An Investigation of the Potential of Traditional Korean Narrative as a Model of Contextual Preaching for the Korean Protestant Church

by

Kyongkuk Han

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Abstract

This thesis proposes a model of Korean contextual preaching based on potentials of traditional Korean narratives and performances, and insights from representative contextual preaching. Korean preaching has mostly followed Western preaching style such as three points deductive style. However, at present, both preachers and hearers are expecting to have a fresh preaching method for Korean pulpit. In this reality, I am suggesting a model of Korean contextual preaching which reflect Koreans’ Koreanness.

In this study, classifications of Schreiter and Bevans expands understanding of contextual theology, and among those models of contextual theology, the synthetic model of Bevans be a frame to set up a model of Korean contextual preaching, and emphasis on Korean traditional narrative and performances of Korean contextual theology provide a clue to connect between Korean narrative and a model of Korean contextual preaching. In addition, this study shows common elements of contextual preaching from investigations of Pauline preaching, Indigenized preaching (Liberation preaching, Black preaching), and the new homiletic. And also, this study confirms unique approaches of each contextual preaching. With potential from Korean
traditional narrative and performances, insights from those contextual preaching aid to set up a model of Korean contextual preaching.

As a result of certain study, I am suggesting a model of Korean contextual preaching which has three stages, *Gilnori – Madang – Duitpuri*. Basically, the preaching values and encourages hearers’ participation and invite hearer as co-partner in the process of the preaching.
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INTRODUCTION

I. Statement of the Problem

“Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” This what some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast said to Philip (John 12:20-21). People who live in the contemporary world also say, “We wish to see Jesus.” How can they see Jesus? How can they recognize Jesus? And more importantly how can preachers show them how to see Jesus?

God has used various methods to reveal His word and intentions throughout salvation history. The act of preaching is still one of God’s clearest ways to reveal His word and intentions to the church and God’s people who live in the twenty-first century.

Expanding globalization in the twenty-first century demands a renewed emphasis on context and contextualization in preaching. Globalization is a reality that affects all spheres of life. As we begin to think in global terms, it is also important to reflect on the specifics of local context. The field of homiletics has gradually begun to reflect on both globalization and localization. As a Korean preacher in the Protestant tradition, my homiletical interest is focused on Korean contextual preaching for that church. This study proposes a model of contextual preaching for the Korean protestant church.

Since the 1890s, Korean preaching has mostly imitated Western preaching styles. Most popular have been the deductive, three-point sermons which were part of the tradition received from Western missionaries about 130 years ago. Unfortunately, preaching in the Korean Church has not developed its own style but has basically stayed with this one homiletic model. Today, in the face of rapidly changing circumstances, both preachers and congregations are seeking different models of preaching that will allow them to experience more fully the Word of God as it relates to the Korean context.
Some scholars have suggested the possibility of newer preaching methods influenced by the new homiletic, such as Eugene Lowry’s narrative preaching. In response, a few preachers have studied and adopted the preaching methodologies of the new homiletic. While applying the perspective of the new homiletic has provided a new possibility for the Korean pulpit, Korean listeners are not fully engaged or even receptive to this model.

Other scholars and preachers have suggested and employed preaching styles based on contemporary trends such as video preaching, movie preaching, skit preaching, and even a talk-show style preaching. These efforts have been meaningful and valuable in their response to social change, and have provided in a minimal way fresh momentum to the youth generation. However, most adult Korean Christians have felt uncomfortable with these styles.

II. Thesis Statement

In the Korean reality, it seems clear that neither imitations of the new homiletic nor a special contemporary style are adequate for the revitalization of Korean preaching. In light of this situation, I want to develop a practical model of contextual preaching for the Korean church. Some might argue that Korean society is highly westernized, and has been long accustomed to a Western preaching style. Why, then, is there a need for the Korean church to develop its own style of preaching?

On the surface it may seem that Korean society and culture have been dominated by Western culture. However, it would be a mistake not to look more deeply in terms of how Korea’s traditional culture continues to be transmitted as it has for over five thousand years. For instance, on Korean traditional holidays such as Sol-Nal (Lunar New Year’s Day) and Chu-Sok (Thanksgiving Day), approximately thirty million people still visit their ancestors' graves and parents' homes for ancestor worship, resulting in severe traffic jams throughout the country.
From a Korean point of view, it would be incorrect to say that Korean culture has been entirely westernized. Instead, Korean society is a fusion of Western culture and a unique Korean heritage. This fusion is essential for understanding the purpose of my dissertation. Rather than being taken over by Western culture, Korean culture has contextualized Western culture according to Korean tradition and heritage. The Korean church has also developed an indigenized Christian culture, which is a collaboration between Western Christian culture and Korean traditions such as *Chu-Do Yae-Bae* (a service for an ancestor's memory which replaces the traditional ancestor worship). However, preaching in Korea does not reflect such collaboration. Preaching in Korea is clearly westernized. It has failed to incorporate indigenous traditions and culture. As both Korean preachers and congregations seek somewhat fresh winds for preaching in Korean churches, it is essential to incorporate basic Korean traditions and Korea's unique heritage. Jung Young Lee declares,

Korean Preaching is not genuine unless it discloses the wholeness of being a Korean who embodies both witness to the incarnate Word and heritages of Korean history and culture. A mere imitation of Western preaching style does not make authentic Korean preacher. Korean preachers must present themselves as Koreans, for preaching means to disclose ourselves, our whole selves, to our congregations.¹

I firmly agree with his assertion, and my thesis will rely on this insight of Lee. In this regard, I will suggest a model of Korean contextual preaching that is a “witness to the incarnate Word and heritages of Korean history and culture”.

My argument is that a model of preaching arising specifically from the Korean context and providing a way for the church to voice its unique heritage, has the potential to revitalize Korean preaching. I propose that traditional Korean narrative will contribute

significantly to such a model. It is my hope that this study will contribute to a theological foundation for Korean contextual preaching, and offer a renewed practice for preaching.

III. Thesis Structure

This study will first investigate a biblical model of contextual preaching, found in 1 Corinthians. It will demonstrate clearly how Paul provides insights for contextual preaching. Through an exegesis of the conflict over food sacrificed to idols (1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1), I will argue that this writing from the life of the early church provides a model of contextual preaching.

After exploring a biblical foundation for contextual preaching, I will seek contact points between models of contextual theology and potential models for contextual preaching. Thus, I will survey various terms, history, and classifications of contextual theology. I will then move my focus to contextual preaching, and two representative indigenized contextual preaching models (liberation preaching and Black preaching) will be researched to provide insights for a model of Korean contextual preaching. Then, to gain further clarity about contextual preaching, I will argue that the new homiletic is a model of contextual preaching which reflects the context of North America post-1960s. To approach the new homiletic as a model of contextual preaching is a unique contribution of this thesis. I will then explore Korean contextual theologies such as Tochakhwa theology and Minjung theology, and their emphasis on narratives. In this section which focuses on the Korean context, I will investigate Korean traditional narrative and storytelling performances to examine indigenized models and their potential for a model of Korean contextual preaching. I will then integrate and apply insights from Pauline preaching, Indigenