification and sanctification. The

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next chapter will probe how the law has been understood and used for ethics in homiletics. Further, how the law can be used for ethics in preaching with relation to the gospel will be explored.
Chapter IV
Homiletical Perspectives of Christian Ethical Living:
Law and Gospel, and Their Ethical Implications in Homiletics

Christian Preaching has continued for one score of centuries. Throughout the long history of Christianity, preaching seems to have had numerous positive influences on Christian practical lives. In other words, preaching’s significant role in Christian worship probably has made diverse impacts on Christians’ faith and lives. As well, considering that preaching is kerygmatic, transformational or ethical as many homileticians argue, preaching may have not only helped Christian ethics to be formed, but also made various positive contributions to many areas of society. On the other side, however, some Christians seem to have made little ethical impact on human lives or are currently causing various ethical troubles inside and outside the church. Ethical, spiritual-formational functions of


479 David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, Unchristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity... and Why It Matters (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007), 44-46. David Kinnaman states, Christians acquired ‘a hypocritical image.’ According to him, that is obviously because their lives do not match their beliefs. “In many ways, their lifestyles and perspectives are no different from those of anyone around them.” With one research conducted by the Barna Group, David Kinnaman elucidates reasons why Christians got a hypocritical reputation: “we explored more than one hundred variables related to values, behaviors, and lifestyles, including both religious and nonreligious areas of life. We compared born-again Christians to non-born-again adults. We discovered that born-agains were distinct on some religious variables, most notably owning more Bibles, going to church more often, and donating money to religious nonprofits (especially a church). However, when it came to nonreligious factors – the substance of people’s daily choices, actions, and attitudes – there were few meaningful gaps between born-again Christians and non-born-agains. Christians emerged as distinct in the areas people would expect – some religious activities and commitments – but not in other areas of life.” Of course, it cannot be maintained that every Christian has a hypocritical image. It would be also true that many Christians have shown positive models of the ethical life and have actually contributed to many areas of society. They place God in the heart of their lives, and seek God’s way which shapes a Christian worldview. Nevertheless, the world pays more attention to the negative side of Christian lives than Christians’ positive contributions to ethical formation of the world.; For instance, as for the negative side and the ethical corruption
preaching still need to be deeply explored with relation to Christian ethics and its influence on Christians’ lives.

In some respects, Christian ethics in practice is not clearly distinguished from secular ethics.\textsuperscript{480} In \textit{From Christ to the World}, an introductory book on Christian Ethics, the difference between Christian ethics and secular ethics from one perspective is explained in this way:

Whereas secular ethics identifies the primary questions of ethics as “what is the good life? What is the life worth living?” Christian ethics identifies the primary questions of ethics as “Who am I as a follower of Jesus? What life is worthy of one who recognizes the authority of Jesus? What sort of people should those who confess Jesus as Christ be?”\textsuperscript{481}

Christian ethics can be closely connected with the gospel centering around Jesus Christ, and is to be elaborated in preaching as proclamation of the gospel. That is, Christian ethics may be theologically understood with close relation to justification, and its meaning may be practically elaborated from the perspective of sanctification. This chapter begins with this

\textsuperscript{480} One of primary reasons of preaching’s weak impact on Christian ethical maturity might be caused by weakness of Christian ethical, theological foundations. In other words, preaching in some aspects might not have placed its emphasis on Christian ethical perspective. Moreover, preaching might not have been interested in forming Christian ethical foundations and theological approaches to diverse ethical issues.

assumption and will examine Christian ethics in homiletics with regard to the gospel.

In this chapter, I will historically and theologically examine the relationship of law and gospel in homiletics with respect to Christian ethics and review what has been said about revitalizing law and gospel and the ethical direction of the gospel in preaching. In the first section, I will explore representative paradigms of ethical preaching with my focus on the law and its function. These have been typically regarded as the norm of ethical engagement in homiletics, but they have tended often to result in avoiding the gospel. The law has obvious limitations for ethical preaching without the gospel. In the second section, regarding essential dynamics for ethical preaching I will probe the homiletical understanding of the gospel from post-World War II to the present. In the last section, I will finally examine the wedding of ethics and the gospel modeled in diverse recent homiletical theories so that I can arrange a theoretical foundation for what I will call a homiletic of ethics.

A. The Ethical Engagement of Law in Homiletics

Today many homileticians speak about ethics in preaching. There is concern for human life context and experience. Homiletical voices tend to be engaged from the perspective of Christian anthropology. Autonomous ethics works without explicit relation to theology or the Christian faith. Ethics can also be understood theonomously as deriving its nomos (norms) from God. Homileticians inadvertently tend to operate in both camps. Yet,

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they tend to finally turn to divine ethical voices in the Bible to search for divine norms, and they generally come to focus on the law in the written Word of God to ethically engage in homiletics.\textsuperscript{483} The law is regarded as the norm of ethical engagement in homiletics. Even if the term, ‘law,’ is not typically engaged, its function is engaged. This has been generally considered as an overall understanding of the law’s engagement in ethical homiletics. The law has been generally understood as a biblical lens through which rules and directions for Christian sanctification are interpreted and embodied. Then, we will examine how such engagement with the law has been taken shapes in ethical homiletics using three paradigms: a problem-solving paradigm, a moralizing paradigm and a theonomous ethics paradigm.\textsuperscript{484}

1. The Problem-solving (Decision-making) Paradigm

Sally A. Brown notes that in the mid-twentieth century ethicists began to struggle with the socio-cultural destruction and unexpected social confusion\textsuperscript{485} of that time period. At the same time, Christian ethicist groups were mainly concerned with examination of moral issues and moral decision-making in the period, from the 1940’s to the 1960’s. In particular, biblical groups began especially to give attention to the appropriation and the effective uses


\textsuperscript{485} Sally Brown writes, “Mid-twentieth century ethicists struggled to come to terms with a world devastated by two unimaginably destructive world wars and faced with the high stakes of burgeoning technologies with profound ethical implications.”: Brown, “Rethinking the Moral-Theological Tasks of Preaching: The Case for Reviving the Conversation between Homiletics and Christian Ethics,” 211.
of biblical materials as norms or resource for Christian ethics. \textsuperscript{486} As Stanley Hauerwas maintains, the biblical text functions as an authority for Christian ethics and the moral use of the Bible has power to help Christians to recall the stories of God for the continual guidance of their individual and communal lives.\textsuperscript{487}

This trend also had an influence on the homiletic field. Problem-solving\textsuperscript{488} or moral decision-making preaching has been understood as a representative ethical homiletic.\textsuperscript{489} Even in recent homiletics, as Brown remarks, “the assumption is widespread that preaching on ethics or prophetic preaching means preaching on particular social issues or matters requiring moral decision-making on the part of individuals, the local congregation, or the wider church.”\textsuperscript{490}

In these biblical and homiletical concerns for issue-centered, problem-solving ethics,


\textsuperscript{488} Thomas Long mentions problem solving in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} edition of \textit{The Witness of Preaching}. He addresses problem solving in his explaining Fred Craddock’s sermon form. He also equates problem solving with law and gospel so that Eugene Lowry and Paul Wilson’s homiletical forms are categorized as problem solving sermon. However, problem-solving mentioned in this chapter does not correspond to Long’s concept. Here problem-solving preaching means sermon on ethics or prophetic preaching that is designed for ethical decision-making with relation to a certain issue.: Thomas Long, \textit{The Witness of Preaching}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} edition (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 124-29.

\textsuperscript{489} Van Seters, \textit{Preaching and Ethics} (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2004), 74.: Van Seters’ remark is worthy of note, ethical values are not just based on “personal preferences, inherited social expectations, some decision-making consensus, or an agreement to resolve conflicts. The good derives from the goodness of God.”; Charles L. Campbell, “More than Quandaries: Character Ethics and Preaching.” \textit{Journal for Preachers} 16 (Pentecost, 1993), 31-37.

\textsuperscript{490} Brown, “Rethinking the Moral-Theological Tasks of Preaching: The Case for Reviving the Conversation between Homiletics and Christian Ethics,” 211.
the law and its function as the norm of ethical engagement have been assumed as resources for ethical formation of Christians and have played a leading role in the homiletical field. According to J. Philip Wogaman’s argument, prophetic preaching has naturally been regarded as “embodying something of the works of the law that the apostle Paul contrasted with faith and grace.”

2. The Moralizing Paradigm

Another paradigm of ethics in preaching may be called a moralizing paradigm of preaching. Preaching morals is not negative per se, but preaching morals becomes moralizing, which is regarded as “a pejorative term” in homiletics, when the biblical authors do not intend to speak of morals. As Sidney Greidanus says, in practice, morals and right conduct are frequently taught in the Scripture: the Decalogue, diverse wisdom in Proverbs, prophetic voices in the OT, the Sermon on the Mount and other lessons of Jesus in the Gospel, and various exhortations of Paul in his letters. However, Greidanus explains that morals in sermon are transformed into moralizing preaching if any moral is intentionally drawn from a scriptural text in which that moral is not originally intended by the author.

491 J. Philip Wogaman, *Speaking the Truth in Love: Prophetic Preaching to a Broken World* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 3-17. However, Wogaman distance himself from such understanding of the prophetic preaching. His understanding of the prophetic is about revealing the reality of God to the hearers through the preacher as a prophet. He explains, “Prophetic preaching draws people into the reality of God in such a way that they cannot any longer be content with conventional wisdom and superficial existence.”


493 Ibid.
Nevertheless, as Greidanus says, preachers have fallen into the trap of moralizing preaching.

Their [preachers’] assumption is that a sermon is not complete until they have admonished the congregation to do something or not to do something. Preachers therefore tend to read the text through moralistic glasses, asking the text what it says about right conduct or wrong conduct. But not every biblical text speaks to the issue of conduct. For example, to read a biblical narrative as if it were law is a genre mistake, and the preacher ends up drawing morals from the text counter to the text’s intention.494

Likewise, when the preacher interprets the Scripture mainly as a form of the law regardless of its genre or the original intention of the author, preaching is easily transformed into moralizing preaching. Furthermore, the law is improperly used as the norm of ethical engagement in homiletics, and its integral role in the gospel comes to be dismissed.495

Nonetheless, many coercive voices of “do’s” and “don’ts” have been heard in sermons. Many texts have been interpreted as a form of the law and used for moralizing messages. In today’s preaching, as a result, the gospel is frequently concealed and many scriptural texts are taught as moral lessons.496

3. The Theonomous Ethics Paradigm

Another ethical preaching paradigm is theorized especially on the basis of Christian anthropology. Much Christian anthropology assumes that humans can be understood only in

494 Ibid., 128.


496 Wilson, The Practice of Preaching, 104-05.; idem, God Sense: Reading the Bible for Preaching (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001), 99-111.
relation to God. Secular ethical approaches, on the other hand, can be derived from human reason, emotion, or experience without any reference to God. One of the representative examples of such a secular, autonomous ethical theory, as Charles E. Bouchard, O.P. notes, is Immanuel Kant’s categorical imperative. According to Kant, human beings are able to recognize and select ethical behaviors with the help of the categorical imperative as an absolute, unconditional requirement.\textsuperscript{497}

Many preachers acknowledge that homiletical ethics should be theonomous. That is, ethics in preaching obtains its norms from the Scripture. Though ethical preaching is commonly understood as theonomous, ethics in homiletics may be variously theorized and the Scripture may be differently interpreted depending on the perspectives of Christian anthropology.\textsuperscript{498} Bouchard explains Christian anthropology for ethics largely through two approaches: one approach emphasizes divine absoluteness and human limitedness with regard to God’s righteousness and human depravity, and the other approach understands

\textsuperscript{497} Bouchard, O.P., “God, Ethics and,” Wilson, ed., The New Interpreter’s Handbook of Preaching, 124.: Immanuel Kant defines an imperative “as any proposition that declares a certain action (or inaction) to be necessary.” He elucidates two kinds of imperative: the hypothetical imperative and the categorical imperative. He argues that those imperatives play a function as a way of evaluating motivations for action. That is, they become ethical drives. According to his understanding of those imperatives, while “hypothetical imperatives apply to someone dependent on them having certain ends,” a categorical imperative denotes “an absolute, unconditional requirement that asserts its authority in all circumstances, both required and justified as an end in itself.”: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Categorical_impervative

\textsuperscript{498} According to John S. McClure, Christian ethics constructs Christian identity with regard to “the other.” That is, whereas through a dialectical stance which reads the Bible to foster identity Christian individual, ecclesial identity becomes notable toward “the other,” through a “erasure” stance which reads the Bible as subversive of identity Christian identity is torn up “in the process of ‘making signs’ to the canon’s other, the neighbor or the stranger.” Likewise, Christian ethics may be variously understood and theorized depending on the perspectives of the Bible and Christian anthropology.: John S. McClure, Other-wise Preaching: A Postmodern Ethic for Homiletics (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2001), 19-26.
“human nature as capable of integrating grace or being perfected by grace.” Depending on which approach the preacher accepts, according to Bouchard’s exploration of ethics and Christian anthropology, the preacher’s ethical perspective is decided and the locus of the hearer is differentiated. Moreover, the preacher’s understanding of the Scripture may be located in the dialectical view or the sacramental view of the relationship between human nature and divine grace. More concretely defining both views of the relationship, in the dialectical view, the effects of the original sin is relatively put more weight on, and human ability of mediation and immanence of divine grace in humans are de-emphasized. On the other hand,

Unlike the dialectical approach, the sacramental view understands that even after the fall, elements of divine goodness remain in creation and human beings, that it is possible for human beings to initiate acts of goodness, that the church serves in a mediating role in offering the sacrament of salvation, and that one finds within society certain aspects that anticipate the realm of God.


502 As for exemplary sacramental theologians and homileticians, it may be said that Catholic theologians and Wesleyan theologians have this sacramental view. Bouchard writes, “Wesley allows for rationality and experience as sources of moral knowledge; these are similar to the Catholic understanding of natural law.” Representatively, Hilker builds her theology of preaching through the sacramental imagination. In her Naming Grace, she introduces Karl Rahner, Edward Schillebeeckx, and many liberation theologians including feminist, ecological liberation, Hispanic/Latino, African-American theologians as examples of theologians and homileticians who belong to the sacramental imagination group.: Hilker, Naming Grace: Preaching and the Sacramental Imagination, 30-43.; Bouchard, O.P., “God, Ethics and,” Wilson, ed., The New Interpreter’s Handbook of Preaching, 124.

Regardless of which stance the preacher takes, however, one may say that the preacher comes to interpret the Scriptural text as a law-centered divine voice as he/she views sermons from an ethical perspective. On the one hand, the preacher who accepts a dialectical view of the relationship between God’s grace and human nature is prone to consider the Scriptural text as an important tool of the law, which solidly fixes the dialectical relationship of grace and nature. On the other hand, the sacramental view of the relationship, which emphasizes and accepts the possibility of sanctification within individual nature, also uses the Scripture “as a moral reminder that illuminates and deepens our rational understanding of God’s law.” As a result, even a sacramental theology of ethical preaching based on the possibility of human mediation for an ethical life tends to view the Scriptural text from the perspective of the law. In sum, even a theonomous ethical paradigm of preaching in general tends to consider the Scriptural text from the perspective of the law. This may be a natural tendency of an ethical approach.

Likewise, this ethical trend of preaching may have contributed to providing practical voices for ethical formation of the Christian life. Yet, this understanding of ethics in preaching often seems to bypass the gospel, when understood as divine empowerment to do what is required, and rather results in putting the burden on the hearers to act in certain ways. Ethical paradigms of preaching, which were examined previously, seem to have placed their primary focus not on the gospel, but rather on the rule to action or decision itself for

504 Ibid.
Christians. Without thorough, profound understanding of the gospel, the law cannot be realized as a critical dimension of the good news. That is, any focus on Christian ethics that seems to contribute to Christian sanctification cannot become good news to Christians if Christian ethics is merely mentioned and enumerated without understanding of justification. The moral life with respect to the law is an integral aspect of the gospel in the sense that “inviting a congregation to live more faithfully is not at odds with the gospel of God’s grace, but an invitation to discover and live into that grace more fully.” Ethics in preaching as law-centered, problem-solving, moralizing paradigm of ethical homiletic may be able to influence concrete actions and decisions, but it could miss the significance of gospel as the true empowerment for Christian discipleship. In forming an ethical homiletic, the gospel is a pivotal, consistent guidance for Christian ethical formation.

B. Homiletical Understanding of Gospel: From Post-World War II to the Present

1. What is the Gospel?

Exploring biblically and theologically, one may define the gospel as the content itself of Jesus’ words which are written down by the gospel writers. That could be considered as a direct resource for our preaching. As Paul Wilson remarks, “the content of Jesus’ words was


506 Paul Wilson points out that many homiletic books from diverse theological spectrums do not deal specifically with the gospel. “Books that one might expect to discuss the gospel, indeed even with the word gospel in their titles, commonly do not engage the subject, or they do so only in limited ways, for example, without mention of the resurrection.”: Paul Scott Wilson, *Setting Words on Fire* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008), 65.
not his full message.”

God’s fulfillment through Christ’s Incarnation, Passion on the cross, Resurrection and Ascension could be understood as a more completed message of the gospel than the preaching of Christ. The gospel can speak of contemporary socio-cultural issues and today’s Christianity, but it cannot be the true gospel without being rooted in the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ.

Moreover, the gospel brings about transformation rather than produces information. The gospel forms relationship with God rather than provides an immediately effective remedy for human corruption. As Kevin J. Vanhoozer writes that the gospel is not only a message about Christ but is also the active address of and by Christ, the gospel transcends information sharing about Christ; rather it works as a theo-drama which shows more than it tells. As though the Bible is literature and literature is intended to transform the readers, the gospel functions as transforming dynamics so that the hearers can experience transformation through the gospel.

Likewise, considering the gospel as transformative dynamics of Christian life, the dialectic between law and gospel could also be elaborated especially for ethics in homiletics. The law reveals the fact that the human needs grace and the law at the same time reveals itself as a locus of divine grace in light of the gospel. From this perspective, law and gospel

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507 Ibid., 59.


510 Ibid., 48.
as a theological grammar and the theological movement in preaching have the potential to maximize fruits for transformation. The law/gospel movement may also help overcome moralism which preaches the Christians moral virtues without Christ-centeredness or empowerment of the Spirit.\footnote{Lischer, \textit{A Theology of Preaching: The Dynamics of the Gospel}, 44-45.; According to James M. Robinson, “To moralize or dogmatize the gospel is to place one’s confidence in the flesh or build one’s existence under his or her own control.” He remarks that “to moralize or dogmatize the gospel makes the kerygma a proven divine fact or a worldly security with which homo religiousus arms himself/herself in his/her effort to become self-sufficient before God.”: James M. Robinson, \textit{A New Quest of the Historical Jesus} (London: SCM Press, 1959), 44.} 

Furthermore, as James F. Kay cites from Christiaan Beker’s comment, “the gospel is always a word on target.”\footnote{James F. Kay, \textit{Preaching and Theology} (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2007), 28-29.} Kay also remarks, referring to “Bultmann’s term, \textit{Anrede},” the gospel is “a ‘speaking to,’ that authoritatively addresses and summons its hearers, but always within the context of their situation and mindful of ‘the real questions of life.’”\footnote{Ibid., 29.: Rudolf Bultmann, \textit{Theology of the New Testament}, 2 vols., trans. Kendrick Grobel (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1951-55), 1:319.} Accordingly, the gospel has an aspect of fluidity and needs to be preached within “Spirit-directed interpretation of the cross-resurrection kerygma, drawing out its implications and pertinence for contemporary situations.”\footnote{Kay, \textit{Preaching and Theology}, 28.; Also refer to Joseph R. Jeter, Jr. and Ronald J. Allen, \textit{One Gospel, Many Ears} (St, Louis: Chalice Press, 2002).} However, the dialectic of the law and the gospel cannot be mechanically accomplished. The gospel, understood in faith, is perfect by itself. But the Holy Spirit is definitely needed in order for the gospel to be fully delivered. The gospel is already perfect, but it does not become visible, audible, and touchable until through preaching and the life of the church, the Holy Spirit begins to work and move.
2. Homiletical Theories about the Gospel

a. The Bible as the Gospel

A variety of homileticians have spoken about the gospel as the purpose of preaching and its homiletical significance. In this period, from the middle of the 1940’s to the early part of the 1960’s, the biblical theology movement had much influence on homiletics. According to O.C. Edwards Jr.’s historical analysis on preaching of the period\textsuperscript{515}, the movement began to be developed in mainline American homiletics which seemed to have been interested in a problem solving pattern such as pastoral counseling on a group scale,\textsuperscript{516} social reformation and moral admonition.\textsuperscript{517}

The movement is the biblical theology movement\textsuperscript{518}, which was primarily concerned

\textsuperscript{515} According to O.C. Edwards Jr., “the majority of the new movements in homiletics reported on began after World War II and, indeed, from the Vietnam era on.” He deals new kinds of preaching with eight areas of homiletical development: “(1) pastoral counseling through preaching, (2) the impact of biblical theology, (3) the influence of the liturgical movement, (4) the emergence of African American preaching in the majority culture, (5) new forms of social protest preaching, (6) the homiletical results of the widespread opening of ordination to women, (7) changes in evangelistic preaching, and (8) the trends referred to collectively as the New Homiletic.”: O.C. Edwards, \textit{A History of Preaching} (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004), 664.

\textsuperscript{516} Harry Emerson Fosdick focused on difficulties and problems congregation members were feeling and facing. This concern was influenced by John Dewey’s pedagogical theory which begins teaching with concerns about problems of the educated.: Halford E. Luccock, \textit{In the Minister’s Workshop} (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977), 52-58.; Edwards, \textit{A History of Preaching}, 667-69.

\textsuperscript{517} Edwards Jr., \textit{A History of Preaching}, 664-69.

\textsuperscript{518} According to Charles Campbell in \textit{Preaching Jesus}, “during the same period that “neo-orthodoxy” flourished in Protestant theological circle in the United States, a related movement exercised significant influence in the field of biblical studies: the Biblical Theology Movement.” It can be summed up that the biblical theology movement tried to recapture the theological dimension of the Bible and at the same time sought to retain the historical-criticism. However, Campbell adduces a compelling critique about the biblical theology movement from Langdon Gilkey’s essay as follows: “Gilkey simply pointed out the inner contradictions in the movement’s “liberal” reliance on historical criticism and its “conservative” (i.e. univocally referential) use of theological language.” : Charles L. Campbell, \textit{Preaching Jesus} (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 9-12. In evangelical circles, on the other side, it is claimed that biblical theology retains much of its attraction. Sidney Greidanus presents three significant aspects of its attraction: “its holistic approach, the longitudinal themes [theo-centric themes], and the idea of progressive revelation.”: Sidney Greidanus, \textit{The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text} (Leicester: IVP, 1988), 68-72.
about doing justice to the theological dimension of the Bible as a new way of doing theology. It eventually collapsed when it was seen to be overlooking the many theologies that are represented within individual books, much less the Bible as a whole. The biblical theology movement had an alliance relationship with Neo-orthodox theology, which developed under the influence of Karl Barth and Emil Brunner in Europe and Richard Niebuhr and Reinhold Niebuhr in North America. As a result, this alliance relation produced synergic voices in an attempt to do theology with regard to biblical studies. The biblical theology movement supported a renewed emphasis on the Bible. As in Neo-orthodox theology’s understanding of the Bible, the biblical theology movement generally understood the Bible as “a fully human book” and at the same time “as a vehicle or witness of the divine Word.” In contrast to David Buttrick’s homiletical critique of Barth, Paul Wilson advocates that Barth was aware of a significant role of contemporary experience. Barth stressed preaching as God’s revelational event, but such eventfulness of preaching does not


520 According to Ronald Allen’s explanation of Neo-orthodox theology and preaching, “The words of the Bible remain human words, but when God touches them, they become words through which God speaks. The Bible is not the Word of God, nor does the Bible contain the Word. Rather, the Bible becomes the occasion of the Word of God when God graciously speaks a living address to the congregation through Jesus Christ as the congregation gathers around the Bible.”: Ronald Allen, Thinking Theologically (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 51.

521 David Buttrick critiques the biblical theology movement which shares common concerns with Neo-orthodox theologians such as Karl Barth: 1) The biblical theology movement refused social relevance of preaching. 2) The biblical theology movement focused on the historical past. 3) The biblical theology movement increased the tension between preaching the Bible and preaching the gospel.: David Buttrick, A Captive Voice: The Liberation of Preaching (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), ; Edward Farley also blames influence of the biblical theology movement on preaching. Willimon claims, “Farley’s main target is what he calls “Biblicist preaching,” that preaching that turns the Bible into an idol.”: Edward Farley, Practicing Gospel: Unconventional Thoughts on the Church’s Ministry (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 71-82; William H. Willimon, Conversations with Barth on Preaching (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006), 34.
denote the objectiveness of God’s self-revelation. Barth critiqued the anthropocentricity of historical critical approach that it considered the Bible as mere historical material.522 Further, he understood the Bible as a primitive forest for contemporary revelation. According to William Willimon’s analysis from Barth’s writings, “while Barth affirms that scripture is powerfully revealing and self-expressive –“God has spoken, speaks now and will again speak”(CD, I, 2, 800) – Barth allows for some interpretation of scripture “in order to be proclaimed and heard again and again in the Church.”(CD, I, 2, 712f)”523

For Barth the Bible becomes revelation and gets its revelational authority “when and where the biblical word becomes God’s Word.”524 Donald McKim cites from Barth’s writing as follows: “In this event, it is the revelation that should be understood primarily as the superior principle and the Bible primarily as the subordinate principle.”525 From the perspective of the neo-theology group and the biblical theology movement, the dual aspects as a witness of God’s past revelation on the one hand and potential of a revelational event on the other hand coexist in the Bible. In sum, for Barth, the Bible in itself is “not the central act of revelation.”526

Nevertheless, some scholars consider that Barth’s understanding of the Bible brought about misguidance to homiletics. In fact, Barth maintains that “the task of the sermon is to

522 Wilson, Preaching and Homiletical Theory, 62.
523 Willimon, Conversations with Barth on Preaching, 29.
524 Karl Barth, CD I:1, 113.
526 McKim, 83.
create space for the Word of God.” Though for Barth the Word of God does not signify the Bible as such, yet, it means what the Bible becomes in the encounter between God and humans. On the basis of influences by the biblical theology movement, the Bible has been considered the gospel itself in homiletics. As Buttrick claims, preaching has been “captive to absoluteness of the Bible.” Originally preaching in the early church was not from the Bible. Early church preaching proclaimed the good news of Christ’s salvific work. As Edward Farley maintains, “That-which-is-preached is not the content of passages of Scripture. It is the gospel, the event of Christ through which we are saved. To think that what is preached is the Bible and the content of its passages is a quite different way of thinking about preaching.” However, in this period, from the middle of the 1940’s to the early part of the 1960’s, preachers had been influenced by the eventfulness of God’s Word through the Bible. The Bible became authoritative and was generally understood as the good news in itself in homiletics. That is, the gospel was understood in relatively close relation to the Bible. As a result, the authentic meaning of the gospel was in some aspects distorted and the Bible itself may have resulted in falling short of the gospel under the influence of the biblical theology movement. Despite such an overall homiletical influence of the biblical theology movement, yet, some theologians and homileticians show their efforts to preserve the


holistic significance of the gospel in homiletics.

b. The Gospel in the New Homiletic

1) The Gospel in The New Homiletic’s Forerunners: From the 1950’s to the 1960’s

The New Homiletic was initiated with a great concern about the renewal of preaching in the second half of the twentieth century. As David J. Lose remarks, many homiletical theories and voices have been grouped under the banner of the New Homiletic. Many preachers in the last half century have benefited “from a creative explosion of available homiletical methods.”

The New Homiletic arose as the polar opposite of what some might call the Old Homiletic which pursues informing and persuading through the sermon, in other words, “cognitive-propositional preaching.” Lose demonstrates the polarity of the Old and the New as follows: “In distinct contrast to the Old Homiletic’s cognitive emphasis on relaying Christian information, proponents of what has come to be called the New Homiletic stress the sermon’s capacity to create an experience of the gospel.”

According to Edwards Jr.’s historical study on preaching, the biblical theology had impacted on preaching and been dominated through several seminary courses in Bible and


532 Lose, 255-56.

533 Lose, 256; Robert Reid, Jeffrey Bullock and David Fleer, “Preaching as the Creation of an Experience: The Not-So-Rational Revolution of the New Homiletic,” Journal of Communication and Religion Vol. 18, No. 1 (March, 1995), 1-9.; Lose notes three major factors contributing to the development of the New Homiletic: First factor is “the emergence of a more holistic sense of preaching” which includes not only rational-cognitive elements of preaching, but also affective elements of the sermon such as not merely head, mind, intellect, but heart, body, and emotions. Second factor is “a renewed appreciation for the literary character of the Bible” which cannot be separated from the content and a form of the sermon. Third factor is “the rise of the New Hermeneutic in biblical and systematic theology.”: Lose, 257-58.
theology from the 1940’s to the 1960’s.\textsuperscript{534} Ironically, although Barth is considered as the most associated theologian of the biblical theology movement, he had not given the most influential impact since he did not publish his works. One of the influential was Theodore O. Wedel in 1956. He argues that preachers need to change their way of preaching, which has tended to turn freedom from biblicism into emancipation from the Bible,\textsuperscript{535} in his book, \textit{The Pulpit Rediscovers Theology}. He notes that the preacher needs to recapture the majestic drama of the Bible which has been robbed of its sacred power since the storms of the Enlightenment came up. His homiletical concern is to place the Bible on the pulpit where it is necessarily enthroned. As understood from the phrase ‘biblical theology’ which denotes theology and implies for him a recovered Bible, he contends following ‘biblical theology’ that the place of the Bible which has been neglected by liberal theology should be recovered.\textsuperscript{536} He points out that anthropocentricity of liberal theology had emphasized ethical exhortation which does not sprout out of the gospel of grace.\textsuperscript{537} He is convinced that preachers need to be based on the biblical theology, which acknowledges the reality of sin and the need of God’s grace. He seems to have resisted against anthropocentric approaches

\textsuperscript{534} Edwards, \textit{A History of Preaching}, 682.: In this period, the Biblical Theology Movement formed an alternative to historical-critical scholarship which had lost itself “in the minutiae of literary, philological, and historical problems.” According to Brevard S. Childs, as a result of the influence of critical scholarship, “the Bible had been hopelessly fragmented and the essential unity of the gospel was distorted and forgotten.” Yet, Greidanus claims that “biblical theology offered a holistic perspective.”: Brevard S. Childs, \textit{Biblical Theology in Crisis} (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), 15.; Sidney Greidanus, \textit{The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text} (Leicester: IVP, 1988), 67.


\textsuperscript{536} Theodore O. Wedel, \textit{The Pulpit Rediscovers Theology} (Greenwich, Conn.: Seabury, 1956), 72-74.

\textsuperscript{537} See Wedel, \textit{The Pulpit Rediscovers Theology}; Edwards, \textit{A History of Preaching}, 682.
of the gospel that liberal theology tended to maintain. Edwards Jr. points out that Wedel had not provided a detailed homiletical methodology of the biblical theology.\textsuperscript{538}

Donald G. Miller is one of the homileticians influenced by the biblical theology movement. In \textit{The Way to Biblical Preaching}, he criticizes older definitions of biblical preaching and expository preaching. He adheres to historical-critical exegesis, but tries to understand holistically a biblical text within the Bible. At the same time, he affirms that the sermon needs theological approaches. He maintains that the preacher should provide theological interpretation and discover its single theme to recover the Bible as a document of faith\textsuperscript{539}: “Every sermon should have a theme, and that theme should be the theme of the portion of Scripture on which it is based.”\textsuperscript{540} He is convinced that every sermon has its clear theme and the theme should be given from the scriptural text. He understands the gospel thoroughly on the biblical basis and at the same time his understanding of the gospel is elucidated within the theological concepts. However, as Wilson argues, “the gospel cannot be reduced to a doctrine. Christ is central, not doctrine about Christ.”\textsuperscript{541} If only the doctrinal aspect of the gospel is considered in the sermon, such preaching could fall short of the gospel. In this sense, if his preaching remained as a doctrinal thematic sermon, it can be evaluated that Miller’s homiletic may have possessed such a shortage for gospel

\textsuperscript{538} Edwards, \textit{A History of Preaching}, 683.


\textsuperscript{541} Wilson, \textit{Setting Words on Fire}, 63.
However, according to Miller’s writings, he underscores Christ-centeredness in proclamation. He may have given main emphasis to doctrinal aspects of the gospel, but he does not overlook Christ as God’s event. He argues that God’s redemptive event in Christ as the gospel should become a living reality to the hearers and move them to participating in the gospel.\(^{542}\) It can be concluded that his understanding of the gospel does not remain as doctrine.

Such influences from the biblical theology movement had succeeded in an outstanding homiletics textbook by Henry Grady Davis, *Design for Preaching*. One can say that he went a step further from the influences of the movement given to homiletics above. His understanding of preaching as an event developed into “preaching as poetic language and structure.”\(^{543}\) Of course, he seems not to have regarded the primary focuses of the biblical theology movement as his main concern, but rather he seems to have presupposed them. Edwards Jr. writes, “the overall success of the [biblical theology] movement in influencing preaching can be seen in the way that many of its teachings were presupposed by”\(^{544}\) Davis. Davis turns his eyes on concerns about a narrative structure of “events, persons, actions and words”\(^{545}\) as sermon form rather than puts his emphasis on sermon content. He emphasizes that the preacher needs to be concerned about sermon form.

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\(^{543}\) Wilson, *Preaching and Homiletical Theory*, 69-72.


He contends that it is dangerous for the preacher to be concerned only with the sermon content. He also pays attention to the point that there is a suitable form for each sermon. In other words, there cannot be a unitary form that is appropriate for any sermon.\textsuperscript{546} By developing such a view on the homiletical significance of sermon form, Davis discusses a sermon form not as a functional form, but as an organic form since the gospel is embodied within the organic movement of narrative.\textsuperscript{547}

His methodological ideas based on organic homiletical forms are not intended as a method to renew preaching, but are developed in order to authentically preach the gospel. First of all, Davis’ homiletical insight is significant in the respect that his organic form of preaching tries to overcome traditional separation between form and theology. That is, his theory may be evaluated as a significant beginning that theology is considered as a way of structuring sermons.\textsuperscript{548} In this sense, it may also be evaluated that Davis improved homiletics under the biblical theology movement and took homiletically a step forward.

Moreover, Davis begins his theory of homiletical method with his clear understanding of preaching ministry itself.\textsuperscript{549} He has his own clear understanding of the gospel.\textsuperscript{550} He also understands that preaching consists of diverse elements such as teaching

\begin{footnotes}
\item[546] Ibid., 8-11.
\item[547] Davis states, “the gospel itself is for the most part a simple narrative of persons, places, happenings, and conversation. It is not a verbal exposition of general ideas. Nine-tenths of our preaching is verbal exposition and argument, but not one tenth of the gospel is exposition. Its ideas are mainly in the form of a story told.”: Ibid., 143; 157.
\item[549] Davis, \textit{Design for Preaching}, 105-07.
\item[550] Davis explains his understanding of the gospel as follows: “The gospel is the news of God’s redemptive action in Jesus Christ our Lord, revealing God’s love toward men and his purpose in history, manifesting at
and exhortation as well as the proclamation of the gospel.

In the New Testament this word [preaching] meant only the proclamation of the gospel in its technical and therefore restricted sense, while teaching and exhortation were used to designate other legitimate forms of speech used in the church’s ministry. Teaching and exhortation were not called preaching, but they were used in the New Testament church, and they were considered both legitimate and necessary. With us, however, the word preaching is not so restricted. It is used to cover all forms of speech in the public ministry of the church, and in that ministry proper teaching and exhortation are of course included.551

He maintains that the nature and purpose of preaching should be completed through kerygma and didache. In other words, for him, the proclamation of the gospel and teaching from the gospel in preaching must coexist. He writes in Design for Preaching: “You can avoid confusion about the whole matter of preaching the gospel, if you recognize clearly that the difference between proclamation and teaching-therapy is a difference of form, primarily, not a difference of substance.”552 For him, kerygma and didache cannot be separated under the umbrella of the gospel. Thus, he argues that Christian preaching should deal with the gospel in whatever form it has.553

Davis does not try to understand Christian teaching and exhortation as distinctive values from the gospel. For him, the gospel is obviously “the whole of the Christian faith.”554 Christian teaching and exhortation can have their meaning within the life of

\[\text{once his judgment and his mercy, furnishing a new basis for the relation between men and God- compassion, forgiveness, unmerited favor and help-and calling into being a reconstituted humanity joined with Christ and living no longer by its biological possibilities but by participation in Christ’s life.}^\text{[551 Ibid., 106.]}\]

\[\text{552 Ibid., 137.}\]

\[\text{553 Ibid.}\]

\[\text{554 Ibid., 109.}\]
Christian faith. That is, they cannot deal with some more significant, greater subjects than the gospel. From the perspective of the dialectic of justification and sanctification, his understanding of preaching is based on a harmonious structure of both elements. In that sense, he states, “Christian duty, ethics, can properly be related to nothing but this gospel. The common day-to-day existence can have no meaning except the meaning it has in the light of this gospel.” He is convinced that the law should be understood in light of the gospel.

2) The Gospel in Transformational Preaching of the New Homiletic: From the 1970’s to the 1980’s

- Values and Characteristics of the New Homiletic

The New Homiletic has contributed to diverse homiletic realms. In the New Homiletic, experience of the gospel is considered as the most significant goal of preaching. The New Homiletic gives primary attention to facilitating an experience of the gospel and transforming the hearer through the gospel experience. In other words, the New Homiletic emphasizes the creation of an experience as Erfahrung through “the event of understanding” in which the meaning of the gospel is embodied and the hearer can be transformed.

555 Ibid.


557 Experience mentioned in the New Homiletic is not a simple experience, but means “interpretive
The New Homiletic has devised diverse theories. O. Wesley Allen Jr. states, “to enable hearers to do their sermonic work appropriately, there must be a shift in how sermons are offered.” In other words, such theories have been homiletically developed in order to evoke experiences in the hearers. For that purpose, the New Homiletic has offered an inductive approach to preaching, a narrative form of preaching, an “overhearing” theory of preaching, a phenomenological movement of preaching and so on. Such theoretical options have been designed to empower hearers to participate in the creation of a gospel experience.

Furthermore, the New Homiletic has huge concern for sermon language influenced by the New Hermeneutic. Thus, the New Homiletic pays great attention to images, figurative language, stories, metaphors, and movement. According to Allen Jr., such linguistic patterns for the New Homiletic are not rhetorical flourishes in preaching, but “they are what bring into being a new consciousness of the hearers.” As mentioned previously, the centrality of the linguistic concern of the New Homiletic also signifies its effort to create an experience of the gospel.

Experience.” According to Hans-George Gadamer’s Truth and Method, he makes a clear distinction between two meanings of experience: Erlebnis and Erfahrung. Erlebnis is experience as a consequence which is brought through speculation and a priori experience. This is formed within dualism of subjectivity and objectivity, and the preacher provides the hearers with aesthetic experience. On the other hand, Erfahrung is beyond appreciating an aesthetic work. It is to lead the hearer into an event (Geschehen) which offers a specific significance. Therefore, as this event is experienced, the hearer’s existing thought and worldview can be transformed and the hearer can have a transformative experience.: Hans-George Gadamer, Truth and Method, 2nd and revised ed., (New York: Crossroad, 1989), xiii-xiv.

558 Allen Jr., The Renewed Homiletic, 8.

559 See Fred B. Craddock, Overhearing the Gospel, revised and expanded (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2002).

• Gospel and Ethics in Transformational Preaching

The New Homiletic places a primary emphasis on transformation through preaching. Of course, as Wilson argues, the New Homiletic embraces diverse characteristics: kerygmatic, transformative, postmodern, and conversational. Yet, the New Homiletic ultimately focuses on transformation. From the perspective of ethics, transformational preaching has significant possibility for ethics in homiletics. As Domenico Grasso states, preaching aims to change the hearer’s whole life. In that sense, it may be assumed that the New Homiletic’s concern about transformative preaching may not only evoke practically the hearer’s experience of the gospel, but also produce ethical transformation of the hearers. In other words, New Homiletic’s transformative preaching seems to seek not only justification but also sanctification.

Rose points out that the transformational voices of preaching are partially overlapped with kerygmatic voices of preaching. Yet she also argues that the transformational voices of preaching best characterize the New Homiletic. Transformational preaching is about the goal of preaching. Preaching is an event as an encounter between God and humans. The New Homiletic is concerned about the divine-human encounter forming a new relationship. The New Homiletic focuses on a preaching event which changes the sermon hearer’s holistic values in his/her life rather than putting its emphasis on communication of the gospel as the

561 Wilson, Preaching and Homiletical Theory, 148-49.
fixed content of the sermon.\textsuperscript{564}

However, stressing the transformative role of preaching, the New Homiletic seems to have lost a considerable portion of the divine side in the human-divine encounter event. In other words, the New Homiletic has put more emphasis on the human side. Even evoking the hearers’ experience of the gospel for their transformation has been mainly discussed on the human side of preaching in the New Homiletic. As Robert Reid, Jeffrey Bullock and David Fleer state in their article, the New Homiletic implies that both preacher and hearer co-participate in the creation of an experience.\textsuperscript{565} In some respects, the role of creating an experience of the gospel in preaching began to be given to humans, and it is believed that such an evoked experience produced transformation of the hearer in his/her life.\textsuperscript{566} In particular, the New Homiletic’s understanding of the sermonic content, language and form has contributed to forming an experience-evoking paradigm of preaching and its diverse theories as hermeneutical, methodological responses in homiletics.\textsuperscript{567} For the New Homiletic, as a result, preaching is to put more focus on the hearer’s receptivity and anthropocentric concerns in the sermon.

However, even though those contributions of the New Homiletic and its diverse new

\textsuperscript{564} Ibid., 59-60.


homiletical benefits are worthy of attention, as Campbell points out, the focus on individual experience in the New Homiletic raises various issues that have not been deeply explored. Campbell notes that the primary focus on evoking the hearer’s experience in the New Homiletic may bring about “the danger of theological ‘relationalism’ a relationalism that dares to make no claims for God apart from the experience of human beings.” He argues that such an emphasis on human experience in the sermon rather than on God in Christ may result in producing human story-centered preaching instead of the story of the gospel. As Campbell elucidates in George Lindbeck’s terms, it needs to be noted the point that in the overriding emphasis on human experience “the God of Christianity is not identified by the role God plays in the biblical stories, but only by reference to the experiences with which God is associated.”

Not all New Homileticians put an emphasis on evoking in the manner Campbell critiques. Considering the overall characteristics of the New Homiletic, many homiletical new insights and contributions can be found, but one significant critique may be raised. That is, it may be contended that the New Homiletic, which has been characterized as transformational, has little focus on the transformative gospel itself. As Wilson argues, the

568 Campbell points out the serious danger of human experience-centered preaching as follows: “This kind of experiential relationalism can be clearly seen in the emphasis on evocative preaching, which seeks to draw out something that is already within the hearers. If it cannot be evoked from experience, it cannot be preached. … In short, the experiential focus of contemporary narrative homiletics can result in a theological relationalism that makes God too dependent on immediate human experience.”: Campbell, Preaching Jesus: New Directions for Homiletics in Hans Frei’s Postliberal Theology, 142.

569 Ibid., 141.

New Homiletic’s transformative preaching is not explicitly concerned about the central story of Christ which powerfully helps to change human consciousness and ethical life, but about evoking human experience and shaping it for preaching. \[571\] Wilson stresses that in spite of the New Homiletic’s focus on the Bible, “it lacks focus on God and specifically on the gospel.” \[572\] The New Homiletic has devised the so-called ‘transformational homiletic’ through diverse methodological approaches, but it has rarely put emphasis on the transformative aspect of the gospel in a dominant homiletical way. \[573\] That is, it seems that the New Homiletic’s transformative approach of preaching with relation to sanctification has the tendency to be more dependent on experience-evoking homiletical methodologies than on proclamation of justification. Consequently, these questions may be raised: Is the New Homiletic truly transformational? Is it possible that preaching in which Jesus Christ is hidden has transformative, ethical impact on the hearers’ lives?

c. The Gospel in Law/Gospel as a Theological Grammar

One year after Davis’ monumental work, *Design for Preaching*, Richard R. Caemmerer’s three stage movement of the sermon, which consists of goal, malady, and means, can be understood as the law/gospel framework of preaching. Caemmerer claims that

\[571\] Wilson, *Preaching and Homiletical Theory*, 148-49.

\[572\] Paul Scott Wilson, “Church Decline: Has the Gospel Gone Missing?,” *TST Homiletics Seminar* 2:2 (Summer, 2008), 1-5.: According to Paul Wilson’s argument, “A divide has now occurred in homiletics between those who identify the purpose of preaching seemingly as preach-the-text (perhaps most biblical scholars) and those who affirm the essential nature of texts to serve the larger purpose of preach-the-gospel.”

the preacher speaks of God’s aim, judgment, and rescuing act throughout the sermon. In other words, “preaching involves all three processes: describing God’s goals, alerting to God’s judgment, speaking God’s Gospel.” Of course, this claim seems not to clarify the fact that the preacher cannot guarantee his/her authority and capability to access God’s goals, judgment and Gospel. All these processes belong only to the work of Holy Spirit. God’s transcendental voices are revealed beyond preacher’s linguistic ability and are not limited to human experiences and interpretation. What is worthy of note in this claim, nonetheless, is that Caemmerer intends to preserve and emphasize the theocentric, Christocentric focus in preaching.

The preacher aims at one goal: to move people into the direction which God wants them to go. … When the preacher preaches, he[she] must make clear at the outset that his[her] purpose is…God’s very own…. The preacher speaks the Word of God’s judgment upon man’s sin, to alert men to the Gospel. …The preacher’s Word of Christ is an act of God, rescuing men from sin, for life. This assertion seems to assume special homiletical authority for the preacher. Yet, Caemmerer rather underscores what the preacher needs to be concerned about for sermon through this “rhetorical strategy [goal, malady, and means] for persuasive design that facilitates preaching the Word of the cross.” He stresses not preacher’s goal, judgment, statement of grace, but God’s goal, judgment, and a proclamation of God’s grace.

For Caemmerer, the gospel is explained in diverse ways: life for death, covering for

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575 Ibid., 15; 19; 21; 27.

sin, and the judgment of mercy.\textsuperscript{577} According to his understanding of the gospel, it functions to solve troubles that produce human helplessness of reaching out for God’s goals and human difficulties and needs by the human malady. He admits that the gospel proclaims God’s grace or rescue in relation to goal and malady as law-parts. However, his homiletical pattern is not strongly based on the law/gospel paradigm. Wilson evaluates Caemerrer’s homiletic as follows:

\begin{quote}
In Caemmerer law and gospel are not yet the dynamic factors that they will become in homiletical theory, generating in the tension between themselves the overall movement of the sermon. Rather, goal, malady, and means are still a way for the preacher to ensure that the text adequately speaks through a sermon to determine its content.\textsuperscript{578}
\end{quote}

Rather, Caemmerer invokes an extreme polarization of law and gospel.\textsuperscript{579} He does not consider law and gospel in a homiletical theory which has a single structure and flows within one paradigm of preaching the gospel. He also focuses more on the life direction into which God wants people to go. In other words, he puts his primary concern on goals of God. Of course, he does not deny the fact that the preacher should keep a balance between divine goals as law and redeeming power of God as gospel in the sermon.\textsuperscript{580} It is evident in his homiletic that he tries to make a balance between sanctification based on Christ’s redeeming

\textsuperscript{577} Caemmerer, \textit{Preaching for the Church}, 30-31.

\textsuperscript{578} Wilson, \textit{Preaching and Homiletical Theory}, 82.

\textsuperscript{579} Caemmerer, \textit{Preaching for the Church}, 24-26; 28-32.

\textsuperscript{580} Caemmerer remarks, “The preacher’s objective must be to make a firm coupling between the way of life in Christ which the text presents and the hearer’s faith and life; to make a living connection in the hearer’s mind between the goal which he holds before him and the Word of Christ’s redeeming work as the one power for attaining that goal.”: Ibid., 89.
grace as divine goal for the individual life and justification as the only power for obtaining the divine goal. Nevertheless, he is concerned much about life goals. As well, “he seems to focus exclusively on the individual with little room for social or systemic evil in his view of the world. The accents in preaching that he identifies are the goals of faith, life, church, family, hope, and prayer.”

Considering the nature of the gospel previously mentioned, his homiletic in a sense loses the significance of a two-fold direction of the gospel. His homiletical concerns do not fully reach out beyond individuals.

In 1977 and 1978, when the New Homiletic was already starting to emerge (though under the name of narrative and inductive), the law/gospel paradigm was homiletically embodied and theorized in theological structure by two homileticians: Milton Crum Jr. and Herman G. Stuemple Jr. According to Wilson, Crum is a key leading figure who helped the development of the law/gospel homiletical school. Crum views the scriptural text with a hermeneutical lens of law/gospel and uses law/gospel as a homiletical, theological concept which can work for sermon structure. He also had crucial influence upon the following homiletical movement, “from law to gospel”.

Crum explains the gospel and designs sermons through homiletical synopses of three elements: situation, complication, and resolution. He identifies the preacher’s hermeneutical understanding of the gospel with this synoptic movement. Moreover, he combines these three synoptic elements with “the five dynamic factors” — symptomatic behavior, root,  

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581 Ibid., 177-214.; Wilson, Preaching and Homiletical Theory, 82.

582 Wilson, Preaching and Homiletical Theory, 86.
resulting consequences, gospel content, new results\textsuperscript{583}—served “as clues for naming and describing factors in human change, factors which we believe to be biblically sound and which can be incorporated by the preacher into the sermon story.”\textsuperscript{584} He does not make these dynamic factors a conspicuous sermon structure, but rather tries to clarify his understanding of the gospel by incorporating them into the sermon even in an inconspicuous way.\textsuperscript{585}

For Crum, first three elements, symptomatic behavior, root and resulting consequences, are combined with Situation-Complication. The hearers get to identify their lives with the mind of their fallen flesh. The mind of flesh as the root of symptomatic behaviors needs to be illuminated throughout preaching. According to Crum, moreover, “symptomatic feeling and action behavior result in consequences.”\textsuperscript{586} As a result, realizing their root of mind and its concrete consequences, the hearers come to be keenly hungry for getting the gospel content as good news that can free them from the root and its inevitable consequences.\textsuperscript{587}

Crum links gospel content and new result with Resolution. He notes that sermons have generally been ended with “moralistic or pietistic yearnings rather than the gospel”\textsuperscript{588} and consequently have been deficient. He claims that the hearers through gospel content can


\textsuperscript{584} Ibid., 112.

\textsuperscript{585} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{586} Crum describes, in other words, “symptomatic feeling-behavior results in action-behavior and consequences.”: Ibid., 115.

\textsuperscript{587} Ibid., 113-15.

\textsuperscript{588} Ibid., 114.
resolve dilemmas from their situation-complication. He is convinced that God’s affirmative promise as the gospel brings the only credible solution for problems from human symptomatic behavior, root and resulting consequences.

Gospel content is what God affirms to us as good news for our transformation. Gospel content is not law (imperative) or conditional affirmation (subjunctive). Rather, gospel content is affirmative promise (indicative) in which God is the affirmer and we are the recipients. It is the effective power of God working through the gospel content, speaking to the root of behavior, which provides the resolution to the situation-complication in the Bible study and, later, in the sermon.\(^{589}\)

As well, Crum emphasizes new results following through gospel content. He understands that the gospel is not just what God affirms and promises, but also is a transforming power that leads to new behaviors. He does not overlook justification’s empowering role in embodying sanctification. Moreover, even “the pressure of the painful consequences (God’s wrath)”\(^{590}\) functions to effect the new results of behavior in concert with “the new perception of the gospel (God’s mercy).”\(^{591}\) In other words, he does not regard the new result as a simple moralism. The new result is homiletically fulfilled through a profound process of “an enlightening message” and “an enabling message”: situation-complication and resolution.\(^{592}\) In this clear theological, homiletical framework, he has a

\(^{589}\) Ibid., 78.

\(^{590}\) Ibid., 116.

\(^{591}\) Ibid.

\(^{592}\) Crum remarks that his homiletic entails two primary steps: “First, as a listener, you listen through the Scripture lessons for an enlightening message, a verbal map, which helps you name and interpret some aspect of the human dilemma, and for an enabling message, a gospel affirmation, which helps resolve the dilemma so you can live in a more fully human way. Second, as a messenger, you share this message with the church gathered for worship in the hope that it will help them, also, to live in a more fully human way as they scatter to their vocations and ministries in the world.”: Ibid., 38.
clear sense of the law/gospel paradigm.

However, Wilson makes a significant objection to Crum’s tendency to recognize law and gospel as a structure of problem and solution. Wilson argues, “The gospel is never just a solution to a problem; it is a relationship with God. What solutions one may find to problems are the fruit of that lived relationship of faith, not a substitute for it.”593 When the gospel begins to be understood as a solution to a problem, the gospel could begin to be used instrumentally. If the gospel is used simply as a solution, one’s relationship with God is limited within a certain purpose. As a result, the dynamics of the transformative gospel, which can bring about any transformation, are also limited. Moreover, homiletical concern about the primary work of the Holy Spirit may be forgotten in that process, from a problem to a solution.

Herman G. Stuempfe Jr., as a Lutheran theologian, followed Martin Luther’s understanding of law and gospel. Yet, Stuempfe developed a sophisticated understanding of law and gospel. Prior to focusing on the gospel, he paid attention to the law and how it could be preached today. He stressed functions of the law: declaring human accountability for life and showing the dark underside of human existence. Yet, he did not believe that those functions are independently fulfilled. That is, he noted that those functions of the law exist in order to serve the proclamation of the gospel.594

593 Wilson, Preaching and Homiletical Theory, 86.

594 Herman G. Stuempfe Jr., Preaching Law and Gospel (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), 20-33.: With regard to preaching and the law, Stuempfe sketches three instructions for preaching the law today: “First, we will preach law today in order to confront those who hear with their accountability for their lives. Second, we will preach law today in order to bring those who hear to a heightened consciousness of the dark underside of their existence. Third, we will preach law not as an end in itself but in order to serve the proclamation of the gospel.”
More concretely, Stuempfle suggested two kinds of understanding of law and gospel: law as hammer of judgment and mirror of existence; gospel as the gift of forgiveness and antiphon to existence.\textsuperscript{595} For him, when law as hammer of judgment is preached, the gospel should be proclaimed as forgiveness or justification which corresponds to the hammer of judgment. Yet, Stuempfle notes that law and gospel cannot be correlated only as judgment and forgiveness. He does not overlook human existential reality in the world. As Wilson remarks, “law is not just divine laws; it is a condition of human existence.”\textsuperscript{596} Stuempfle illuminates another aspect of the law as a mirror of existence. He maintains that the preacher should realize various human fallen conditions and present proper gospel which correlates with existential reality. He calls the gospel an antiphon to existence.

The preaching of law as “mirror of existence” requires the preaching of gospel as “antiphon to existence.” Just as in our preaching of law we “mirror” certain negative aspects of our common humanity, so in our proclamation of the gospel we are to respond antiphonally with appropriate affirmations. We have noted and illustrated four paired motifs: alienation and reconciliation, anxiety and certitude, despair and hope, transiency and homecoming. Others of course are possible, and it becomes our task when we preach to match articulations of law as “mirror” and gospel as “antiphon” as sensitively and precisely as we can.\textsuperscript{597}

Likewise, one of his contributions to contemporary homiletics is his horizontal understanding of law and gospel. He did not see the relationship only in a vertical way.

Moreover, Stuempfle broadens his view of the fallen condition of the world, from an

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\textsuperscript{595} Ibid., 20-61.

\textsuperscript{596} Wilson, \textit{Preaching and Homiletical Theory}, 83.

\textsuperscript{597} Stuempfle, \textit{Preaching Law and Gospel}, 58.
individualistic view to a social view. These broadened views influence his concern about the next step as the practical consequences of law and gospel. He calls the step “a call to obedience.”

His view of the call to obedience is based on Luther’s understanding of good works. For Luther, good works are “a consequence of grace and not its cause.” Luther does not ignore the identity of the righteous as *simul iustus et peccator*. “He recognizes the need for something like a call to obedience to incite the Christian to side with the Spirit in its continual struggle against the flesh.”

That is, Stuempfle maintains that obedience should be realized as a consequence of God’s grace. Obedience should never be understood as a critical cause of grace.

Further, Stuempfle underscores the concreteness of the call to obedience in preaching. He remarks that “the goal of the preacher is to incarnate the call to obedience as realistically as he can, to ground the appeal for a Christian life style in the recognizable relationships and dilemmas of which daily existence consists.”

Lastly, he maintains that homiletic focus needs to shift “from being primarily individualistic to being social.” We [the preachers] will therefore help our congregations see how the obligation to love the neighbor must often be translated into a struggle for social justice and world peace – a

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598 Ibid., 62-75.

599 Ibid., 65.; Oswald Bayer, *Martin Luther’s Theology: A Contemporary Interpretation*, 282-88.: Luther also explains good works with relation to faith which is given by grace of God.


601 Ibid., 71.

602 Wilson, *Preaching and Homiletical Theory*, 84.
struggle which involves us directly in the political realm.”

In sum, Stumpfle homiletically underlines the call to obedience in a dynamic relation to law and gospel. However, he does not seem to mechanically divide law, gospel, and the call to obedience. Rather, he seems to expend and elaborate the authentic and vital meaning of the gospel through those three dimensions. Considering his homiletic from the perspective of justification and sanctification, he does not divide these concepts into two different stages, but tries to see them holistically. He believes that both concepts work homiletically in dynamic ways. According to Wilson, Stuempfle does not have much concern about a homiletical pattern of movement which streams from law to gospel and then to the call to obedience. In practice, Stuempfle states, “The sermon’s creation cannot be programmed. It is not simply a total of interchangeable parts. The dimensions of Law, Gospel, and the call to obedience move within each sermon in lively, unpredictable ways.” Yet, even though he did not accomplish a well-elaborated sermon form and movement, it can be said that he provided preachers with an overall balanced understanding of the gospel.

d. The Gospel in the Post-New Homiletic

As a result of transformational homiletics examined previously, it could be assumed that the excessive focus on transformative preaching has produced diverse approaches of

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604 Wilson, *Preaching and Homiletical Theory*, 83-84.

ethical preaching which bypasses the gospel. For instance, postmodern approaches to homiletics which seek transformational preaching through human-centered stories and anthropocentric issues arise as a form of the Post-New Homiletic. Wilson calls those approaches "the radical postmodern school." Those approaches are mainly concerned with ethics, and are related to timely important issues, and their solutions. They help the homileticians to evoke positive concerns about the marginalized and to lay primary stress on their circumstances from the perspective of equality and particularity. These stances of the radical postmodern homiletic evoke insightful ethical perspectives. Nevertheless, what makes them radical postmodern in Wilson’s perspective is not their concern for the “other” so much as their seeming departure from Biblical norms and God. That is, the radical postmodern members, as John McClure, Joseph Webb, and Christine Smith note in their own writings, pay attention to “the others,” and homiletically examine and consider issues about

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606 Wilson, Preaching and Homiletical Theory, 137; 175.: The radical postmodern homiletic school members call themselves the postmodern homiletic group, but Paul Wilson maintains that the postmodern homiletic can be identified with the New Homiletic which has transpired in homiletics over the last few decades. This view is not just Wilson’s. According to essays by Robert Stephen Reid and Lucy Lind Hogan, Eugene Lowry, Alyce McKenzie, Jeffrey Bullock, and James W. Thompson, the postmodern and the New Homiletic are seen as identical.” I believe that the radical postmodern homiletic could be grouped as a Post-New Homiletic rather than as a postmodern homiletic group. : Robert Stephen Reid, “Postmodernism and the Function of the New Homiletic in Post-Christendom Congregations,” Homiletic 20, no 2 (Winter, 1995), 1-13; and Lucy Lind Hogan and Robert Stephen Reid, Connecting with the Congregation: Rhetoric and the Art of Preaching (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), 121-33. Hogan and Reid identify Transformative approaches and the New Homiletic with the Practical Postmodern approaches to make a distinction between that and Postliberal paradigm, which is named Thoroughly Postmodern preaching.; Eugene Lowry, The Sermon: Dancing the Edge of Mystery (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 20-28; Alyce McKenzie, “Homiletical Grammars: Retrospect and Prospects.” Homiletic 26, no 2 (Winter 2001): 8-9; Jeffrey E. Bullock, “Preaching in a Post-Modern World,” Papers for the Annual Meeting of the Academy of Homiletics (The Academy of Homiletics, 2002), 153-63; James W. Thompson, Preaching Like Paul: Homiletical Wisdom for Today (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 7.

607 Allen, Thinking Theologically, 61.
the sermon hearers and especially the marginalized “others.” At times, however, the radical postmodern homiletic do tend to lose God in its preaching. Turning to the hearer in the process of preaching is not simply to have a concern for “the others,” but may result in diminishing God’s voice in the preaching.

Moreover, the radical postmodern homileticians seem to limit the divine truth to being within human language. It is considered that God can be revealed only as much as human linguistic ability can allow. Accordingly, truth is conditional in their preaching. Ethics of the radical postmodernists generally puts human behavior in front and God’s proclamation of the gospel behind. God’s proclamative voice through the gospel and an appropriate response to the gospel are replaced by anthropocentric ethical behavior and concerns about human ‘others.’ As a result, in the radical group of the Post-New Homiletic, as in typical characteristics of the New Homiletic, it could be said that the gospel is assumed rather than discussed.

However, the Post-New Homiletic is not restricted to the radical group. One could call a group of homileticians, who pay attention to un-emphasized issues of the New Homiletic, another group of Post-New Homiletic. As Charles Campbell notes, many new homileticians talk about the gospel, but not a few new homileticians still lack a homiletical

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610 Paul Scott Wilson, *The Practice of Preaching*, 250.
articulation of the gospel. They share in common that preaching’s primary goal is to proclaim the gospel, but its goal has been practically overwhelmed by hermeneutical, methodological approaches of the New Homiletic. 611 “The New Homiletic has often seemed to focus on evoking a gospel-like experience, rather than explicating what the gospel is, God’s decisive action in Christ in the event of the gospel.” 612

As a representative reaction to this neglected articulation of the gospel in the New Homiletic, Wilson suggests a theological lens through which homiletical centrality of the gospel may be recovered. He proposes a hermeneutical lens, which he calls the “God-sense” of scripture, the interpretation of the Bible that looks for the church’s meaning. 613 He argues that preaching locate the God-sense interpretation through questions: “Who is God, What is God saying, and What is God doing in and beyond this biblical text?” 614 According to Wilson, the God-sense helps the gospel to be clearly illuminated on the hearers’ lives in preaching. Further, it manifests the gospel in preaching through his theological structure of trouble and grace. Likewise, Wilson’s notion of the gospel may characterize a Post-New Homiletic. 615

Moreover, this concern about the recovery of gospel-centeredness in preaching offers

611 Campbell, Preaching Jesus, 147-80.
612 Jinbong Choi, “A Theological Homiletics for the Korean Church’s Appropriation of the Gospel with Special Reference to Hilbert’s Proposal Rooted in Paul Ricoeur’s Hermeneutic of Belief” (Th.D. Thesis, Knox College and the University of Toronto, 2008), 175.
613 Wilson, God Sense: Reading the Bible for Preaching, 67-68.
614 Ibid., 66-67.
615 This Post-New Homiletic group corresponds to Wilson’s categorizing of the trouble/grace school of homiletics and its variations in recent homiletics.: Wilson, Preaching and Homiletical Theory, 87-108.
significant insights for ethics in homiletics. As James M. Gustafson remarks, the scripture is “the revelation of the action of God.”\textsuperscript{616} Christian ethics could be embodied through homiletical proclamation of God who acts and speaks through the biblical revelation.\textsuperscript{617} That is, Christian ethics could be elaborately articulated by proper understanding and precise proclamation of the gospel in preaching.

C. Ethical Implications of the Law and the Gospel

1. Ethics in Recent Homiletical Theories

As explored previously, Christian ethics is inseparable from the gospel. Nevertheless, the gospel has not always been located in the center of preaching. Ethics has been disclosed in preaching, but ethics in preaching has rarely embodied the gospel in transformative ways. In this section, homiletical approaches of Christian ethics in recent homiletics will be examined. Furthermore, homiletical recovery of the intimacy between the gospel and Christian ethics will be considered through representative recent homiletical theologies and theories: An empowering-ethical homiletic; a communal homiletic; an other-wise homiletic.

a. An Empowering-Ethical Homiletic: African American Homiletic

In the recent homiletic field, a significant question, ‘preaching the biblical text or preaching the gospel?’ has been raised. After the biblical theology movement, the biblical


text has been still in a core position of the homiletical realm. In this regard, not a few homileticians and theologians such as Buttrick, Farley, Wilson and Kay agree to the proposition that preaching needs to focus on the broader theological task of preaching the gospel than preaching the text. Then, in what homiletic is this homiletical concern well articulated? I believe that this view is well embodied in African American preaching.

Of course, in most African American churches, preaching places a special emphasis on the biblical text. Cleophus J. LaRue primarily emphasizes the centrality of the scripture in preaching:

In many black churches, biblical preaching, defined as preaching that allows a text from the Bible to serve as the leading force in shaping the content and purpose of the sermon, is the type of preaching considered to be most faithful to traditional understandings of the proclaimed word.

In a general sense, yet, many African American preachers go first to the scripture in order to attain a dynamic meeting between the scriptural text and African American life experiences. In other words, they underscore the biblical text in order to connect it to

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African American experiences and then conceptualize the gospel which the hearers can deeply empathize in their own life contexts and tradition. According to LaRue’s explication, thus, African American preachers have conceptualized the gospel through their hearers’ life contexts and stories so that they can get a firm foundation on which the gospel is not just heard but vitally practiced in their lives.

As well, Henry Mitchell elucidates that many African American preachers conceptualize and preach the gospel from a “soul theology” as “an ethnic folk system of beliefs.” According to Mitchell’s ethnic perspective, African American preachers’ soul theology is clearly based on God and human life in relation to God: “the providence of God; the justice of God; the majesty, omnipotence, and omniscience of God; the goodness of God and creation; the grace of God; the equality and uniqueness of persons; the family of God as the whole of humankind; the importance of perseverance.”

As a result, African American preaching in a general sense can be connected to its

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622 Whereas Henry Mitchell puts his primary homiletical focus on a performative-rhetorical aspect, Cleophus LaRue is primarily concerned about “a formative biblical hermeneutic plan to demonstrate the role and function of Scripture in sermons.” In particular, LaRue argues that two characteristics make African American preaching distinctive: 1) African Americans’ conception of God 2) their hermeneutic appropriation of Scripture to their life experiences. In other words, while Mitchell emphasized evoking experience through his rhetorical approach, LaRue tries to connect the biblical text to their experiences through using the hermeneutic buttons of African Americans. See Henry H. Mitchell, Celebration and Experience in Preaching (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990); Cleophus J. LaRue, The Heart of Black Preaching; Kenyatta R. Gilbert, The Journey and Promise of African American Preaching (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), 22-26.

623 LaRue, The Heart of Black Preaching, 13-16.

624 Allen, Thinking Theologically: The Preacher as Theologian (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 83.

hearers’ practical participation of the gospel in their lives. As Samuel Dewitt Proctor names, the need for “disciplined obedience” to the gospel is illustrated in the good news. In other words, L Susan Bond describes, “preachers proclaim the good news of God’s affirming presence in Jesus Christ, and do so to bring about increased moral character in relationships and public life.” Compared with Euro-American homiletics, it could be said that African American homiletics is more conscious of a holistic spiritual and ethical conversion of the hearers. For most African American preachers, according to Bond, the gospel is “the fundamental orientation to a life of justice and righteousness.” At the same time, it is believed that ethical behaviors are necessary outcomes of trusting in God’s grace through the gospel. Thus, it could be said that typical African American preaching tends to be gospel-centered and include ethical life and homiletical analysis with a view to justice in the gospel.

Furthermore, many African American preachers have the strong belief that the best way for social transformation is to change the hearers’ inner hearts. For them, thus, African American preaching stresses the gospel as the transformative power for humans. Its purpose, however, is not simply to be concerned about individual salvation, but also to move the individuals and the church toward the concerns of a shared social life and ethical virtue. As a result, most African American preachers do not simply imply ethical

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626 Bond, Contemporary African American Preaching: Diversity in Theory and Style, 37.

627 Ibid., 51.


concerns. Rather, their preaching clearly states ethical directions on the basis of the gospel proclamation. As James Earl Massey’s homiletical theory can be recapitulated in a simple sentence, “Preach the gospel and work for justice,” for African American homiletics, preaching the gospel would not only be to proclaim divine grace in light of individual soteriology, but also be concerned about brightening the ethical eyesight of the hearers through the proclamation of the gospel. In other words, African American preaching generally becomes a powerful stage on which the Holy Spirit empowers the hearers to step forward from their own soteriological faith to active participation in ethical transformation.

In general, moreover, African American preaching notes not simply individual ethical change, but also social transformation and active participation of the hearers in the gospel against adverse social powers. Massey remarks, “The black Christian preacher has had to preach the gospel, but he has also had to work actively against the social forces that undermine human dignity and make the gospel seem only a wealth of words.” In particular, for African Americans who have experienced socio-political discrimination, as LaRue states, transformative social justice is considered one of the very important domains of experience which evoke the true meaning of the gospel and its power. As James Forbes Jr. defines, for African American preachers who have experienced such social environment,

\[^{630}\text{Ibid.}, 67.\]


\[^{632}\text{LaRue, The Heart of Black Preaching, 20-25.: LaRue categorizes situations in which God's sovereign power is experienced in the life of African Americans: personal piety, care of the soul, social justice, corporate concerns and maintenance of the institutional church. He also specifies matters concerning social justice such as racism, sexism, ageism, and other forms of discrimination.}\]
preaching the gospel is proclamation for social transformation and liberation beyond the immediate needs of the church and the individuals in the church.633

b. A Communal Homiletic: Postliberal Homiletic

As suggested previously, ethics is not primarily about decisions but rather about character forming.634 Preaching as character forming may have to consider two standpoints: individualism and communalism. For American preachers, according to Eslinger, pitfalls reside both in individualism and in communalism.635 He maintains, “Rather than choosing which side of the new dualism to favor, preachers must plan to draw from both paradigms.”636 Today, in practice, many sermons do not keep the balance between the two paradigms. As a result, ethics in preaching places its weight on one side: individual character forming or communal character forming. Mostly ethics in preaching has spoken about individual character forming especially since the Enlightenment movement.637 In particular, individual soteriology has been combined with the life of individual Christian faith so that


635 Richard L. Eslinger uses “social-ism,” which named by Edward Farley, with a hyphen to be distinguished from Karl Heinrich Marx’s term, “socialism.” I use “communalism” instead of social-ism.


individual ethics has mainly been considered as the essential focus of ethical preaching. Today, however, Christian ethical formation is necessarily understood in the context of the church. Rather, as Dietrich Bonhoeffer contends, ecclesial ethical formation may need to be regarded as the most primary concern of ethics.\footnote{Dietrich Bonhoeffer, \textit{Ethics}, ed., Eberhard Bethge, trans., Neville Horton Smith (New York: Simon \& Schuster, 1995), 20-23.} Paul Lehmann maintains that Christians have their ethical reflection not merely as believers in Christ but as church members.\footnote{Sally A. Brown recapitulates the ecclesial significance of the church from Lehmann’s “koinonia” ethics: “what makes Christian ethical thinking distinctive is not the resources or norms that it brings to universal moral questions; rather the starting point for Christian thinking about ethics is the fact and the nature of the Christian Church.”: Sally A. Brown, “Rethinking the Moral-Theological Tasks of Preaching: The Case for Reviving the Conversation between Homiletics and Christian Ethics,” 213; Paul Lehmann, \textit{Ethics in a Christian Context} (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), 56.}

Ecclesial ethics has been shaped and developed elaborately by postliberal theologians such as Hans Frei, George Lindbeck, William Willimon, Stanley Hauerwas, Charles L. Campbell. In general, they warn against the influence of the Enlightenment, which tries to adapt Christian identity to modern assumptions.\footnote{Ronald J. Allen, \textit{Preaching and the Other: Studies of Postmodern Insights} (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2009), 24.} Their common concern is to build up the Christian centrality of the church as a cultural-linguistic community within the Bible and Christian doctrine. As Hauerwas and Willimon state, the homiletic essential point of postliberal theology is “not to make the gospel credible to the modern world but to make the world credible to the gospel.”\footnote{Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon, \textit{Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony} (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988), 24.} Therefore, for postliberal theologians, the gospel becomes a starting point which generates the Christian community, forms its character, and teaches its
members about the ethical direction of life. Furthermore, postliberal theology is also concerned for the world and its “Domination system.” Postliberal theology keeps a clear distance away from contemporary secular culture, but is not unconcerned about ethics in the world. As Hauerwas places the ethical function of the church at the center of the ethical issue, the church not only plays a role for the formation of individual character and provides biblical narrative as its ongoing tradition, but also necessarily has responsibility toward the ethically collapsed world. Those balances between individualism and communalism and between ecclesial ethics and worldly ethics are well shaped in postliberal approaches to preaching.

However, Bond has a different view of postliberal balanced approaches towards the church and the world. She offers two different understandings of communal vocation: the postliberal model and Buttrick’s model. According to her argument, whereas postliberal theology considers the church as a peculiar community which has its own internal feature and is distinguished from the contemporary secular world and is named “resident aliens,” Buttrick considers the church as an active subject which approaches the world and embraces

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642 The Domination System, in Walter Wink’s terms, characterizes best the total configuration of powers. According to Wink, “The Domination System is, so to speak, the system of the Powers, in a satanic parody of God, who might be called the System of the systems. The Domination System is thus equivalent to what the Bible so often means by the terms world, aeon, and flesh.”: Walter Wink, Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 49.; Refer to Campbell, The Word before the Powers: An Ethic of Preaching, 24-43.


it with God’s love. According to Bond’s comparison, postliberal homiletic and theology more or less neglect the ethical vocation of the church toward the world in regard to God’s love and concerns. On the other hand, Buttrick’s theological, homiletical model of vocation toward the world seeks “not for confessional identity or church growth or institutional management, but to continue the preaching of Christ that sets us free for neighbor-love, manifested as social justice.” Bond’s contention is reasonable in some aspects. Hauerwas makes the controversial claim that the ethical business of the church is to become the particular ecclesiastical polity named the church. According to him, “the public role of the church is not to seek to become the moral ally of people of good will, but to bear witness to an alternative way of life.” Considering these postliberal voices, therefore, Bond’s observation could be regarded valid enough.

However, Campbell’s ethic of preaching is also worthy of note. Campbell in his book, The Word before the Powers, provides his ethical preaching theory in his own law/gospel system: ‘exposing’ and ‘envisioning.’ The first step of his ethical homiletic theory is to unveil the principalities and powers in the world on his ecclesiastical basis. He calls the step ‘exposing.’ His ‘exposing’ does not intend to overwhelm the hearers by the enormous worldly powers. ‘Exposing’ is accompanied by ‘envisioning’ the new hope that leads them to live with resistance to the powers of death in the world. Between ‘exposing’ and

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645 Bond, Contemporary African American Preaching: Diversity in Theory and Style, 16-17.
646 Ibid., 17.
647 Hauerwas, The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics, 100; Sally A. Brown, “Rethinking the Moral-Theological Tasks of Preaching: The Case for Reviving the Conversation between Homiletics and Christian Ethics,” 215.
‘envisioning’ Campbell’s essential point is to cultivate individual discipleship and community formation which can produce resistance to the powers. Above all, Campbell places the primary emphasis on the hearers’ engagement in practical resistance to the powers.\textsuperscript{648} That is, he underscores envisioning through which Christian individuals and the church can influence the world. According to him, “Such envisioning seeks to set people free from the fear of death and to generate hope that empowers new life in and for the world.”\textsuperscript{649} Likewise, Campbell demonstrates active ethical engagement in and for the world. In such a sense, Bond’s explanation that postliberal homiletic has little concern about the sacrificial ethical vocation of the church toward the world is not fully accepted.

In sum, preaching with communal value could also be considered for ethics in homiletics. In preaching, God’s power that transforms the world through the church community and its active ethical engagement needs to be focused on. That is, when preaching reveals the transformative, resisting power of God working through the church community, Christian ethics could increase its homiletical denotation.

c. An Other-wise Homiletic: Radical Postmodern Homiletic

Another ethics in preaching could be examined in the radical postmodern school. Radical postmodern homiletics has been largely affected by theological concerns about otherness.\textsuperscript{650} According to Ronald Allen’s examination of theologies of otherness in

\textsuperscript{648} Campbell, \textit{The Word before the Powers: An Ethic of Preaching}, 105-20.

\textsuperscript{649} Ibid., 120.

\textsuperscript{650} John McClure says that there are some models for other-wise preaching which have already been introduced
preaching, theologies of otherness oppose westerners’ emphasis on universal experience. That is, theologies of otherness understand that “the Enlightenment quest for universal experience has led westerners not to respect the particular experiences and values of people of other culture.”

In particular, John McClure’s ethics derives out of his doctrinal understanding of otherness, and contributes to broadening an ethical outlook in preaching. He develops homiletic concepts of deconstruction and otherness through contemporary figures such as Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida. He calls his homiletic an “other-wise homiletic.”

McClure’s main concern is to respect the particularity of others, which could include the Bible, the congregation, others inside or outside the church and even God. His concern for otherness proposes a collaborative homiletic which gathers congregation members together into the “roundtable” as a place for sermon preparation. He pays attention to the

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652 See McClure, *Other-wise Preaching: A Postmodern Ethic for Homiletics*, 97-152.

653 Allen, *Thinking Theologically: The Preacher as Theologian*, 64.


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significance of collaboration that the preacher can be taught by others’ experiences and understandings of the gospel. He believes that “another person’s reading of the gospel may transform the preacher’s interpretation entirely.”

This other-wise homiletic takes shape with four theological characteristics: the social gospel, liberation theology, Christus Victor theology and theology of victimization. These theological concerns of McClure clearly show his theology of otherness. He not only proposes a collaborative homiletic, but also tries to embody those theologies in preaching. Furthermore, his focus on otherness gives profound insight into an ethics in preaching which is concerned about a social scale of the gospel with reference to “the super-personal forces of evil” beyond the human personal vices. Moreover, ethics in other-wise preaching is concerned for “the pain and suffering of the poor, the marginalized, the oppressed, the shamed, the shunned, the outcast, the abused, or the disenfranchised” and their hope of liberation. His theological emphasis on otherness may broaden and deepen homiletical vision of the preacher from centre to margin, from visible richness to invisible poorness. This other-wise homiletic may fortify ethics and its direction in preaching.

This other-wise homiletic has been also developed in homiletic theologies of several homileticians: Lucy Rose, Christine Smith, Charles Campbell, Eunjoo Mary Kim, and so

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656 McClure, *Other-wise Preaching: A Postmodern Ethic for Homiletics*, 136.: McClure enumerates the super-personal forces of evil: race, gender, class, ethnic discrimination, poverty, war, etc. He also takes examples of human personal vices such as alcoholism, drug abuse, adultery, greed, envy, etc.

657 Ibid., 136.

658 According to Wilson’s analysis of radical postmodern homiletic, Charles Campbell is distinguished from the radical postmodern school. He is concerned for exposing the principalities and powers and preaching active
For Christine Smith, preaching is not only an act of naming and interpreting realities of the human present world, but also an act of transforming and redeeming the realities. Such preaching may become possible through clear awareness of otherness of the preacher and the church community. Smith’s homiletical concern about otherness is explicated well through her preaching as weeping, confession and resistance. For her, preaching begins with engaging our (preacher and community) deepest passions and highest concerns about a world filled with human suffering, oppression, prejudice and discrimination in a sermon. This is preaching as *weeping*. She also proposes preaching as *confession*, which discloses and articulates the truths about present harsh realities of human existence; preaching as *resistance*, which mobilizes communities to stand against evil as a transforming act.

Likewise, Smith’s preaching seems to contribute to developing ethics in homiletics. In particular, her concerns for harsh realities as otherness in a world may be able to expand the realm of ethical approaches in preaching.

Eunjoo Mary Kim also recognize otherness in their homiletics and their theologies of otherness are embodied in patterns of ethical preaching. She proposes trans-contextual preaching in terms of globalization in her *Preaching in an Age of Globalization*. She extends the horizon of otherness into a global world. Her trans-contextual preaching recognizes

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multiple heritages which congregants possess so that their precious diverse viewpoints are respected and are seriously shared in preaching.\textsuperscript{660} Moreover, trans-contextual preaching encourages preachers not only to read and interpret the biblical text and the hearer as others, but also to “stretch beyond our boundaries” in order to “have direct and indirect dialogue with people whose social and personal situations are different from our own.”\textsuperscript{661} As a result, Kim maintains that trans-contextual preaching could provide opportunities through which new viewpoints and worldviews are experienced.\textsuperscript{662} It may be said that her trans-contextual preaching is also based on other-wise homiletics. Especially her other-wise preaching may globally enlarge ethical vision in homiletics.

Likewise, diverse theories of other-wise preaching have made manifold ethical approaches in homiletics possible. In practice, such various patterns of other-wise preaching have been concerned about the marginalized, and have listened attentively to silent voices of others. As a result, preaching’s audibility may be amplified and improved through this other-wise homiletic.

Theologies of other-wise preaching often have resulted in little reference to God and the gospel.\textsuperscript{663} Their emphasis on otherness has ended to bring about lack of emphasis on God

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{660} Eunjoo Mary Kim, \textit{Preaching in an Age of Globalization} (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 54-55; 87.
\item \textsuperscript{661} Ibid., 21.
\item \textsuperscript{662} Ibid., 69.
\item \textsuperscript{663} Of course, it cannot be asserted that all homileticians of other-wise homiletics are not concerned for God in preaching. Tisdale underscores a “contextual middle way” between two approaches: “an approach that values (with liberalism) the importance of forging theology in continual dialogue with the realities of congregational experience, while also valuing (with neo-orthodoxy) the role of Scripture in providing the normative paradigms by which experience itself can be evaluated and judged.”: Tisdale, \textit{Preaching as Local Theology and Folk Art}, 96-97.
\end{itemize}
in preaching. That is, homiletical entropocentricity in other-wise preaching seems to have produced unclear focus on God. As Wilson argues in evaluating radical postmodern homiletics, a critical problem of radical postmodern homiletics such as other-wise homiletics may be “in largely doing theology and homiletics by splitting off the Divine from the human, the above from the below.” Other-wise homiletics seems to lose its balance between naming God and naming the realities of others.

2. Ethics in a Law-Gospel Homiletic as a Gospel-centered Homiletic

As David Buttrick maintains that “biblical preaching that will not name God out of narrative and into the world is simply unbiblical,” preaching’s theological formulation needs to be based on God-centeredness. That is, preaching is a ministry which embodies works of naming God from the gospel and into the contextual realities of the human life.

Gospel-centered preaching, as Tim Keller writes, converts doctrinal or how-to speeches into true sermons. “The gospel brings news about what God has already done for you, rather than instruction and advice about what you are to do for God.” Likewise, gospel-centered preaching seems not to be directly connected with Christian ethics. Rather, gospel-centered preaching mainly seems to focus the gospel solely on saving souls. Yet, examining recent homiletical theories, a connection between gospel-centered preaching and ethical preaching is observed. For example, once gospel-centered preaching is elaborated

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664 Wilson, *Preaching and Homiletical Theory*, 145.

through a homiletical theory such as law-gospel homiletic, it is concerned about the hearers’ participation in the reality of the gospel. This can be considered as part of the turn to the listener that otherwise is an emphasis in the New Homiletic. The hearers’ existence is illuminated and gradually confirmed in the movement from law to gospel or from trouble to grace as the deep grammar. As a result, the hearers come to be able to see themselves through the reality of the gospel and come to experience a third identity generated through gospel-centered preaching. Wilson writes, “By juxtaposing trouble [law] and grace [gospel], and by the power of the Holy Spirit, a third identity is generated, an identity of faith, hope, and love of God and neighbor.” 666 That is, the hearers come to encounter the inescapable situation that they ask themselves the primary questions of Christian ethics regarding a third identity: “Who am I as a follower of Jesus? What life is worthy of one who recognizes the authority of Jesus? or What sort of people should those who confess Jesus as Christ be?” 667

Details in homiletical theories for preaching the gospel may be diverse, but gospel-centered preaching primarily explicates what the gospel is and how God has decisively acted in Christ in the events of the gospel. 668 Here we find an appropriate reason why ethical preaching can hold its core value in common with gospel-centered preaching. Gospel-centered preaching does not directly talk about ethical matters. However, it is significant that gospel preaching is to proclaim what God has done, is doing, and promises to do in and


668 Paul Wilson hermeneutically suggests a theological lens of “God-sense” to read the Bible for preaching. See his *God Sense* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001).
through Christ. In that, the meaning of preaching ethics is included, and more strictly speaking it could be said that preaching ethics is preaching God’s ethics through divine holistic works.

As Daniel M. Bell Jr. says, “Preaching ethics is not something we do in addition to (or, worse, instead of) preaching Christ. To preach ethics faithfully is to preach Christ, to proclaim what Christ has done, is doing, and will do.” 669 In other words, preaching ethics is announcing the gospel. Preaching ethics is not a notification of something we have to do, but primarily is an announcement of what God in Christ does because ethics is a way of life and in the gospel God’s decisive way of life is embedded. As Tom Ridenhour contends, therefore, “preaching ethics is a matter of making God the subject of the sermon’s verbs.” 670 In conclusion, it might be summarized that the reason why preaching the gospel can be the original root of ethical preaching is because the gospel itself is about what God is doing today in us and through us, and the divine life itself sheds light on the human ethical life.

Moreover, as Miller says, “To preach the gospel then is not merely to say words but to effect a deed.” 671 Yet, I want to insert one thing between saying words and causing a behavior. That is, the gospel is not a vending machine which instantly brings about a new visual, ethical consequence. The preacher needs to be concerned about a dynamic of the gospel to help the hearer ethically understand the word and the world. Hauerwas states,


“Ethics is a way of seeing before it is a matter of doing. The ethical task is not to tell you what is right or wrong, but rather to train you to see.” As Wilson remarks, in the same manner, the gospel in preaching is not only a doorway to faith, but also provides a lens through which the hearers can newly see God and the world. Preaching cannot give divine ethical voice to the hearers until this new lens of the gospel is distributed throughout preaching. In this sense, it could be concluded that gospel-centered preaching itself includes Christian ethics and is preaching ethics. Preaching ethics is not just to preach ethical issues or sanctified transformation of the hearers, but rather to be fulfilled through preaching the gospel.

Gospel-centered preaching is distinguished from moralizing, ethical imperative preaching. In particular, law-gospel homiletic as gospel-centered preaching focuses on an articulation of what gospel means and does, which has been generally deemphasized since the New Homiletic began. Comparing law-gospel homiletic with other homiletical theologies and theories examined previously with respect to ethics in homiletics, it could be said that law-gospel homiletic not only puts its primary emphasis on theological articulation of the gospel, but also provides an effective homiletical structure through which God can be named in a world.

One may say that law/gospel structure in preaching is a mechanical device to

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672 Hauerwas and Willimon, Resident Aliens, 95.

673 Paul Scott Wilson, “Preach the Text or Preach the Gospel?” The Toronto School of Theology Homiletics Colloquium 1:1 (Winter, 2007), 7-8.: http://individual.utoronto.ca/jacobsen1/TSTHS1-1.pdf

674 Paul Scott Wilson, “What is the Gospel?” The Academy of Homiletics (Fall 2005); Campbell, Preaching Jesus: new Directions for Homiletics in Hans Frei’s Postliberal Theology, 147-80.
highlight the gospel in preaching. However, law-gospel homiletic pays attention to the reality of the gospel per se and its homiletical embodiment. Of course, some homileticians seem to place more emphasis on law/gospel structure itself, and elaborate its sermonic stream. For example, Lowry seems to put only secondary focus on the gospel considering the placement of the gospel and the delay in introducing the gospel in his homiletical loop. Yet, as Lowry explains, his primary concern is not the methodological efficiency of his homiletical loop, but the hearers’ experience of the gospel: “Quantity of words is not the appropriate measure. The quality of impact, the suddenness of perception, and the power of decisive insight are central.”

Lowry’s homiletical theory of law and gospel is a little different from other theories of law and gospel in the aspect that he seems to put less emphasis on the content of the gospel, but it can be said that he is not less concerned about the gospel content, but rather focuses on the form of the gospel, through which delivering the content of the gospel is maximized, as an event and an experience. As a result, Lowry also emphasizes gospel-centered preaching in his homiletical loop.

Likewise, law-gospel homiletic links the gospel with the God-sense of Scripture regardless of concrete patterns of law/gospel structure in preaching. Moreover, it begins with human realities in which the hearers encounter and experience troubles of the law. The law is

675 Lowry, The Sermon: Dancing the Edge of Mystery, 78.

676 Representatively, Wilson and Lowry have different views of the ratio between law part and gospel part in the sermon. Lowry argues that the timing of the sudden shift from law to gospel is crucial. For him, the more delaying the timing of the turn is done, the more efficiency of the gospel delivery will be maximized. He suggests that the shift happens about three-fourths into the sermon. Further, five-sixths will be better for him. Other homileticians including Paul Wilson, on the other hand, maintain a half-half balance between law and gospel.: Lowry, The Sermon: Dancing the Edge of Mystery, 78.; Wilson, Preaching and Homiletical Theory, 90; 96-97.
not simply biblical regulation, but also arises from existential self-awareness in the realities of congregation. Accordingly, law-gospel preaching is deeply rooted in the realities of a world where the hearers live. In other words, law-gospel homiletics is based on the balance between the gospel and the ethical contexts. Therefore, law-gospel preaching may become an effective homiletical model for ethics in preaching.

However, it may also be noted that a law-gospel homiletic may need to pay attention to another use of law in order to deepen the understanding of God and broaden the understanding of today’s cultural, ethical reality. In practice, law-gospel homiletic has shown little concern about law “as a way of making clear how the reality of our world needs to be seen, named and evaluated in light of the reign of God.” As Arthur Van Seters proposes, however, law cannot be simply used “as a prelude to articulating gospel.” Law is a part of gospel, it is itself grace. It needs to be noted that law may reillumine distortions and deceptions in current cultures in light of gospel and actively name God into a world. The potential of law’s ethical contribution in preaching may need to be grafted into this law-gospel homiletic to form a larger gospel-centered ethical-oriented homiletic.

3. The Potential of the Law’s Ethical Contribution in Homiletics

As already stated, law has been engaged as a norm of Christian ethics in homiletics. Even if the term, law, is not typically used with regard to its ethical engagement in

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preaching, law generally plays an ethical function in homiletics.

Law and the Divine

Is viewing and interpreting the Scripture for ethical preaching from the perspective of the law absolutely problematic? One might say no. As the apostle Paul mentions in Romans, the law is holy, good, and just. Of course, as he states, the law is understood as having a dual structure. Awareness of the law also functions to stimulate sin to work. The law may be considered as a stumbling block for Christians. As Douglas Moo explains, the law’s duality can be understood as “the different operations and effects of the same law.”679 The two natures of the law should coexist. Yet, for ethical preaching it would be particularly necessary to recognize the original positive nature of the law, which is consistently good, holy and just,680 and through which God’s ongoing voice embedded in the law leads and instructs the hearers. The polarization of law and gospel can help to maximize the significant function of the gospel, but it may bring about another unexpected polarization between ethics and gospel. In other words, extreme concern about one nature of law may remove the other nature of law, its goodness, holiness and justice, so that the full sense of gospel can be distorted and limitedly understood in the context of homiletics.681

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679 Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT, 491.

680 Romans 7:12: “the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.”; The law itself, for Paul, is neither sin nor a source of sin. Paul intends to clarify that the law and commandment are still “holy, righteous, and good,”(v.12) regardless of the relation with sin.: Lambrecht, S.J., The Wretched “I” and Its Liberation: Paul in Romans 7 and 8, 48.; Thielman, Paul and the Law: A Contextual Approach, 199.; Talbert, Romans, SHBC, 189-90.

681 The full sense of gospel is not fulfilled only through the timeless kerygma for humans living in situations. As David Schnasa Jacobsen and Robert Allen Kelly write, “it would be a big mistake to assume that the gospel
The law should not be considered simply as a moral norm and a form of ethical engagement for homiletical problem-solving. The law needs to be preached and a certain challenge\textsuperscript{682} needs to be put as an extension of proclaiming and embodying the gospel. The gospel itself cannot be a direct key to an issue. The law itself is not able to fulfill ethical works. As Wilson demonstrates, Christian ethics can fruitfully work when a relationship of faith with God is formed and ethical preaching can gain its power when God wills, equips and empowers people to fulfill their tasks for an ethical life.\textsuperscript{683} Ethical functions of law and gospel cannot be mechanically assumed without a true relationship with God and divine will. For a homiletics of ethics, therefore, law and gospel need to be explored in the sense that the growth of relationship with God is a pre-requisite for ethical consequences of Christian lives; law and gospel are necessarily interpreted and preached for developing that relationship.

How can the law do its best for fulfilling its ethical role and developing relationship with God? If only the convicting second use of the law (Luther’s second use)\textsuperscript{684} plays a role,


\textsuperscript{683} Wilson, \textit{The Practice of Preaching}, 105.; idem, \textit{Preaching and Homiletical Theory}, 86.

\textsuperscript{684} For Martin Luther, the second use of the law is theological, convicting use while the first use is political use of the law. For John Calvin, these are contrary to Luther’s. The first use of the law is law in “its punitive function that warns, teaches, convicts, condemns, and corrects” while the second is “civil law that protects and deters.”: Bayer, \textit{Martin Luther’s Theology: A Contemporary Interpretation}, 61; Wilson, \textit{Setting Words on Fire}, 175.
it can help to clarify the gospel in preaching, but it may not be able to contribute to holistic ethical changes of the hearers, namely ongoing sanctification of the hearers. This use of the law (theological/spiritual/pedagogical use of the law) discloses the ultimate problem which needs the absolute solution for new life. The second use of the law without an extra function of the law proves the ethical impotence of humans and may not be able to entail ethical life changes in the hearer.

The Third Use of the Law

It should be noted that this particular function of the law as the third use no longer proves the ethical impotence of humans but embodies the perfect gospel. A long debate regarding the functions of the law has been continued. John Calvin does not use the principle of simul iustus et peccator like Martin Luther, but he sees the believer’s possibility to follow Imago Dei so that he pays attention to the point that the believer, who is justified and at the same time sinful, can be recovered and gradually sanctified in the union with Christ throughout the journey of salvation. Thus, according to Calvin, even the believers need the law of God as a consistent guide to life, namely the third use of the law, as well as the gospel and they ceaselessly need to be obedient to the law, which “points out the goal toward which throughout life they are to strive.” As in Article VI of the Formula of Concord, “The Third Use of the Law,” the law has been provided for three reasons, and especially the third reason

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686 Institutes, II.6.13.
is “to give on that account a definite rule according to which they [those who are *simul iustus et peccator*] should pattern and regulate their entire life.” As Arthur Van Seters claims that “the goal of preaching is to translate rules into guiding norms shaped by a gospel perspective,” the third use of the law may contribute to reaching the goal of preaching with a formation of divine, concrete guiding norms based on the gospel. However, the third use of the law is not human use [the preacher’s use]; it is divine use. The third use of the law does not fulfill the gospel, but rather the perfect gospel is embodied in the law. The new obedience to the law through the third function of the law denotes “an expression of gratitude for the gospel without any hint of an attempt to use the moral law as a tool for self-justification.”

This use of the law is significantly noticed with reference to how to preach and what to preach. Thomas G. Rogers describes the current trend in the New Homiletic that “the pendulum of homiletic emphasis swings in the direction of how.” He argues that such an

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689 Edward G. Kettner, “The Third Use of the Law and the Homiletical Task,” *Lutheran Theological Review* VII: 1&2 (Fall/Winter 1994 & Spring/Summer 1995), 68-69.: Kettner elucidates a divine-driven ongoing sanctification process through the third use of the law as follows: “When the law is preached people are told how God desires that they live their lives. That preaching condemns the sinner because it serves as a mirror by which the individual examines himself and discovers that he has not done what God requires, and thereby stands condemned before God. Thus it drives the sinner to seek mercy in the blood of Christ. The sinner, rejoicing in the mercy God has provided in Christ, passes from death to life. Now, as a living child of God, the law informs the Christian as new man as to what is pleasing to God, and the Christian out of gratitude to God seeks to live in conformity with that law – not to earn salvation, not to remain in salvation, but purely out of gratitude.”


emphasis on how to preach can also help the preacher struggling with issues of what to preach. He explains that such balanced swings between analyses of preaching form and theological concerns with regard to the law/gospel structure have emerged as a common structure of those theoretical models: a conflict; a resolution; and implications for the future. Rogers explains the structure in his terms: “problem, solution, and what now?”

Furthermore, he warns against the possibility that the last step “what now?” may lead to a sort of works righteousness for the hearer of preaching. If it is so, it would have the same function as the second use of the law. Thus, Rogers suggests that the third use of the law as the final movement of the sermon needs to be preached not in a coercive way, which forces ethical behaviors, but in an encouraging, empowering, confirming way, which preaches challenge through identification or questioning.

The third use of the law cannot be separated from the gospel. It cannot simply be


693 Shauna K. Hannan writes, Tomas Rogers notes that a danger of the “What Now?” is the possibility that a new kind of law could be created. Thus, Rogers suggests a way, “challenge,” which uses language that focuses not on what we do but who we are, people transformed by the gospel.: Shauna K. Hannan, “Lowry’s Loop and the Third Use of the Law,” Academy of Homiletics (Fall 2007), 187.

694 Rogers, “What and How of North American Lutheran Preaching.” 267-69.: According to Rogers’ abstract on this article, “Since preaching the third use of the law can lead to a kind of works righteousness for hearers of such sermons [sermons which have the narrative model based on the structure: the second use of the law – the gospel – the third use of the law], strategies are offered for dealing with preaching challenge. Preachers can put challenge before their hearers as a noun rather than as a verb; they can preach challenge as identification or questioning rather than as something hearers must do of their own accord.”
substituted for the gospel as a means of empowerment to action. It is a function of gospel that the law as the third use can encourage and empower the believers to act. The dialectic between law and gospel helps to produce a chance to experience grace. Grace experienced through such a chance may present a new horizon of obedience to the law, in which God’s will is deeply and insightfully embedded. Grace is embodied through the third use of the law on the basis of the gospel. The third use of the law does not just list fragments of behavioral responsibilities. Homiletically, it is a form of proclaiming grace and of preaching God’s ethics based on divine holistic works.

Therefore, the third use of the law should not be understood as having a problem-solving, decision-making function. In general, social-issue, decision-making preaching has tended to be understood as common ethical preaching. However, the third use of the law could expand the scope of ethics in preaching.695 The third use of the law sprouts from thankfulness for God’s goodness, justice, grace and resistance to the powers.696 The third use of the law, moreover, homiletically needs to be regarded as a challenging proclamation with reference to divine-human relationship forming. As in Wilson’s term, “nurturing exhortation,”697 the third use of the law could provide the hearers with divine nurturing voices within God’s grace, and contribute to forming relationship with God.


Conclusion

In this chapter, it has been examined that theological notions of sanctification can be developed into practical concepts in homiletics regarding Christian ethical life. To put it concretely, as justification and sanctification are inseparably related to each other, the law and the gospel can be investigated as a homiletical paradigm with regard to Christian ethical life. There is an important theological connection between the two sets of terms. However, the law has been typically regarded as the norm of ethical engagement in homiletics, but has tended to result in avoiding the gospel. The law has obvious limitations for ethical preaching without the gospel. Nonetheless, the gospel seems to have been assumed rather than homiletically discussed in much of the homiletic field, especially the New Homiletic. The significance of gospel in homiletics with relation to Christian ethical life seems to have been neglected. Yet, the significance of the gospel has still been the focus of some homileticians. The wedding of ethics and the gospel can be modeled in diverse recent homiletical theories: an empowering-ethical homiletic (African American Homiletic), a communal homiletic (postliberal homiletic), and an other-wise homiletic (radical postmodern homiletic). These theories can give implications for ethical voices in homiletics, but some critiques of each theory can be made in order to propose a homiletic that is both gospel-centered and ethically-oriented. This gospel-centered and ethically-oriented homiletic may provide the potential of the law’s ethical (pedagogical) contribution in homiletics: the third use of the law in preaching.

Now is the time to come out from the primitive forest of biblical, theological, homiletical reflection upon ethical living for which justification/sanctification, law/gospel,
and gospel/the third use of the law have been dynamically intertwined in order to form a homiletical proposal. The next chapter finally turns to a practical proposal of preaching geared towards ethical living particularly for the Korean pulpit. This sermonic theory proposes concrete homiletical directions of the third use of the law with relation to the gospel and ethics in preaching.
Chapter V. A Homiletic Geared towards Ethical Living:

Homiletical Proposals through the Third Use of the Law as Grace for the Korean Pulpit

A. A New Homiletical Methodology for the Korean Pulpit

1. Needs for a New Homiletical Model for the Korean Church

In recent decades, Korean preaching has been experiencing a diversity of homiletical approaches in the Korean pulpit. According to an examination of the preaching history of the Korean church, roughly during the period, the 1880’s to the 1970’s, Korean preaching had mostly consisted of topical and textual sermons. In the 1980’s, expository sermons emerged in earnest as one of the well-known, respected sermon styles under the influence of evangelical preachers in the Korean church. Since the 1990’s through the present, diverse preaching methods and theories have been introduced and performed, especially among young preachers.

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698 As mentioned previously, the Korean church here denotes primarily churches in Korea, but also includes first generation or bilingual Korean churches in North America and worldwide.

699 According to the review of *Hanguk Seolkyo Daejeonjib*, 862 sermons (almost 80%) of the 1,098 sermons from 1884 to 1970 were topical sermons which were mostly preached in a three-point deductive form. 222 sermons (about 20%) of the rest were textual preaching, which takes shape of a miniature of expository sermon; the other style was expository preaching (only 1%).: Editorial Department, ed., *Hanguk Seolkyo Daejeonjib*, vol. I-XII.; Unyong Kim, “Faith Comes from Hearing: A Critical Evaluation of the Homiletical Paradigm Shift through the Homiletical Theories of Fred. B. Craddock, Eugene L. Lowry, and David Buttrick, and Its Application to the Korean Church,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education, 1999), 64.


701 The New Homiletic began to give its theoretical, practical influences to Korean churches and homiletic classes in seminaries in the 1990’s and the 2000’s. Sermonic theories of the New Homiletic such as Inductive preaching and narrative preaching have been introduced and began to be actually performed in the context of the Korean pulpit.
As a result, Korean preaching has become richer in its use of methodological theories of preaching. These theories have provided various methodological possibilities and new practical expressions of Korean preaching. However, Korean preaching arguably still has need in terms of ethics in Christian life. The Korean church has been encountering diverse critiques of ethical realities in its life.

a. Critiques of Korean Christian Ethics: From Outside the Church

Current diverse critiques of Korean Christianity from within Korean culture have recently brought about a serious crisis in the Korean church and its evangelizing ministry. One of the most serious critiques which the Korean church is facing pertains to ethical corruption in the church community and the personal lives of Christians. Every society has its own standard of ethics. In particular, Korean society has a high standard of morality. It could be said that this is an influence of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, belief systems which have long-standing roots in Korean traditional culture. Those religious, ideological traditions are based on their ethical values such as the Buddhist way of life “best expressed by the axiom ‘do no evil and do good’.”

Virtues such as this have become one of the most important values to Koreans.

Likewise, Korean culture and society evaluate personality and humanity of each member in a social community with such deeply rooted standards of morality. While modern

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China has de-emphasized its religious traditions such as Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism and rather cultivated its own form of Communism, Korea has maintained and promoted its own religious traditions and socio-cultural foundations for ethics.\textsuperscript{703} Even if an individual shows great competency at his/her job, Korean society places the greater value on his/her sense of morality. While Korean society has experienced serious corruption in an ethical sense, high morality still stands as a significant value in Korea.\textsuperscript{704} Thus, the church is also evaluated by the standards of such high morality.

Ethical corruption of the Korean church has become a major target of critical evaluation by those outside of the church. In practice, as previously stated in the chapter one of this thesis, the current reality of the Korean church and Korean Christian individual lives seems to be getting serious in light of general standard of ethics.\textsuperscript{705} The church is expected to maintain a high level of morality, and is held responsible when her own ethics falls short of even the social standards outside the church though these are crumbling too.

The Korean church is blamed because of what are seen as its hypocritical realities.\textsuperscript{706} The Korean church is well known for its evangelical passion, social influences and devotion to several activities such as early morning prayer, Bible study groups, revival meetings, discipleship training programs, choirs, praising teams and so on. For that reason, the church

\textsuperscript{703} Chai Shin Yu, \textit{Korean Thought and Culture: A New Introduction} (Toronto, Canada: The Society for Korean and Related Studies, 2010), 13.


\textsuperscript{706} Ibid., 24-25.
has been requested to show higher and stricter levels of ethics. The church itself calls for this. Yet, the church has sometimes failed to be a positive role model in society’s eyes. As a result, the church’s passion and efforts tend to be regarded as hypocrisy. These outside criticisms towards the church have been hindering the church’s evangelistic efforts. To make matters worse, positive influences and ethical contributions of the Korean church have been ignored and disparaged.

b. Critiques of Korean Christian Ethics: From Inside the Church

As much as the Korean church is encountering severe critiques of its Christian ethics from society, judgments exist within the church as well. The Korean church has been defined as a community of grace. The church has been regarded as set apart from the world, clearly distinguished from the secular world and in which congregants are healed and trained within divine grace. Furthermore, Christians are charged to extend the grace, which they themselves have received, to embrace and forgive other congregation members. In many Korean churches, grace has been emphasized and they have strove to accept and embrace the gospel. Such receptivity of the gospel has been considered a Christian virtue in the Korean church.

Today, however, new voices begin to arise from inside the church. Some congregation members encourage self-examination of moral corruption and ethical apathy. As a result, the church sees a new type of division depending on denominations and

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congregants: a grace-centered group and an ethics-sensitive group.\textsuperscript{708}

In this new context, preaching is also facing a new challenge that it needs to address both groups and move them to greater unity as a single church toward living ethically responsible life within the gospel. However, Korean preaching still has recent critical issues which need to be reconsidered and improved upon with regard to ethics and the church’s ethical duty. These include: absence of homiletical interpretation of biblical ethics and morality for the Christian life, overemphasis on blessing in preaching, individual-centered preaching, imbalance between “being” and “doing” in preaching, radically biased ideological, political preaching, and unquestioned acceptance of American prosperity gospel preaching.

c. Current Issues in Korean Preaching with Regard to Ethics

1) Absence of homiletical Interpretation of Biblical Ethics and Morality

In the Korean church as well as in Korean society, the awareness of ethics is generally high in comparison to western societies and cultures. Whereas western traditions have a strong sense of relative ethics, the Korean tradition has emphasized a high level of absolute correspondence to ethical standards, codes and principles rather than from a perspective of relationship and situational or contextual consideration. Ethical laws are equated with truth in Korean culture.\textsuperscript{709}


\textsuperscript{709} Inwhan Kim, “Seolgyoeui Yoonriseongeul Hoibokhaja,” The Pastoral Monthly (December, 2006), 64.
However, ethical realities of quite a few Korean Christians and church communities are not appreciably different from those of people outside the church. The reason may be due to the fact that Korean churches have not interpreted biblical ethics for the Christian life. Koreans have always had Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism as ideologies that have guided their moral compass, but as Christianity flourished in Korea, a reinterpretation of Koran ethics into biblical ethics on the basis of the gospel did not occur.

2) Overemphasis on Blessing

Many cultures have a special interest in a blessed life.\textsuperscript{710} Blessing is a significant virtue not only in the Christian life, but with the human relationship. In general, Christians seek a life of blessing in hopes of receiving the ultimate blessing of life everlasting. It seems to be natural for them to expect to live in the blessed life now and then. Though Jesus says in Scripture that this life on earth will not be easy, (one must carry one’s cross and forsake their own lives), in general, Christians believe that there will be a greater reward and blessing (“We have every spiritual blessing that is in Christ”\textsuperscript{711}).

Similarly, Koreans have a significant sense of being blessed, and they hold it in high regard in their lives. Blessing is called “\textit{bok}” in Korean. And they also regard blessing others as an important virtue which is called “\textit{chuk-bok}” in Korean. “\textit{Bok}” and “\textit{chuk-bok}” are terms most frequently heard in the Korean church. The Korean church has a strong sense of

\textsuperscript{710} See Bronislaw Malinowski, \textit{A Scientific Theory of Culture and Others Essays} (Chapel Hill, N. Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944).

\textsuperscript{711} Ephesians, 1:3.
invocation for blessings. Those blessings are also messages which many Korean Christians want to hear from sermons. One thing that distinguishes Korean culture from western culture is that the Korean church tries to relate their bok and chuk-bok to personal material richness and physical wealth/health. According to Jung Young Lee, most Koreans “understand the blessings of this world in terms of personal and material rewards rather than social justice and ethical living; and they perceive heavenly blessings as spiritual manifestations of worldly blessings.” He states that this characteristic of blessing in the Korean church comes from the Korean culture, especially from the shamanistic tradition. As Koreans have traditionally gone to shamans and asked them to pray for their receiving bok which mainly signifies material blessings: success, health, wealth, having many children, promotion in company, long life and so on. Even today, not a few Koreans, including even Christians, are still dependent on a shamanic ritual for their bok.

Such strong concerns about bok (blessings) have influenced sermonic overemphasis on blessings. Many Korean preachers overuse an invocation for blessings in their sermons to connect their message to their congregant members in relevant ways. As a result, sermons turn into a blessing-oriented invocation rather than gospel-centered preaching. Thus, today’s Korean preaching is asked to focus more on how to live as a true Christian than blessings, especially blessings of visible grace such as material richness, physical comfort, success of life through which all seems to go well.

712 Lee, Korean Preaching: An Interpretation, 80.
713 Ibid., 80-81.
3) Individual-centered Preaching

In the Korean church, since preaching occurs in a worship space where church community members gather together, it needs to take into account its communal context. The message to be preached needs to be developed and understood with the context of the church community and its communality in mind. Still, individual-centered preaching is heard in many Korean sermons. Many Korean sermons focus on individual faith, salvation, restoration, repentance, transformation, revival, and outward deeds. They seem to leave out or omit important content pertaining to a church community and its communal aspects as seen in the first church in Acts. In that sense, Korean preaching needs to take Christian ethics into greater account while recovering truths of Christian community living in preaching.

2. The Third Use of the Law in Homiletics for the Korean Church

Although Korean preaching has played a central role throughout the history of Korean church growth and is still making impact on the church and Christians. However, as discussed earlier, the characteristics and realities of Korean preaching reveal how limited it is in allowing a healthy infiltration of ethics. In that sense, as introduced in the fourth chapter, Korean preaching needs to develop a homiletical theology and rhetoric with respect

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714 Lee, Hankook Kyohoi, Paradigm-ul Bakuoya Sanda, 137-44.; Unyong Kim, Seolgyoui Saeroun Paradigm (Seoul: PCTS, 2004), 111.

715 Chung, Preaching for Preachers: A Study of Preaching with Particular Reference to the Korean Cultural Context, 19-44.: Chung remarks, in the Korean church “the Good News spread rapidly because those who received it knew it to be good for others, as it was for them. Faith in Jesus Christ proved to be the transforming power that changed the character and lives of those who believed. The preached Word of God opened up to these lives a new world. Therefore, the preaching of the Word of God had an important place in the hearts of the Presbyterian Church of Korea.”: Ibid. 44.
to ethics.

However, for contemporary Christians who tend to be against the traditional stance which understands ethics as a concept of absolute truth, discussing homiletical practices for preaching ethics is considered a very sensitive and deliberate work. Considering such sensitivity of ethics in preaching, how ethics in preaching can be preached needs to be deliberated. In other words, it is noted that the truth, which resides in ethics, needs to be determined and proclaimed in preaching beyond the faith and experiences of the preacher and congregation. Preaching ethics is not simply to offer a remedy for recovery of ethics. This calls for elaborated works. This thesis finally proposes those works within the dialectic of the gospel and the third use of the law. The gospel is complete in itself, but it may be able to concretely approach the contexts of individual lives through the third use of the law that shows and embodies divine purpose. The law without the gospel cannot become grace. Yet when the law and the gospel are integrated into a sermon, the third use of the law finally becomes valid as grace. Further, the dialectic of the gospel and the third use of the law forms a practical framework for preaching ethics. A gospel-centered homiletical approach will elucidate this proposal through the practical principle of the third use of the law and its relation to the gospel.

To preach about Christian ethics, the preacher needs to embody ethics and present concrete guidance for acts relevant to the lives of the congregants. Rather than use the preacher’s or the congregation’s interpretation of ethical truth as a measuring stick, the

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716 Lee, Hankook Kyohoi, Paradigm-ul Bakuoya Sanda, 22-23.
preacher is advised to employ the third use of the law as divine interpretation of the ethical guidance in preaching. According to Van Seters, preaching needs the guidance of norms, values, and rights in order to discern how the gospel inspires the congregation to participate in ethical living. The third use of the law offers an aid for one to recognize the fruits within gospel and broadens the homiletical lens for ethics in preaching.

The third use of the law in homiletics does not just provide the congregation with divine rules in a direction. It is thoroughly related to the believer’s faith and responsive acts with intimate, inseparable relation to the gospel. In other words, the third use of the law is not merely norms imperatively given by God to his people. It is not hierarchical rules as the responsibility which is coercively imposed upon the believers. Homiletical roles of the third use of the law are functioned in a relation-forming structure. The third use of the law is closely related to the gospel proclaimed in preaching, but in a way is incomplete without the believer’s response of thankfulness and decisive action towards ethical living. Therefore, the third use of the law works to encourage a dynamic dialectic of divine and human roles with relation to Christian ethics and sanctification. The rest of this chapter will explore the third use of the law and its homiletical implications with regard to the human role in sanctification.

B. Insightful Traces of the Third Use of the Law in Homiletics

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717 Van Seters, Preaching and Ethics, 58.

In homiletics, the third use of the law has not received much attention. Rather, its presence in homiletics has been assumed in diverse ways through practical suggestions for living as Christians. Moreover, it has not been sufficiently studied for ethics in homiletics. The rest of this chapter will identify a homiletical approach for ethics in preaching through the third use of the law. First of all, insightful traces of the third use of the law in homiletics will be probed to devise a homiletical method of ethical living for the congregation. Of course, homiletical traces to be explored henceforth do not directly refer to the third use of the law. However, those traces of the third use of the law may provide perceptive homiletical, theoretical foundations on which a homiletic geared towards ethical living for Christians can be built within a dynamical dialectic of the gospel. From various authors I will identify notions that seem helpful in developing a homiletic that highlights the third use of the law. In particular I will draw upon Eugene Lowry’s homiletical loop, Richard Lischer’s works of law and gospel in preaching, Charles Campbell’s homiletical principle of exposing, envisioning and practice, Paul Wilson’s Four Pages of the Sermon, and Thomas Rogers’ homiletical concern about the third use of the law. I will be exploring homiletical traces of the third use of the law through drawing specific guidelines from their works, but put the main emphasis on the steps for preachers to take. For this examination, I can categorize two groups: locus of the third use of the law in sermonic steps and practical approaches of the third use of the law in preaching. The first group includes Lowry, Lischer and Campbell’s principles and the second includes Wilson and Roger’s principles.

1. Eugene Lowry’s Loop: Unfolding
Eugene Lowry also does not use the term, the third use of the law, in his homiletic, but it informs his homiletical plot and theory. His homiletical plot is completed with unfolding the possible anticipated consequences as human response to the gospel, the final stage that “always anticipates the future, made new by the good news.” The Unfolding stage is a stage as anticipating the consequences in his homiletical loop as Crum employs his final move to “new consequences that follow” “the new way of perceiving or believing.” In this stage of unfolding, his notion of the third use of the law may be observed. He employs a term in homiletics called a ‘loop’ as a plot form. In his first edition (1980) of Homiletical Plot, his homiletical plot consists of five steps: upsetting the equilibrium, analyzing the discrepancy, disclosing the clue to resolution, experiencing the gospel and anticipating the consequences. He also proposes his revised view of plotting processes in his book, The Sermon: Dancing the Edge of Mystery: conflict, complication, sudden shift (peripeteia) and unfolding (resolution). After twenty years since the first edition of Homiletical Plot, he renames the stages of the sermonic plot by integrating the previous two versions of the plot: conflict, complication, sudden shift, good news and unfolding in his expanded edition of Homiletical Plot. According to him, “the plotted

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719 Lowry, The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form, 120.

720 Crum, Manual on Preaching, 52-86, 111-16.

721 Wilson, Preaching and Homiletical Theory, 89.


723 Lowry, The Sermon: Dancing the Edge of Mystery, 56-89.

724 Richar L. Eslinger, “Tracking the Homiletical Plot,” Mike Graves and David J. Schlafer, eds., What’s the Shape of Narrative Preaching? (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2008), 71; Lowry, The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon
sermon moves from opening conflict or discrepancy through increased complication into some kind of sudden shift or reversal that changes everything.”725 That is, his sermonic plot moves from the law to the gospel much like a movement form an *itch* to a *scratch*.

Lowry does not end the plot of his sermon at the stage of ‘solution to a problem.’ He maintains that a sermon needs to move toward a final stage which he calls unfolding or resolution.726 This final step corresponds to homiletical implications of the third use of the law. Through this final stage of the plot, Lowry’s intention is to help the congregation anticipate the future which is made new by the good news.727 Not only, for him, is the stage of experiencing the gospel a central concern in his homiletical plot, but the plotted movement from one stage to the next is also very important. He is especially concerned about the final stage of his sermon plot since he believes that the response of the congregation to the good news occurs in the final stage. To put it another way, Lowry argues that the congregants listen to the good news and subsequently move forward in conviction desiring to align their lives to the law in ways they did not previously.

Lowry believes that the congregants experiencing the gospel in preaching come to see the same law through a different lens. Even if the final stage of his plot speaks an imperative claim to the congregation, the claim is no longer a bad news since it is a claim

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727 Lowry, *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form*, 120.
based on the promise of the gospel. “There can be no imperative claim without the indicative
based on the Good News of Christ. Otherwise, we are pushing an ethics of obedience
message only.”

For Lowry, the indicative claim of the good news and the imperative claim
of the third use of the law as a response to the good news work inseparably in the plotted
movement of the sermon.

Likewise, the preacher names the imperative claim that rides alongside the
indicative promise of the gospel. Bartimaeus, now healed, must now look; there is
no option. That he now can look is the marvelous surprise. And the imperative is
not riding on the back of the indicative. This is no contradictory “conditional-free
grace.” It simply is successive, subsequent. Once healed of blindness, the
community now can see what is uglier than our worst fears as well as what is
infinitely lovelier than could be thought possible. And before Paul is through with
his letter to the church at Rome, he makes clear the unfolding claim: “I appeal to
you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as
a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.”

Although Lowry does not mention the third use of the law in his homiletic, he has not
only a clear homiletical goal of the final stage of the sermon plot, but also a theoretical
guideline for the stage with respect to the homiletical approach of the third use of the law.

Lowry remarks, “this [the stage of unfolding] is a crucial time for powerful economy with
words.” Since tension continued throughout the previous four stages subsides at the final
stage, unfolding, he maintains that “the listeners will not abide lots of new material” when

[728] Lowry, The Sermon: Dancing the Edge of Mystery, 81.

[729] Ibid., 86-87.

[730] Ibid., 86.

[731] Ibid.
they reach the final stage. Therefore, for Lowry, the final stage is not the time to disclose many new things. This stage needs to be short, but having impact so that the listeners can experience “quickly and powerfully the consequences of our [their] being claimed by the gospel’s prophetic and poetic anticipation of new possibility in the listening assembly.” That is, for Lowry, in the final stage in light of the third use of the law, the preacher does not need to say much, but rather needs only to powerfully name the consequences of the gospel in the Christian life.

Shauna Hannan tries to see more clearly Lowry’s third use of the law in his homiletic by examining and comparing it with James Childs. Hannan suggests that “Lowry’s use of the third use of the law in the final stage mirrors what James Childs calls a ‘summary rule dialogical ethic.’” According to Hannan, Childs’ ethics “comprehends the instructional function of the law while at the same time recognizing that it is never merely that but always also my accuser which sends me fleeing to the gospel as the only source of hope, confidence and power for the Christian life and ethic.” Hannan asserts that Lowry considers the final stage of the sermon plot as the rules for the Christian living, which is derived from the dialectical movement between the gospel and the scripture as the rubric of the third use of the law, much like Childs’ summary rules.

Moreover, Lowry emphasizes the final stage not as the climax of the sermon, but as


“the subsidiary role in the face of the centrality of the gospel.”\textsuperscript{735} Lowry evidently warns against seeking the human response to commit to change as the climax of the sermonic plot.

Although many would deny wanting such a result, making the “climax” of the sermon coincidental with the “asking” of human response constitutes a form of works righteousness, no matter how much the preacher tries to avoid it. It is internal to that approach. The focus of our preaching is upon the decisive activity of God, not upon us, and hence the climax of any sermon must be stage four – the experiencing of the gospel. Human response is subsequent to that experience – and consequent of it.\textsuperscript{736}

Lowry’s final stage in his sermonic plot is closely related to the concept of the third use of the law. Furthermore, the plotted loop aspect in his preaching paradigm offers a well-balanced homiletical model with relation to the third use of the law in preaching. He overcomes a homiletical possibility of inciting legalism as a response under the third use of the law through his centrality of the gospel. Likewise, Lowry hurdles the dangers of legalism in his final stage as consequent human responses to the good news. At the same time, he proposes a homiletical possibility for ethics in the Christian life through his appropriation of the third use of the law in the final stage of his plot.

2. Richard Lischer’s Works of Law and Gospel in Preaching: \textit{Analysis, Transition, Integration}

Richard Lischer’s theology of preaching also offers homiletical hints at the third use of the law in preaching. He discusses the law/gospel structure of sermon movement under

\textsuperscript{735} Hannan, “Lowry’s Loop and the Third Use of the Law,” 186.

\textsuperscript{736} Lowry, \textit{The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form}, 83.
the influence of Crum and Stuempfle. Yet, his concern about the law/gospel structure does not produce a particular sermonic design. Rather he focuses on “theological movements which continue to appear in sermons of every shape and design.”

Wilson remarks that “Lischer identified the law/gospel movement as a kind of deep structure or grammar that can operate in sermons whatever the design.”

However, Lischer proposes homiletical works of law and gospel through a traditional movement of law/gospel sermon: law-gospel-obedience. It is noted that he does not try to offer a prescriptive formula for preaching, but he proposes a deep theological grammar in preaching which dynamically works as a series of sermonic movements: analysis, transition, and integration. On the basis of the law/gospel paradigm, Lischer parallels law and gospel with analysis and transition. In analysis, it reflects to Christians the futility of living for themselves as well as the inescapable divine judgment. In a transitional phrase, they are invited into the centre of the gospel in which God’s true identity “as a giver of gifts and surprises” is revealed so that they can experience the grace and forgiveness of sins.

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and be empowered to live changed lives.742

However, Lischer’s homiletical movement does not end in these two steps. For him, those who experience exchanging death for life through analysis and transition begin to see the possibility of “a re-integration of a life that was not originally meant to be fragmented,”743 hence the last movement: integration. Christians are encouraged to walk in the Spirit in a new life marked by good deeds with an impassioned obedience to the divine command. For them, the fact “that God had designed him [them] for the purpose of doing good works in Christ Jesus was both comforting and challenging.”744 The law pedagogically offers a “guidance, or a form for living out the Christian faith.”745 In other words, it can be said that Lischer’s integration in his three movements for sermons indicates homiletical implications of the third use of the law.

Similarly to Lowry’s final stage of his sermonic plot, Lischer’s integration is firmly dependent on the structure of law and gospel. That is, it finally works under the large framework of the gospel proclaimed throughout the previous two movements. Through the movements for Lischer the preacher can finally use a different grammar: Not “if you want to get right with the Almighty, then this is what you ought to do,” but “because of God’s grace… this therefore is what you can do. Become what you are!”746 In other words, analysis

742 Ibid., 31-32.

743 Ibid., 32.

744 Ibid.

745 Ibid., 41.

746 Ibid., 33.: For Lischer, the stage of integration is not understood in the imperative mood, but it is used in a indicative way of exhortation.
reaches the hearers as a word of judgment, but they can be introduced God’s grace through a transitional phase that overcomes their own exposition of wrath and their awareness of God’s judgment. Finally, their fragmented life can be re-integrated into a holistic being who accepts comfortably and at the same time challengingly his/her identity designed for the purpose of doing good works in Jesus Christ. Integration is a key aspect in Lischer’s homiletical theology, that is, the homiletical power of the gospel by which the third use of the law can be embodied in preaching and signs of the sanctification process can be realized.

3. Charles Campbell’s Exposing, Envisioning and Practices

Among homileticians who focus on ethics, Charles Campbell shows homiletical traces of the third use of the law in his homiletic. His homiletical principle of ‘exposing’ and ‘envisioning’ functions as an alternative way in the trouble/grace structure. Wilson remarks that Campbell “represents a postliberal stance that tends to mute God’s voice in the preaching event, which is one step toward the radical postmodern homiletic.” He assesses that Campbell’s homiletic goes one step further than alternative theories on the trouble/grace structure. In certain aspects, then, Campbell’s homiletical theory of exposing and envisioning seems to be similar to the structure of trouble and grace as a homiletical grammar of the gospel.

747 Lischer, A Theology of Preaching, 31-33.
748 Wilson, Preaching and Homiletical Theory, 114.
749 Ibid., 112-14.
Campbell’s ethical concerns in homiletics are developed according to his concern for a Christian’s ability to resist the evil powers in the world and “vision as a way of seeing reality and living in the world.”\textsuperscript{750} He develops those two concerns into homiletical movements: exposing and envisioning. He believes that the preacher needs to be sensitive to the principalities and powers of the world and be ready to resist them. Moreover, for him, the preacher is required to be concerned about a way of seeing God’s redemptive actions in the world. He argues that preaching engages in a twofold movement: “exposing the deadly ways of the powers and envisioning God’s new creation.”\textsuperscript{751}

Campbell subscribes to the idea of character ethics\textsuperscript{752} as a new trend in ethics. He believes that ethical dimensions regarding character are much broader and deeper than the typical decision-making and problem-solving ethics. He understands that in character ethics vision has been appropriated and “functions in preaching that seeks to expose the powers and envision the new creation.”\textsuperscript{753} According to the Irish-born British philosopher and novelist Iris Murdoch, who emphasizes the moral life as “something that goes on continually, not something that is switched on and off between the occurrence of explicit


\textsuperscript{751} Campbell, \textit{The Word before the Powers: An Ethics of Preaching}, 105.

\textsuperscript{752} Campbell defines the term character as what refers to “the qualification of human agency by particular virtues that enable a person to negotiate life in certain ways rather than others.” In this sense, character ethics does not consider ethical norms for decision-making as a primary approach, but focuses on vision as a way of seeing the principalities and powers in the world and the new creation through God’s redemptive grace.: Ibid., 94-96.

\textsuperscript{753} Ibid., 96.
moral choices,\textsuperscript{754} vision is a critical category in ethics since it makes higher-order attention possible prior to choice and action.\textsuperscript{755} According to Campbell, vision for homiletics signifies exposing the powers and envisioning an alternative to the powers by divine grace in Christ. About this vision Stanley Hauerwas states,

Christian ethics… is not first of all concerned with “Thou shalt” or “Thou shalt not.” Its first task is to help us rightly envision the world. … In other words, the enterprise of Christian ethics primarily helps us to see. We can only act within the world we can envision, and we can envision the world rightly only as we are trained to see.\textsuperscript{756}

Campbell develops the concept of vision into his homiletic under the influence of philosophers and theologians of character ethics: Iris Murdoch, Stanley Hauerwas, Alasdair MacIntyre, Jean Porter, Paul J. Wadell and so on.\textsuperscript{757} His concern for vision helps to produce his twofold sermonic movement: exposing and envisioning.

Campbell is also influenced by Hauerwas’ emphasis on the role of distinctive communal language in training Christian attention to the world through a particular story and a peculiar linguistic approach.\textsuperscript{758} In other words, Campbell emphasizes a connection between vision and communal language in relation to preaching. This is proved by his homiletic


\textsuperscript{755} Ibid., 98.

\textsuperscript{756} Hauerwas, \textit{The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics}, 29.

\textsuperscript{757} Campbell, \textit{The Word before the Powers: An Ethics of Preaching}, 96.

based on the story of Jesus Christ and developed out of the proclamation of Christ. Jesus
Christ and his works in the face of worldly principalities become the foundation of
Campbell’s ethical homiletic.

Just as Jesus exposed the powers and inaugurated the new creation through his life,
death, and resurrection, so preaching seeks to expose the powers of death at work in
the world and envision God’s inbreaking new creation. This twofold movement of
exposing the powers and envisioning the new creation provides the crucial dynamic
for Christian preaching that moves out from the story of Jesus, attends faithfully to
the world, and helps form the church’s ethical vision in the midst of the powers.\(^{759}\)

Campbell’s exposing and envisioning in preaching may be understood as a version
of the trouble/grace homiletical pattern. Exposing the powers in the world corresponds to the
concept of trouble. “Exposing the powers of death at work in the world represents a crucial
movement in homiletical resistance.”\(^{760}\) Yet, as he writes, “Simply exposing the principalities
and powers and unveiling their ways of death in the world is not sufficient for preacher.”\(^{761}\)
He presents envisioning as a grace that cannot be fully appreciated without an exposition of
the effects of sinful principalities in the world. He argues that the new creation through
Christ, which “has broken into the world in Christ’s life, death and resurrection,”\(^{762}\) needs to
be envisioned as the good news.\(^{763}\) It can be said that an alternative to the trouble/grace
homiletical structure is found in the movement of exposing and envisioning.


\(^{760}\) Ibid., 106.

\(^{761}\) Ibid., 119.

\(^{762}\) Ibid.

\(^{763}\) Ibid., 119-20.
However, Campbell asserts that exposing and envisioning are insufficient by themselves for a homiletic on ethics. He contends that the sermonic movement of exposing and envisioning should go one step further to concretize new ways of living in the renewed Christian life. Especially, he emphasizes under the influence of the cultural-linguistic theology that “the preacher must attend to the communal practices that both nurture the vision and enable the church to live into it.” According to Hauerwas’s suggestion, “ethical preaching not only needs to expose the powers of death and envision the new creation but also must nurture communities in the practices that shape how Christians see and live in the world.” Although Campbell puts his emphasis on communal ethics of church, his homiletical concern about the practical application of the gospel vision still has valuable significance in relation to the third use of the law in preaching.

In Campbell’s homiletic movements, to expose fallen ways in conjunction with envisioning a world of grace can create a wall of defense for Christians to resist worldly principalities by practicing renewed ways of living within the church community. Yet, Campbell contends that the preacher needs to take the church to the next step in which the church actively engages in “new and renewed practices of resistance to the powers of death in the world.” He maintains that preaching should move the congregation just from seeing

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the new creation, disclosed through exposing and envisioning, to whole-heartedly partaking in the practices of the church and Christian living. He knows that in current homiletical theories naming the specific practices is not frequently spoken of. “The indicative has reigned supreme, and ‘telling people what to do’ has been virtually anathema. Preachers are to engage in an open-ended conversation rather than make any claims or demands on the congregation.” Nevertheless, he asserts that the preacher still needs to explore concrete practices for Christian ethical living in preaching. He believes that practices generated through the process of exposing and envisioning should no longer be heavy burdens for Christians to bear because the preacher has opened up the law as grace for the congregation as having emerged from the gospel. Rather, for him, “practices can lead one into grace just as often as grace empowers practices. Engagement in the concrete practices of the Christian community may, in fact, become not a means of works righteousness but a means to coming into a fuller sense of God’s grace.”

By exposing the powers and envisioning the new creation, preachers help the people of God see the world in new ways. By redescribing routine practices, exposing corrupt practices, and nurturing faithful practices, preachers give concrete shape to the vision of life in the new creation and help Christian congregations to begin living into the redemption that God has accomplished through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. When vision and practice come together in sermons, informing and supporting each other, preaching can become one means by which the people of God are built up into a community of resistance that embodies an alternative to the powers of death in and for the world.

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768 Ibid., 148.
769 Ibid., 148-49.
770 Ibid., 156.
In short, Campbell attempts to create a fuller homiletic by connecting vision (exposing and envisioning) and practices. His homiletical theory embraces not only experiencing the gospel through exposing and envisioning, but also naming concrete practices, as the third use of the law, so that the church and individuals can be formed into a community that resists the powers of the world. Within this faith community, believers can be nurtured as holistic Christians through practices that help them to “no longer conform to the patterns of this world.” (Rom. 12:2.)

4. Paul Wilson’s Four Pages of the Sermon and Nurturing Exhortation

Paul Wilson, a leading homiletician in the law/gospel family, proposes *Four Pages of the sermon* as his homiletical theory which is based on the sermonic movement from *trouble* to *grace*. As Lowry and Lischer focus on the hearers’ recognition of their old existential reality and their transformation into the new existence through sermonic plot movements from law (trouble) to gospel (grace), Wilson also maintains that preaching needs to invite the hearers to experience the existential reality change and participate in the gospel which empowers them to experience their new existence. Wilson argues that the experience can be effectively fulfilled in the sermonic movement from trouble to grace.\(^\text{771}\) Wilson proposes his four-page sermonic movement: page one as trouble in the Bible, page two as trouble in the world, page three as grace by God’s action in the Bible, and page four as grace by God’s

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action in the world. His four-page sermonic sequence is designed for the Christian to grasp
the essence of God’s grace through a hermeneutical spiral that is formed in the dynamic
dialectic between the biblical context and the world context, and between the concepts of
problem and grace.\textsuperscript{772}

Four consecutive “pages” are an ideal norm for communication of good news, for
the following reasons. Two initial pages identify the trouble in the Bible and our
world. Two additional pages identify what God graciously has done and is doing in
relationship to that trouble, again in the Bible and our world.\textsuperscript{773}

Wilson’s hermeneutical, theological theory of the four-page sermon based on the structure of
trouble and grace has a clear homiletical goal. More than a mere offering of grace in
preaching, his homiletical goal is towards “generating more hope, courage, and faith in the
congregation.”\textsuperscript{774} To put it another way, the decisive point in this sermonic structure is for “a
new approach to preaching, one that centers on God, one capable of fostering responsible
lives filled with hope and a renewal of faith.”\textsuperscript{775}

In this sense, Wilson’s homiletical theory of the Four Pages of the sermon pays
attention to a hermeneutical, theological way in which a third new meaning is generated
through the dynamic process of trouble and grace. For him, grace itself cannot represent the

\textsuperscript{772} Crum Jr., \textit{Manual on Preaching: A New Process of Sermon Development}, 80.; Wilson, \textit{Preaching and
Homiletical Theory}, 95.: Wilson’s four-page sequence of the sermon is equivalent to Crum’s four components
of the sermonic movement: “biblical situation-complication, present situation-complication, biblical gospel
resolution, and present gospel resolution.”


\textsuperscript{774} Ibid., 27.

\textsuperscript{775} Ibid., 155.
whole gospel until it is experienced and accepted by the listener.\textsuperscript{776} Thus, he emphasizes that trouble and grace need to be mutually integrated into the sermonic sequence. This process can help the listener to experience and receive grace as the gospel. Moreover, for Wilson, through the tension of trouble and grace, not only is the gospel experienced, but faith also comes to guide one towards living a holy Christian life bearing much spiritual fruit.\textsuperscript{777}

As examined in homiletical traces of the third use of the law of Lowry and Lischer, Wilson is also concerned about the gospel and its concrete influence on the Christian life for holy living. For him, the gospel through trouble and grace as the grammar of the gospel is the third identity for today which includes a dynamic transformation into a responsible Christian life. However, unlike Lowry and Lischer, Wilson directly addresses the third use of the law in preaching with relation to genres of proclamation of the gospel. He argues that the third use of the law can take its shape homiletically through \textit{nurturing exhortation}\textsuperscript{778} which is clearly distinguished from simple teaching. According to Wilson, nurturing exhortation is “an emotionally charged form of expression designed not to inform but to change how the

\textsuperscript{776} Wilson notes that a small caution may be needed with regard to grace and gospel. He thinks that grace and gospel are different. Yet, he points out that “grace often needs something more to bring it home as gospel: grace is not gospel until it is experienced and received, as Luther said, \textit{pro me}, for me. The listener needs to know – or be reminded of – the way that grace is his or hers. One can know that God I love and still feel shut out from that love because one is unlovable. Grace becomes gospel through faith in the One who died on the cross for us and who rose to offer new life. Grace becomes gospel when one knows that the power of the old ways has been defeated and that new life is already begun in Christ.”: Wilson, \textit{The Practice of Preaching}, revised ed., 178.

\textsuperscript{777} Ibid., 180.

\textsuperscript{778} Exhortation may take two shapes with relation to the law: stern exhortation and nurturing exhortation. According to Wilson’s understanding of exhortation with regard to Calvin’s uses of the law, “stern exhortation is related to his [Calvin’s] first use of the law. Nurture may be compared to Calvin’s third or principal use of the law.”: Wilson, \textit{Setting Words on Fire: Putting God at the Center of the Sermon}, 175.
listener behaves or is disposed toward things.”

As Calvin considers the third use of the law as the gospel in a broad sense, Wilson also regards nurturing exhortation as a genre for preaching the gospel. While Calvin believes that the third use of the law is for Christians who have already accepted Christ and experienced divine grace, in a similar way, Wilson acknowledges that nurturing exhortation needs always be present alongside grace. As Calvin believes that the third use of the law has the potential to extend the grace of the gospel to its hearers, Wilson also believes that nurturing exhortation, which can be seen as a genre of the third use of the law, helps to uphold the gospel, illuminates its depth and concreteness, or serves to be a beacon that shines the light of the gospel into hearts of Christians, evermore encouraging them to fight the good fight to the end. Above all, Wilson maintains that nurturing exhortation is not just biblical instruction for the Christian life, but it also embodies the holistic love of the Godhead for the Christian life: God’s grace is evermore in the presence of Christ through the power of the Spirit.

Nurturing exhortation functions as Calvin’s third use of the law in being law, yet it is law accompanied by its accomplishment, law united with grace and power, law in the presence of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. The third use of the law is proclamation of the gospel in that through it, the identity and activity of God are made known in Christ. It both highlights and enacts in the Spirit the help a person receives in obedient living. It proclaims by encouraging, informing, nurturing, supporting, and reminding people of who they are in Jesus Christ. It leaves listeners not dependent upon their own strength, but with a sense of mission in which Christ is a constant companion who gives them his powers. The direction given and the ability to meet it in Christ are one.

779 Wilson, Setting Words on Fire: Putting God at the Center of the Sermon, 174.

780 Ibid., 175-77.

781 Ibid., 176.
Wilson’s nurturing exhortation may possibly be examined in the same vein as Lowry’s unfolding stage and Lischer’s integration. In other words, Wilson is also concerned about the third use of the law and its homiletical function in the practical sermonic plot and movement. Wilson proposes four pages of the sermon, but his four steps can also be understood in three movements which finds its resolution in the gospel: human situation (Pages One and Two) – resolution or reversal (Pages Three and Four) – new result (included in Page Four). As in the sermonic plots of Lowry and the sermonic movements of Lischer, Wilson’s four pages of the sermon also move “from the first or old status in the law to enlightenment in the gospel to the second or new status in the law.” For Wilson, nurturing exhortation as the third use of the law in preaching can usually appear at the end of a sermon. Unlike a mechanical instruction given to exhort the Christian life, Wilson employs the nurturing exhortation device. For him, nurturing exhortation appears and works throughout a theological and hermeneutical process of trouble and grace as the deep grammar of the gospel where it can deliver a clear voice of mission of the gospel. Wilson accounts in detail the practice of nurturing exhortation in his four pages of the sermon as follows:

In terms of my Four Pages of a sermon, which move from law to gospel or trouble to grace, Pages One and Two are trouble in the biblical text and our world, Pages Three and Four are grace in the biblical text and our world. Stern exhortation is closely related to law and mission, hence is most fitting in the first half on Page Two. Nurturing exhortation is closely related to both gospel and mission, and is thus typically found on Page Four. However, mission in this location at the end of the sermon is already altered by the gospel that previously has been proclaimed.

782 Jinbong Choi, “The Word Became Flesh and Lived among Us, and We Have Seen His Glory: A Theological Homiletical for the Korean Church’s Appropriation of the Gospel with Special Reference to Hilkert’s Proposal Rooted in Paul Ricoeur’s Hermeneutic of Belief,” 183.
Mission is no longer a command but an invitation because in doing what is required by the law, one is met by one’s Lord and Savior; one’s faith and strength are renewed. Thus mission is something one longs for and is excited to engage in and through the Spirit. It is mainly good news.783

5. Thomas Rogers’ Challenge

Thomas Rogers is a Lutheran homiletician who suggests a practical idea with relation to the third use of the law in preaching. His homiletical concern about the idea begins with the background of the New Homiletic which places more emphasis on how to preach comparing with what to preach. He admits that homiletics has been swinging back and forth between what to preach and how to preach like a pendulum.784 He notes that homiletics currently pays more attention to how of preaching and the structural model of the New Homiletic may be simplified as the narrative format of “Problem → Solution → What Now?”785 Moreover, he also points out the danger that the “What Now?” could create a new kind of works righteousness.786 Thus, his homiletical concern for the third use of the law can be understood as his intention to explore a way by which a works righteousness ideology can be avoided in the preaching structure.

Rogers does not focus solely on how to preach in order to complete the narrative format of problem, solution and what now. Rather, he is also deeply concerned about the

783 Wilson, Setting Words on Fire: Putting God at the Center of the Sermon, 177.
785 Ibid., 263.
what of the law and the gospel. Rogers seems to try to make a balance between the what and the how of preaching on the basis of his Lutheran theology: the law and the gospel. According to his explanation of the New Homiletic’s typical movement embodied in preaching, “attending to a form model like ‘Problem → Solution → What Now?’ leads one directly to the law then to the gospel, and finally, to something else.” Rogers focuses on the something else and its implication as relating to the third use of the law.

Rogers proposes a way called the challenge for the What Now stage? He confesses that he himself is afraid to preach this idea called challenge. He notes that the challenge in preaching is this stage he has coined as challenge. Nevertheless, he argues that preaching challenge is worthy to be attempted. He contends that the challenge of preaching challenge may be overcome through a special attention to the linguistic choices. He remarks,

It may be possible to avoid some of the problems inherent in preaching challenge by selecting language that focuses not on what we do, but on who we are—people transformed by the gospel. It can be helpful, in preaching the “What Now?” of challenge, to distinguish the verb from the noun.

Rogers points out that most challenges of preaching challenge have been caused by its use as a verb. That is, for him, challenge could seem to correspond to the law as far as challenge is considered a verb. However, he maintains that challenge can function as the third use of the

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788 Ibid., 267.
789 Ibid., 268.
790 Ibid.
law by using it not as a verb but as a noun.\textsuperscript{791} His \textit{challenge} does not urge the congregation to listen to and participate in the new reality through the expression, “I challenge you to….” But, he suggests that the preacher needs to challenge the congregation to find their identity “in the wake of an encounter with the Living Christ”\textsuperscript{792} and to ask a question which can help them to confront the world with a new interpretation of reality. He addresses that the elements of \textit{challenge} include identification and questioning.\textsuperscript{793}

Likewise, Rogers proposes his \textit{challenge} as the sermonic stage of \textit{What Now?} with relation to the third use of the law in preaching. His perspective consists of similarities with homiletics examined previously, as noted in Lowry, Lischer, Wilson and Campbell, with regard to homiletical implications of the third use of the law. As in their views, Rogers does not merely offer practical uses of \textit{What Now?} In the same a way as his \textit{challenge}, but also emphasizes a holistic sermonic study through a sermonic movement – law, gospel and \textit{challenge}. In other words, he clearly recognizes that the third use of the law inseparably connected to the good news. The following citation clearly shows his conviction of the sermonic movement and its holistic effect.

May they [preachers] preach law that kills; may they preach gospel that resurrects, and may they speak challenge as they identify the characters on stage and question previous scenes. Then, as the preacher says “Amen,” the curtain rises on the greatest story ever yet to be told.\textsuperscript{794}

\textsuperscript{791} Ibid., 270.
\textsuperscript{792} Ibid., 269.
\textsuperscript{793} Ibid., 268-69.
\textsuperscript{794} Ibid., 270.
Likewise, Roger’s *challenge* as the stage of *What Now?* evokes the congregation of their identity and helps them to confront the world and move onto the next stage with profound questioning. In such a sense, his *challenge* has a significant meaning in embodying homiletical implications of the third use of the law.

### C. The Third Use of the Law and Its Practical Implications in Preaching: Five Signs of the Third Use of the Law in Preaching

For a homiletic geared towards ethical living, this thesis has examined gospel-centered preaching on the basis of the dialectic of law/gospel and its homiletical appropriation of the third use of the law. As this thesis has probed so far, the third use of the law may possibly be preached following the proclamation of the gospel. Before the good news of the gospel is proclaimed, the law cannot homiletically function as its third use. Once the gospel is heard throughout the dynamic dialectic of the law and the gospel and after it has truly penetrated into the hearer’s heart by the power of the Spirit, the law finally comes to approach us in a different sense from its first (or second) use. The law is no longer a mirror that condemningly reflects back to us our sinfulness and limitedness, but it stands as a voice of divine grace itself.

Considering the overall structure of the law and the gospel and then the third use of the law as examined in this section, it seems that the homiletical appropriation of the law and
the gospel has been scrutinized and theorized in diverse ways. Yet, the third use of the law has not been explored in great depth in light of preaching in practical ways. The next section will propose several homiletical markers through which preachers can practically cultivate the third use of the law. The following various linguistic and semantic signs of the third use of the law may undergird a significant homiletical function of the law which is God’s grace. In particular, for the Korean church, that is used to use the law as a moral imperative in preaching, these five signs may give practical ways to relocate the law as a path of divine grace in preaching.

1. Where Does Power Come from?

Some may understand the third use of the law to be identified with the portion of the sermon that discusses life application. It may seem to function as the practical application of the sermon, but cannot be identified simply as such. Several preachers regard the sermonic application as explaining or demonstrating how biblical texts can impact the Christian life in the practical sense. For that reason, transformative power and contemporary relevancy of the application are emphasized. As a result, many sermon applications are dependent on the preachers’ vision and sermonic role. The homiletical approach of the third use of the law on the basis of understanding of sermon application as such may result in confusing or omitting where the power in the third use of the law comes from.

795 The overall structure of this preaching form can be described as law/gospel/the third use of the law.

The third use of the law cannot be understood simply as the application of the sermon. It cannot be understood as a different part mechanically divided from the body of the gospel. It is an extension of the gospel and a special tool used in the proclamation of divine grace. Therefore, the third use of the law reveals God’s voice in different matters which empowers the congregation to move towards a spiritual and ethical transformation in the realities of the Christian life. The third use of the law is not just an instrument for the use of application. It is a divine proclamation in its own right. Accordingly, its power cannot come from the preacher’s elaborate delivery skills. Its power is not made complete by the preacher’s persuasive or convicting words alone. To put it another way, the third use of the law can be homiletically understood in combination of these diverse elements: contextual relevancy and sermonic skills; discerning implications in biblical truth; avoiding radical spiritualizing, moralizing, patternizing, trivializing, normalizing, proof-texting, and promising the unpromised; discovering grace in the law through the gospel; and the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

Practical Example #1

To ensure proper handling of the third use of the law, the preacher needs to recognize

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797 Ibid., 73-100.: Overdorf discusses those seven concepts which hold the most immediate danger for preachers in the sermonic application: “Spiritualizing: turning the physical realities of a biblical text into unwarranted spiritual analogies and application; Moralizing: drawing moral exhortations from a text that go beyond the text’s intention; Patternizing: turning biblical descriptions of people or events into universally normative prescriptions for behavior; Trivializing: offering applications that diminish the gravity and complexity of the gospel; Normalizing: implying that a biblical passage applies in the same manner to every person, despite differing circumstances; Proof-texting: beginning with an application and then using various verses removed from their biblical contexts to support that application; Promising the Unpromised: guaranteeing listeners certain outcomes that biblical teaching does not truly assure.
divine agency as the principal subject of the third use of the law in sermons. This stage is not just a time to disclose the preacher’s humility (i.e., “its not about me”), but rather a time to corroborate the extended grace of God as the supreme power in the homiletical approach of the third use of the law. The following sermon excerpt addresses how the power of God is preached by employing the third use of the law.

[Page 4] … All of this may seem far removed from you and me. It is not. Christmas is what God does, not only in relation to Mary but also to you and me. In this brief moment the spotlight of the universe is on us. In this moment the spotlight of God is on you. The angels of heaven say to you, “The Lord is with you. Do not be afraid, for you have found favor with God. For this Christmas Jesus Christ will be born unto you as your Lord and Savior. And you will call this child the Son of God. The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.” Impossible, you say? You may respond however you like. The God who comes to us as an infant does not force us. You may say, “Sorry, I have Christmas under control. I make Christmases my way.” Here at this church, we hope and pray that you will choose the impossible Christmas, the one that is not in your control, the one that God controls. That is the Christmas where the impossible becomes possible because with God all things are possible; where an angel appears to a girl in high school to speak of God’s love, where a virgin conceives and brings Christ into the world, where a Savior is born who is the hope of all people. [A Sign of the Third Use of the Law:] And all we need to do is to say with Mary, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” If you want the impossible Christmas, if you want the Holy Spirit to come upon you, just ask: “Send your Spirit upon me, O God. Open my heart to the mystery of your Son.” If everyone would choose the impossible Christmas, Christmas would be vastly different. AIDS would be prevented for thirty million people; everyone would have clean drinking water, food, shelter, schools for their children, and hospitals for their sick. Instead of folks being anxious about the future, they would know the peace of the Prince of Peace, the Son of the Most High. Impossible, some say. Yes it is impossible. But all things are possible for God. Wait but a little while, and you will see. And while you are waiting say, “Here am I, a servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.”


In this sermon, Wilson does not offer direct ethical instructions or Christian practices of faith in his sermon. But, he does offer an indirect, open-ended conversation of what would happen if everyone chose the impossible Christmas (i.e. sharing one’s material resources with the needy, prioritizing our time and energies to help the poor and needy). Rather, he tries to derive the ethical, practical meaning of the biblical text from “God’s action in or behind the text, for this typically has implications for human behaviors. God’s action is further related to our own in that we are reliant upon God’s grace to fulfill our ethical commitment.”

In Wilson’s Four Pages of the sermon, the third use of the law is not located in a separate page or a distinctive section of the sermon, except perhaps in the mission as it is expressed on page four. In general, the third use of the law may be involved in page four of his Four Pages of the sermon in which God’s action to give the gift of grace to the world is proclaimed. In the underlined section of the sermon above, the power of God, on which we can depend, was spoken of in a way that could deeply resonate with listeners. So then, on the basis of the divine power the third use of the law is homiletically embodied. The third use of the law does not give concrete instructions, but helps the congregation to deeply engage with a new concept of Christmas. Furthermore, hope-driven ethical practices may be evoked as it is preached that it is God who makes all things possible. Preaching God as all-powerful is a sermonic sign that can illuminate the third use of the law.

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800 Ibid., 55-56.
2. Semantic and Linguistic Positive Actions

The first sign of the third use of the law was power; the second is its semantic and linguistic characteristics. The law no longer needs to represent a negative burden for those who experience divine grace through the gospel. In sermons, therefore, the third use of the law speaks of this grace that propels the people to desire toward ethical Christian living and the congregation comes to experience anew the law as grace. The third use of the law highlights affirmative life directions without negatively condemning the listener. Especially, it focuses on positive actions derived from the truth of the gospel.

Individual performing actions derived from the law could be negatively perceived if the acts are a result of the first [or second] use of the law, and particularly if the individual had not experienced the gospel. Actions such as ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’ (Matt. 22:39) may be regarded as a negative action when we are in discord with our neighbor. Yet, once God’s love through the life of Christ is proclaimed and heartily touched to me, the action of loving my neighbor as myself becomes a positive and desired action. 801 This positivity can be seen as a semantic approach to the third use of the law. Moreover, positivity in the third use of the law can be used as a linguistic marker in sermons.

The third use of the law may be fleshed out in preaching through positive speech forms. Positive forms of exhortation, challenge, and sometimes imperative assertions can all be used. Yet, other linguistic forms for sermonic speech exist whereby the third use of the

law can be employed such as the following two ways of exhortation: a positive form and a negative form. For instance, in the Ten Commandments, most of the commands are addressed in the negative form. Eight of them are commanded as a negative form (i.e. Thou shalt not...). Compared to commands in the positive form, commands in the negative form are more clearly understood and remembered. However, continual negative reinforcement can stifle one’s growth in Christian living. That is, diverse aspects in dynamics of divine commandments may be restricted by negatively-formed laws. Relatively, positively-formed commandments have a broader range of understanding and interpreting in practice and application. In other words, following those positively-formed commandments is required to have a deep understanding of divine intention embedded in the commandments. Yet, the positively-formed law may be able to provide several aspects of divine grace and Christian practices through a process of proclaiming the gospel and reinterpreting the law as being in relationship with God.

In most cases, God’s direct biblical commandments which are spoken in a negatively-formed law function as the first (theological) use of the law in preaching. In that sense, those biblical commandments and exhortations need to be transformed into positively-formed speech to be able to impart God’s grace in preaching. The positively-formed law may be understood as a voice which can be diversely understood and interpreted. Yet, the gospel can clarify the positively-formed law and reveal appropriate practices for the Christian life.

802 The fourth and fifth commandments among the Ten Commandments are spoken in a positive form: “Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the Lord your God has commanded you. ... Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the Lord your God is giving you.”: Deuteronomy 5:12; 16.; Exodus 20.
Conversely, it could be said that experiencing divine grace through the positively-formed law has significance on practicing the gospel.

Practical Example # 2

In Leonora Tubbs Tisdale’s sermon, “God’s ‘No’ and Ours,” for example, it can be found the point that a positively-formed sermonic suggestion offers a broader sense of Christian practice than a negative form of assertion even though her expressions in this sermon may sound somewhat in the imperative mood.

For freedom God in Christ Jesus has set all of us free. Therefore, let us stand firm – not only for our own sakes, but also with and on behalf of others in the church who desperately need us to stand firm with them – and let us boldly and courageously open our mouths and say NO! to anything and everything that would require any of God’s children to submit again to a yoke of slavery.803

The positively-formed law provides more opportunity for hearers to imagine and anticipate meeting with divine will embedded in the law. Such positively-formed proclamation through the third use of the law may provide deeper teachings of God that are in fact more relevant to the context of the Christian life.

Moreover, the third use of the law is homiletically employed on the unbiased basis of view. Not all biblical text offers a clear standard of action or viewpoint on any given subject. Sometimes, the third use of the law may seem to be silent holding a neutral position. Nevertheless, some preachers tend to infuse their own viewpoint as they use the third use of the law. However, infusing one’s own biased view in preaching tends to go over negatively

with sermon hearers.

3. Not Focusing on the Answer to a Problem

In addition to identifying the source of the power offered and semantic/linguistic characteristics, another sign of the third use of the law in preaching is that the focus is not on the answer to a problem. Typical dismissal of the law/gospel approach has largely been understood as a simple structure outlining the problem and solution. Hence, the third use of the law is often expected to produce a concrete answer to a problem or responsible guidelines as part of the solution. As a result, regardless of homiletical purposes, current homiletics seems to have the tendency to problem-solve and produce fast-fixes in preaching. Some may say that the reasons for this lie with the congregants who want to hear clearer directions and guidelines from the pulpit. Yet, solely focusing on obtaining answers to problems can produce legalism or a biased vision which is not based on divine power and authority. Such preaching places its primary focus on the radical reorientation of the Christian life as solutions to the diverse problematic contexts rather than on fruit being borne out of a transformed character into Christlikeness.

However, the third use of the law in preaching does not pay attention to a radical and immediate change in the Christian life. The result may or may not be drastic, but the greater point is that a new understanding of who God is and what God has done is attained.804 And from this new perspective, the hearer is drawn into closer relationship with God in Christ

who empowers him/her to bear the fruits of life in the Spirit. The transformation, at the heart of the matter, is about recovering *Imago Dei* in the believer. The third use of the law produces not the radical reorientation of a person’s priorities, but reorients them to praise God, nor does it take away hardships from a believer’s life, but often times, through hardships and trials, an intimate relationship with God is fostered. Moreover, the third use of the law does not mandate a behavioral code for the Christian life but urges a change of attitude in the self-seeking human heart towards the divine heart of love and justice through Christ. The power of the third use of the law is not in its provision of behavioral, ethical guideline, but in its ability to awaken the hearer to further grasp God’s deep heart of love embedded in the law. Christian sanctification is not simply about behavioral changes or wise decision-making. Rather, sanctification is for Christians to be awakened by their recognition of divine love and confirming the special relationship with God. Sanctification may start to be embodied when God’s grace is discovered and experienced in the law. Thus, it could be said that sanctification is a result of the gospel and is accelerated by the third use of the law.

As probed in chapter four, problem-solving paradigm in preaching may be able to motivate the hearer to perform good deeds. That is, a solution in the problem-solving or decision-making sermon may be an answer to a problem. Due to such an expectation, some preachers may assign a solution-making function to the third use of the law. Yet, preaching within a problem-solving paradigm of an ethical homiletic may miss the significance of the gospel as the true source of empowerment for Christian growth and discipleship. Rather, the third use of the law functions not to etch an ethical code onto the hearts of Christians, but to encourage self-introspection to discover who one is in an ever-forming relationship with
Christ. One does not undergo the process of Christian sanctification simply by following ethical teachings and guidelines, but discovers self in the ultimate Other, who is Christ. Sermons need to clarify the identity of God and its significance for the Christian life in a secular world.

Practical Example #3

As in the following sermon excerpt by David Buttrick, the third use of the law may be homiletically embodied as a concrete shape of Christians’ participation into divine works in a secular world on the basis of the Christian identity and Christian relationship with God.

Nevertheless, somehow God has been involved in all. “To the exiles whom I have exiled.” Listen, the secular world is still very much God’s world.

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(Statement) So, guess what, we can serve God in a secular age. Our calling is to serve God here and now. (Development) “Seek the welfare of the city,” sings Jeremiah, “Pray for the welfare of the land where you are.” Listen, we are Christians who follow Jesus Christ. He lived human in a human world. He healed the sick. He spoke out boldly. As his disciples, we, too, must serve the worldly world, working for the common good. So you will not devote yourself full-time to a church school class, but you will also seek to serve school kids in poverty areas. God knows, we need smart schools for everybody’s kids. And you will not become merely a church leader, for nowadays we must speak out in political places. America is having trouble pulling its political act together. The danger now is that we Christian people may clutch our Bibles and retreat into a sage, sweet, sheltered churchliness, pulling the covers of faith over our heads. No, we live. (Image) A few years ago there was a big book of pictures done by Sunday school kids. In the middle of the book was a centerfold, a big picture of stick-figure people in pairs bending down toward each other like waiters waiting on tables, all over the pages. Underneath in crayon letters was a caption: “Kingdom of God.” Every pagan place is still within the kingdom of God and very moment a usefulness to neighbors. (Closure) “Work for the welfare of the city,” sings old Jeremiah, “pray for the welfare of the land.” Oracle of the Lord!

(Ending) So how do we live in a secular world, exiles in faith? We settle down yes, and breed our children and work for the welfare of all. And we feast –
breaking bread, hoisting a cup – yes, feast as the family of God, trusting in the providence that, like a mighty moving current of God-love, surrounds our lives.  

As seen in what he would call the above closing “move” of a sermon, Christians need to serve the world that belongs to God’s realm as God’s disciples. The reason they involve in serving the secular world is because they have special relationship with God. Likewise, the third use of the law embodies the identity of Christians within the relationship with God. The third use of the law does not simply play a role of an answer to a problem. Rather, the third use of the law homiletically becomes gospel in the sense that it verifies the special relationship and intimacy with God.

Regarding the homiletical desire for good deeds that preach an answer to a problem, Ronald Allen’s words are worthy of note: “Many Christians today think of practice as something that we do that shapes who we are. Who we are, then, shapes what we do.” The third use of the law homiletically builds up practices in the Christian life on the basis of ‘who we are.’ Therefore, the third use of the law focuses on forming the believer’s relationship with Christ rather than on merely devising a practical behavioral guideline or ethical code.

4. Joy, Hope, Nurture and Celebration

The third use of the law can be developed and embodied with such various signs in preaching. Sermonic signs of the third use of the law previously presented were about origin

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806 Ibid., 177.
of power, semantic/linguistic characteristics and concerns for obtaining answers to problems. The third use of the law is not embodied in preaching through enumerating an ethical, behavioral set of guidelines. Rather, it is closely related to the inner transformation of the hearer. Preaching that embodies the third use of the law is deeply relevant to the transformational process of the hearer’s inner being. Sermon hearers may want to be delivered concrete guidelines for the Christian life which they can easily pick up from a sermon, but such road maps do not possess lasting power to sustain the hearer to solid change in their lives nor can it help them weather the trials and tribulations in this life. Without the gospel, even relevant and concrete behavioral guidelines cannot transform a human heart for eternity. As the apostle Paul says in the Second Epistle to Timothy who was ministering to the church in Ephesus, “God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: ‘The Lord knows those who are his,’ and “Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness”\(^{807}\), all changed behavior as Christians are inseparable from the gospel and are also based on the gospel.

Therefore, the third use of the law in preaching should not be encased in a sort of a code of conduct. Rather, the third use of the law in preaching needs to raise “an excitement to obedience”\(^{808}\) through various genres of emotional motivations. In other words, it may be akin to the characteristics of joy, hope, nurture and celebration as extended proclamations of the gospel. The pedagogical and doxological sense of the third use of the law may be

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\(^{807}\) 2 Timothy 2:19.

\(^{808}\) Wilson, *Setting Words on Fire: Putting God at the Center of the Sermon*, 217.
expressed in ways that effuse joy, hope, nurture and celebration.

Of course, an imperative, stern exhortation can be effective when employing the third use of the law in preaching, even though one might use it sparingly. If the gospel is homiletically well elaborated and strongly proclaimed, even imperative exhortation could be an expression of grace and may arouse overflowing hearts bent on obedience. However, considering the point that the third use of the law is designed to lead and encourage the hearers to concrete actions, it may be wise to say that joy in the hearer’s life is a sure sign that the hope of the gospel has transformed their hearts and minds. When gladness in the gospel is celebrated, when the eschatological hope of proleptic grace can be experienced, or when nurturing exhortation can be preached throughout the sermonic journey within the gospel, the hearer cannot help but be moved toward good Christian deeds that extend beyond his/her circumstances. Joy, hope, nurture and celebration are all results and gifts from the divine power through the third use of the law with the full support of the Holy Spirit.\(^{809}\)

Practical Example #4

Among sermon styles Gennifer Benjamin Brooks proposes, the sermon style called the “journey to celebration”\(^{810}\) is a typical African American preaching model that underscores the point that the third use of the law can be homiletically embodied through a

\(^{809}\) Ibid., 220.

\(^{810}\) Frank Thomas names this process of a sermonic journey “Celebration as Ecstatic Reinforcement.”: Frank Thomas, *They Like to Never Quit Praisin’ God: The Role of Celebration in Preaching* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1997), 87-89.
specific exhibition of emotions or attitudes such as joy, hope and celebration. She describes
the sermon style through a movement of three stages: situation and complication; gospel
assurance to complication; resolution and celebration. She explains characteristics of the
sermon style by presenting tasks for each stage in a real sermon. Especially, in the third step
(resolution/celebration) she demonstrates how this celebrative sermonic approach based on
the gospel can apply to a real sermon: (Scriptural Text: Mark 10:46-52).

The resolution of Bartimaeus’ situation comes with the good news (gospel) that
Jesus hears him, calls to him, and heals him. This is good news worthy of
celebration that reaches into the soul of every person who has been ignored or
bypassed, whatever the cause. Celebrate Bartimaeus’ restoration by naming the
promise of restoration to every individual and to the whole community.
[Task A] – Remind them that they – each one and the whole community – sit in
Bartimaeus’ seat, and that they can seek restoration for themselves and for the
community by reaching out to Christ in the assurance that Jesus will hear and is
ready to respond with affirmation that speaks of restoration.
[Task B] – Celebrate Bartimaeus’ restoration as that which is promised to each one
who calls out to Jesus Christ. Celebrate the assurance that Christ answers the call of
each person, hearing the voice, calling forth the person, restoring each in love. As
appropriate, call out names of some of those present so that persons become
invested in taking the journey to new life. Call and response is a common and
familiar style of preaching in the African American worship tradition.
[Task C] – Repeat the offer of new life and call the community forward to accept
the gift. End with the good news that Christ stands waiting in their midst to restore
each one to wholeness. The normal ending in African American churches is an altar
call, and this may be done using phrasing from the sermon.

Celebration in and of itself should not be the goal of the sermon. The preacher needs to
understand that a homiletical function of the third use of the law is to “elicit a deep spiritual

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812 Ibid., 87.
response to the good news and to the message of the sermon in diverse ways such as celebration, joy and hope. Once the hearer sits in Bartimaeus’ seat, he/she gets to experience grace which was given to Bartimaeus and then comes to invest him/herself in taking the journey to new life to which Bartimaeus might have departed after he was healed. Although the sermon ends without a set of behavioral guidelines, the rhetorical signs through joy, hope and celebration that arise from the proclamation of the good news may be able to help the hearer experience grace which enables him/her to move forward with gladness of heart changed towards Christlikeness.

One thing should not be overlooked in these remarks about the third use of the law in preaching. It is the work of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the true driver empowering the hearer’s change of actions. These marks – joy, hope, nurture and celebration – cannot be accomplished by human manipulative techniques, but only by a manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

5. Accentuation of Love and Justice of God in the Law

The third use of the law is interrelated to practicing the gospel. As Ronald Allen remarks, the preacher is called to help the congregation practice the gospel actively. The good news of the gospel may be summarized as God’s love, which is bestowed as a gift unworthy human beings. In addition, the gospel proclaims divine justice, which intends to

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813 Ibid.

take care of and recover the relationship between God and his people. Thus, it can be said that the preacher helps the congregation “experience, understand, and witness to God’s unconditional love for us and for all, and God’s call for justice for us and for all.”

Accordingly, the preacher needs to pay attention to the third use of the law in preaching regarding the living out of the gospel. Furthermore, the preacher needs to be concerned with homiletically emphasizing the love and justice of God in the law.

As already stated, the third use of the law has a tendency to be considered a behavior-oriented guideline. However, the third use of the law needs to function as a means to disclose, and accentuate to the people the basic divine characteristics such as God’s love and justice through the life of Christ. Sometimes the third use of the law may be delivered in an imperative way, but sometimes it may be embodied in an indicative way. Whatever form it has, it should not focus on the code of conduct itself, but needs to demonstrate and describe love and justice as its core messages of who God is.

Love and justice are inseparable, interrelated biblical concepts. The love of God introduces the divine vision of justice, and the justice of God takes its concrete shape through divine love. That is, God’s love does not have the same understanding of justice as the world does. God’s justice is not about material equality but about equality of the relationship with the people, and it is beyond punitive justice because divine justice is formed and practiced through God’s love and mercy (“To act justly and to love mercy…,”

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Micah 6:8).

Only can the profound unconditional love of God meet the massively conditional need of human sinfulness.\textsuperscript{817} God’s justice gives more attention to restoration and care for the needy on the basis of divine love.\textsuperscript{818} These ethical principles of God’s love and justice may on their own urge and motivate the congregation to practice love and justice. So then, these exhortations and commandments to love and to practice justice in the context of God’s unconditional love and restorative justice can lead one to realize clearly the divine grace that empowers believers practice love and justice which in turn becomes joy, celebration, and hope guiding them on a path to obedience that is full of delight.\textsuperscript{819}

Practical Example #5

In the following sermon excerpt, Leonora Tubbs Tisdale points to the love and justice of God through Christ as the way by which the congregation can overcome the dilemma of forgiveness within situations where immeasurable burdens of having to “forgive” reside. She proclaims the love of Jesus as grace and the justice of Jesus as his radical love through which mutual forgiveness is fulfilled. Henceforth a new relationship is built up amidst confession, repentance and a turning of life from darkness to light. It seems to be confirmed the point that sermonic demands for forgiveness as the third use of the law are effectively preached within love and justice of God in Jesus Christ.

\textsuperscript{817} Van Seters, \textit{Preaching and Ethics}, 68.

\textsuperscript{818} Ibid., 71-73.

I do not know how to preach “love of enemies” and “forgiving as we are forgiven” in a world where women and children are physically beaten and battered in homes, and where the preaching of this gospel in the Christian church has often forced those women prematurely to swallow their own justified rage; has added to the immeasurable burdens they already bear by placing upon them, the victims, the burden of having to “forgive” that abusing spouse, and which, at its worst, has sent those women back to be reconciled with and to “love” the very ones who place their lives in danger.

Our culture often equates “forgive and forget” as if they are synonymous terms. But the Gospel of our Lord does not. It is in the very context of God’s promised remembering – a remembering those who have suffered evil and a remembering those who have perpetrated it – that these difficult words regarding love and forgiveness come. And whatever they mean, they don’t mean that we cheapen the horrific remembrances of those who have suffered great evils by asking them to “forget.” Christian forgiveness, whatever we say about it, has its taproots in God’s own radical love for us: a love that is persistently, determinedly, unwaveringly merciful, even toward those totally undeserving of that mercy.

Surely forgiveness, in the first instance, means a release, a letting go of the bitterness within so that we refuse to let those who have maimed our bodies or our spirit or our psyches also maim our souls. The gospel of Christ never lets us off the hook in that regard. But of course this Gospel text calls for more than a release and letting go of the unholy rage within us. Jesus also calls on us to be proactive: to love our enemies, to do good to those who hate us, to bless those who curse us, and to pray for those who abuse us. We are called to be merciful, even as God is merciful.

And that, of course, is where the real rub of this text comes. What does love look like, when it also goes hand in hand with a remembering of evil, a holding of evildoers accountable, and a refusal to discount evil or sweep it under the rug? What does love look like in a situation in which a “return” to a relationship of equality and respect with the other is simply impossible?

Finally, I return full circle at this sermon’s end to one of those places where my quest for understanding forgiveness originally began – to the writings of Martin Luther King himself. I confess that when I went to that volume of King’s sermons two years ago, I did so hoping that King would let me off of the love hook. Surely, this man, who knew what it was like to have real enemies and real anger over real evils would qualify this radical love of Jesus in some way. But King never did.

Rather I found in King one whose radical strength of love also went hand in hand with a radical, nonviolent resistance of the evil he abhorred, and who, like his Lord, died witnessing to both. “But I say to you, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. …
Be merciful just as your Father is merciful.” May our merciful God give to each of us strength so to love, and wisdom so to live. Amen.820

As in this sermon, a simple guideline of Christian deed is not provided through the third use of the law. In this sermon, the third use of the law helps the hearer to understand forgiveness and decide how to forgive on the basis of grace embedded in divine notions of love and justice.

The reason love and justice are the basic components of the third use of the law is because they are rooted in God’s grace rather than fleeting emotions or even good emotions such as thankfulness.821 The gospel proclaimed allows the congregation to view and understand the third use of the law from the divine perspective of love and justice. Moreover, the congregation may be able to understand other voices in the law through divine grace on the basis of God’s love and justice. In other words, the inseparable dialectic of God’s love and justice become the lens through which divine grace in the third use of the law can be seen to function as a motivational tool, that invites the power of the Holy Spirit to work in those who desire to practice and live out the gospel.

Conclusion

As examined previously, homiletical possibility of the third use of the law can be traced from various homiletical theories. The third use of the law can be not only


821 Van Seters, Preaching and Ethics, 68.
theoretically explained but practically embodied in homiletics as examined from various homiletical theories: *unfolding* in Eugene Lowry’s homiletical loop, *integration* in Richard Lischer’s works of law and gospel in preaching, *nurturing exhortation* in Paul Wilson’s four pages of the sermon, *practices* in Charles Campbell’s exposing and envisioning, and Thomas Roger’s *challenge* in the narrative format of Problem – Solution – What Now?

The common characteristics of the third use of the law in these homiletical theories is that it does not work as a simple imperative form of applications but it plays a role as proclamation of gospel per se. The third use of the law may need to be verified through the five signs in order to homiletically fulfill the role. First, the origin of power in the third use of the law does not depend on preacher’s elaborate delivery skills or persuasive, convicting words. The power comes from divine voice, so various elements (i.e. discovering grace in the law through the gospel and the empowering of the Holy Spirit) need to be thoroughly considered to confirm God’s voice and the origin of power in the third use of the law. Second, semantic and linguistic characteristics may need to be considered. The third use of the law may be used in Positive speech forms such as positive forms of exhortation, challenge, and sometimes even imperative assertions. *Nurturing exhortation* of Wilson and *challenge* of Rogers would be good examples of this sign of the third use of the law in a practical sense. Third, the third use of the law does not focus on answers to problems. That is, it cannot function as a problem-solving formula. Lowry’s final step of the sermonic loop, *unfolding*, does not mean deriving simple resolutions, but anticipating new consequences as fruits of good news. Fourth, the third use of the law may be expressed in ways that effuse joy, hope, nurture and celebration. Like Lischer’s *integration* in his sermonic movement, the
third use of the law may be able to be expressed in ways of joy, hope, nurture and celebration through the dialectic of law and gospel such as Lischer’s analysis and transition. Finally, the third use of the law needs to accentuate God’s love and justice as inseparable divine nature and interrelated biblical concepts so that the congregation can be motivated to practice love and justice. In particular, Campbell’s principle of practice through exposing the principalities and the powers and envisioning God’s new creation may be a good practical sermonic model for this sign.

These characteristics of the third use of the law are commonly based on the gospel that is clearly revealed through the law/gospel dialectic. That is to say, the third use of the law gets its homiletical voice through the gospel as sanctification is inseparable from justification. Christians are justified within the gospel and they keep sanctified within the gospel and its concrete messages embedded in the law.

The third use of the law homiletically functions in a relation-forming structure. That is, the third use of the law is intimately related to the gospel proclaimed in preaching and is also based on divine-human mutual trust and the intimate relationship. On those conditions the third use of the law may be able to provide homiletics with an expanded way of proclaiming the gospel. Moreover, the third use of the law may homiletically work to encourage a dynamic dialectic of divine and human roles in relation to Christian ethics and sanctification.
CONCLUSION

Preaching that employs a tension between law and gospel tends to clarify Christian justification through proclamation of the gospel as God’s grace. However, in order for sanctification not simply to be assumed as directly following from justification, without faithful living, it is helpful to emphasize the third use of the law in preaching. This use of the law explicitly illuminates God’s grace that especially stimulates and encourages both Christian sanctification of individuals and a church that provides faithful and ethical witness to the community. For developing homiletically this focus, this thesis first has examined a basic theological grammar of justification and sanctification. This thesis maintains that the law may not function for ethics in preaching without a clear sense of the inseparability of justification and sanctification. To put it another way, the law may be used as a hammer or a mirror which reveals human sinfulness and limitedness with relation to the gospel or a homiletical device which fortifies Christian legalism. However, such homiletical approaches to the law cannot accomplish complete functions of the law, and cannot form a balanced harmony of justification and sanctification. Justification and sanctification embody the transformative function of the gospel together since they are not in relation of cause and effect, but they go together in the journey of salvation.

On a balanced theological foundation of justification and sanctification, law and gospel can be helped to fully function in preaching. The tension and harmony of law and gospel can contribute to proclaiming justification, but the third use of the law as grace with relation to law and gospel can contribute to embodying the transformative role of sanctification in preaching. Therefore, this thesis has consistently focused on ethics in
preaching and its homiletical relationship with the third use of the law on the foundation of law and gospel. Preaching is not considered an ethical act, but rather a gospel-centered approach to the law that is its third use as another form of God’s grace may contribute to sermonic proclamation and pedagogy for ethics in preaching. In other words, the third use of the law can help both to clarify Christian identity (justification), and to enable faithful and ethical living (sanctification).

This thesis is the output of such an ethical concern about homiletical responsibilities and roles with regard to Christian sanctification. To the contemporary Korean pulpit which seems to have lost sound balances between justification and sanctification, law and gospel, and the first use of the law and the third use of the law, this thesis proposes a homiletical direction for the recovery of ethics and sanctification in preaching. Not only for the Korean church but also other churches that struggle similarly may they find homiletical insight for ethics within the organic relationship and integration of the gospel and the third use of the law. Moreover, in this humble work may this thesis clarify the divine and human roles in sanctification that are homiletically theorized and embodied as Paul writes in the Epistle to the Ephesians: “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

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822 Ephesians 2:8-10.
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APPENDIX: A Sermonic Method and a Sample Sermon

1. A Sermonic Method: The Third Use of the Law in Four Pages of the Sermon

Regarding the homiletical practice of the third use of the law, it is not limited to a certain sermonic method. As examined previously, the third use of the law is not just an ethical exhortation. It functions as a homiletical extension of grace on the foundation of the gospel. Therefore, the third use of the law in preaching may be understood and theorized within the centrality of the gospel and its subsequent human responses.

A gospel-centered preaching, may be one of the most effective homiletical theories for ethics in preaching and sermonic practices of the third use of the law. In this section, a sample sermon will be proposed in the form of the four page sermon for a homiletic geared towards ethical living with relation to the gospel and the third use of the law as divine and human roles for sanctification.\(^\text{823}\) This is a class sermon designed for seminary students who are serving as a preacher already or are preparing to become a preacher.

a. Sermonic Structure and Development

This sample sermon basically follows Paul Wilson’s homiletical theory of the Four pages of the sermon. The Four Pages of the sermon can be acknowledged as a representative homiletical theory of the law/gospel approach to preaching which effectively reflects the

\(^{823}\) Of course, diverse sermonic methods can be used for ethics in preaching especially with respect to the third use of the law and its homiletical role for sanctification. However, one of necessary conditions is that the sermon should be gospel-centered and gospel needs to be homiletically highlighted so that the homiletical third use of the law can give a significant impact to gospel’s subsequent, consequent responses.
This sermon begins with a story of the *Hallelujah* chorus in Handel’s *Messiah*. The joy seen in the introduction of the *Hallelujah* chorus offers an image of the greatness and glory of God, and the image will be reiterated on the pages of gospel: Page Three and Four. Following Wilson’s trouble/grace paradigm of preaching, on Page One and Two, the main trouble (fear and anxiety) which is generated from the scriptural text and the reality of the life is described. The biblical trouble focuses on the Israelites losing their hearts and melting toward the opponents. This trouble embodied as fear and anxiety takes place in our life contexts in diverse forms and situations as well. Due to this paralyzing fear and anxiety, the people of God may not be able to move toward the land of promise even though we have been already received God’s promise and are eager to move forward.

On Page Three and Four, the focus on trouble is shifted to the good news of God’s presence and purposes in God’s grace in the scriptural text and the contemporary world. The two spies who were sent by Joshua and Rahab appear as the biblical characters in which God’s greatness and power are illuminated. God’s grace is not overt but can be sensed through the characters and their distinctive responses. God’s grace is revealed through God who makes Rahab look at and realize the omnipotent God who accomplishes all the miracles for the people of Israel. Such divine grace is also present in the lives of Christians today. This sermon reminds the hearers that Jesus Christ, who was sent into the world as God’s unchanging promise, is still lighting the way for us Christians all the time by being a burning

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light. This sermon proclaims that we can see Heaven here on earth and the greatness of God through Jesus Christ here and now. Likewise, the sermon proclaims the gospel for today’s hearers throughout Page Three and Page Four.

b. The Third Use of the Law in the Sermon

Gospel-centered preaching such as a law-gospel homiletic seems to focus on the gospel and its proclamation. This thesis proposes a further step in regards to the third use of the law in preaching. As probed previously regarding sermonic signs in the third use of the law, this sample sermon is designed to show God as its focus with relation to the third use of the law to draw the hearers towards ethical living and sanctification. In this sermon, the third use of the law does not take its shape in imperative forms. Prior to addressing “doings,” this sermon is concerned about “being,” that is, grasping who God is to us and whom we can be dependent on. On such relational basis, “doing” finally comes to obtain its significance as human roles in sanctification.

Moreover, this sermon, in light of the third use of the law in preaching, shows sermonic samples regarding positive actions. This sermon employs indicative words and expressions in a positive form rather than using imperative words of prohibition. Through such linguistic uses this sermon hopes to arouse the hearers’ joy and hope even in difficult situations. Furthermore, this sermon seeks to help the hearers reaffirm the love and justice of God through preaching in light of the third use of the law.
2. A Sample Sermon: “Toward Whom, or toward What Is Your Heart Being Lost?”

Text: Joshua 2:8-14; Deuteronomy 1:28

- Intro.

In a small house on Brook Street in London, a servant sighs with resignation as he prepares food, he assumes, will not be eaten. For more than a week, he has faithfully continued to wait on his employer, an eccentric composer, who spends hour after hour in his own room. Morning, noon, and evening the servant delivers meals to the composer and returns later to find the bowls and platters untouched. Once again, he decides to go through the same routine, muttering about how oddly temperamental musicians can be. As he swings open the door to the composer’s room, the servant stops in his tracks. The startled composer, tears streaming down his face, turns to his servant and cries out, “I did see all Heaven before me, and the great God Himself.” George Frederic Handel had just finished writing a movement that would take its place in history as the Hallelujah Chorus (music on).

This music we are listening to is the Hallelujah chorus, which is the last of the part 2, from Handel’s oratorio, Messiah. You may know this music very well, but I feel that you may not be that familiar with this music. No one stands…. It is the famous anecdote that when the king of England attended the performance of Handel’s Messiah, he rose as the first notes of the triumphant Hallelujah rang out. The entire audience also stood up following

825Kyo Don Joo, “Toward Whom, or toward What Is Your Heart Melting?” Class Preaching (focusing on a sermon for Advent Sunday Service) in Artful Preaching (Director: Paul Scott Wilson), TST in the University of Toronto, 2008 (December).
royal protocol. Thus, the tradition of standing during the *Hallelujah* chorus performance has continued up to the present day. In fact, it takes about three hours for a full-length of *Messiah* to be played. For many it is pretty boring to listen to such a long musical piece. Many people may not experience the joy and wonder from the presence of God and the greatness of God which Handel experienced until they wait for the long awaited arrival of the *Hallelujah* chorus. In fact, Handel’s *Messiah* oratorio is all about God’s triumph and reign through the life of Jesus Christ from the beginning to end of the oratorio. Handel obviously expresses Jesus Christ’s being the Messiah through a full-length of *Messiah*.Ironically, however, we generally do not taste joy or triumph until we arrive at the *Hallelujah* chorus. We do not sense the presence of God and do not experience a thrill from the authentic triumph until we reach the chorus. Our faith in our lives also demonstrates such features. We do not see the presence of God and the reign of God which we have forgotten until we experience many twists and turns, several crises, troubles, and wanderings (music off). Though God’s glorious presence is thoroughly witnessed in our daily life so that we can experience it anywhere, we still only see the present surroundings and circumstances through our own eyes and minds.

- Page 1.

Canaan was the promised-land for the Israelites. But it was not an easy task for them to come into the land. Because some people had already dwelt in the land, the land could be taken again after the Israelites threw them out. Thus, Moses sent twelve spies to explore the land of Canaan. The spies’ report would be critical information for the next step of the
Israelites. If they reported positively, their walk toward Canaan would be even faster. However, ten of them held an extremely negative opinion. Even if the soil of the land was fertile and it was most suitable for their residence place, in the spies’ eyes, the people who lived in Canaan were too powerful for Israelites to defeat. The people seemed to be undefeatable opponents. Moreover, the city seemed to be too fortified to be taken. It was probably just like rushing to a huge aircraft carrier in a small patrol boat. It was a ridiculous attempt. Consequently, the spies were completely seized with fear by themselves. They completely lost their nerve. Conquering the land of Canaan was impossible in their eyes.

The report from the spies also made the Israelites lose heart. The Israelites’ hearts were already downcast toward the opponents and the land that they had not seen yet even though the land was promised to them by God. Their hearts were despondent in light of the circumstances. God liberated them from the oppression by Egyptians, and promised them to take possession of Canaan. But such a promise faded away when they were confronted with the circumstances reported by the spies. They already felt like failures. They regretted belatedly and did not want to advance against Canaan. Nevertheless, they tried, but they were completely defeated.

For sailors, the role of a lighthouse is crucial. Of course, these days, high-tech equipments play a great role in sailing. However, if the high-tech equipment does not work, the role of the lighthouse is crucial. For sailors, a lighthouse is regarded as the last straw if all else fails. It is the same in flight. In flight a landmark plays the same role in flight as a
lighthouse for sailing. Of course, a plane is equipped with the highest technology, but a landmark’s role is crucial for the pilot to land the plane safely. However, even though there is a lighthouse or a landmark as the ultimate step and the final safeguard, we often hear that accidents, great and small, occur. People get scared at a sudden crisis. They cannot discern what to do. They are so flustered that they do not know what to do. Finally they cannot escape from the crisis. Mostly they do not stay calm or follow the guidance from a lighthouse or a landmark as the final safeguard. Likewise, at a critical moment they are shaken.

At this moment, each one of us is probably experiencing many of our own problems, great and small, within various difficult circumstances around us. Sometimes we cannot find a solution to our own problems. We have to find a solution, but we cannot find a breakthrough. We are deeply worried about the problems and try every possible means, but sometimes we can never find a solution. We come to be concerned only about finding a solution. We are quite at a loss as to what to do in those situations. For instance, today, the world economy is in a huge crisis. In particular, Korean students studying abroad and Korean immigrants are experiencing a serious crisis. A sudden rise of a foreign exchange rate is striking the pocket books of Korean students with a fatal blow. The exchange rate is one and half times higher than it was a few months ago. Consequently, the number of students who gave up studying abroad has rapidly increased. For so-called ‘wild-goose daddies,’ who sent their wife and children to a foreign country while they stay alone in Korea working to send money to their family, current financial and economic crises are making their worries and troubles deeper and more serious. Facing endless rough waves in
our lives, what do you first look at and count on?

We believe that we can handle any crisis that comes our way. But when we actually confront such huge challenges in our lives, we find ourselves losing our nerve. We believe that we have faith with which we can stand up to challenges, but we find ourselves surrendering to the challenges when we actually face such crises. We pay attention only to the confronted difficulties. We give attention only to the fact that we are incapable of overcoming those difficult circumstances. We finally come to surrender to those situations. We completely fall apart as a result.

- Page 3.

We meet another whose heart was lost because of something else. The person was Rahab. After Israel’s conquest of Canaan was delayed at the time of Moses due to the event of twelve spies, now two spies were sent again by Joshua to retry to conquer Canaan. The contents of their report were completely opposite to the ten spies’. In other words, this time it was reported that the people in Jericho, the land of Canaan, were falling apart while the report by the ten spies had made the Israelites’ hearts crumble before Canaan.

Rahab shared her heart as follows: “I know that the Lord has given this land to you and that a great fear of you had fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you.” She clearly expressed her fear. But her fear was not simply fear of confronted circumstances. That was not fear of the Israelites, themselves. Though she was a Gentile, and an obscure prostitute, she thoroughly feared the God working behind Israel, and she recognized her total helplessness. She witnessed the Israelites who had eager intention to
fight and take the land. But she saw God, who was the solid background for the Israelites. How could she fear God instead of the people of Israel? How could she see the invisible God working behind the Israelites? God made her look at God, not the people. God made her realize omnipotent God who accomplished all the miracles through the people of Israel, neither the people nor the miracles themselves.

Here the difference between what the ten spies saw and what Rahab did is clearly revealed. What the ten spies paid attention to was the situation itself. They could not help but get frustrated and surrender to the situation. But, the other hand, God led Rahab to pay attention to God’s working in the given situation so that she could thoroughly give up all control and surrender to God.

Then, what was indeed given to Rahab, who could surrender herself before the greatness of God? God conferred God’s salvific grace to her in the process of the Israelites’ bloody entry into Jericho. The situation did not change. People in Jericho could not avoid Israel’s occupation. Finally, they were occupied by the Israelites. However, she could see God who superintended the process. She knew that the situation belonged to God. And she thoroughly surrendered to God, and she found herself melting towards God. All would have been impossible without God’s full guidance. All the responses of Rahab to the situation were possible through God’s grace.

Consequently, God saved her from death. She could keep her life in God’s grace. Now her life probably became a totally different life from before. For human beings, a situation that Jesus Christ confronts is despair, itself. For them, the cross of Jesus is a failure and foolishness. But Jesus Christ decided not to yield to situations and surroundings. Jesus
Christ decided to melt himself or surrender before God’s greatness, so that he did not avoid the way to the cross in order to fulfill God’s will. And his death on the cross witnessed authentic life through the resurrection, and brought new life to us, human beings.

- Page 4.

How’s your life? Are you happy and at peace all the time? Most likely, we still live with frustration from chaos and crises to some degree given the growing responsibilities we have as we get older. Then, are we bound to become just a failure or a loser? No! We still have our lighthouse and landmark for our lives. Jesus Christ who sacrificed himself and has kept his locus as the lighthouse for us is unchangingly guiding us. Jesus Christ, our lighthouse, is power itself and life itself. We just did not look at Jesus Christ, who is always in his place and always ready to stretch his arms to help us. We just have not thoroughly surrendered to our Lord. We are still immature and spiritually young, so we’ve stopped counting on the security of the lighthouse. Nevertheless, whatever crisis we face, the lighthouse is lit all the time to guide us. Jesus Christ is lighting the way for us all the time by being a burning light Himself.

“I did see all Heaven before me, and the great God Himself.” From now on Handel’s confession becomes my confession of faith which I pray can be come for all of us.

[The Third Use of the Law in this sermon:] Whatever situation I encounter in my ministry, I remember God’s comfort and empowerment as well as God’s triumph and reign. Whatever circumstances I am put in, I can see God’s greatness in which nothing is impossible. Even when my congregation members force me as a pastor to mediate and solve conflicts among
them, I can find God on whom I can truly rely. Even when I am asked to spiritually and physically to sacrifice my time and comfort, I can seek God who gives me true wisdom and strength rather than complain and form bitter feelings towards them. Sometimes when I am deeply hurt by their criticisms and judgments, I know to whom I need to go first to be healed. Sometimes I carelessly hurt others in the church as a pastor and then come to realize, I can courageously come to them and seek their forgiveness. When I am tempted to preach a prosperity gospel, I can rather focus on the true celebrative, joyful gospel which witnesses God’s providence of love and justice even through hardship and failure. When I am tempted to follow a success-orientated way of thinking influenced by the secular background, I will maintain God’s love-and-justice-oriented focus.

We must become smaller before God’s greatness which can be confirmed through the cross and the resurrection. Through such confession we can see Jesus Christ the Sovereign one, our Lord, who powerlessly died in his love but reigns over the world in his love by the power of the cross and the resurrection. Whatever situation appears before us, we can find God tirelessly working by his love and justice. We do not need to melt toward anything, but God Himself who has been working for us. We no longer need to lose our nerve in troubling circumstances, for our momentary troubles become small before the great and mighty God, who defeat all darkness and always gives us the best God has as God gave God’s one and only Son, Jesus Christ. In doing so, God’s will is fulfilled through us. When we strive to see God’s greatness and stay tuned to see what God will do, my Lord works through us, renews us, and rebuilds us through redemptive, merciful grace so that we can thoroughly “melt,” as Rahab did, before the Lord. When we melt away before God, we will see more of the grace
that is in Christ Jesus. Our melting spot is the place of grace where we surrender and our pride is melt so that we can meet God and know that God is with us, just as if the cross is the place of grace where Christ melted and surrendered before God in tears and hope.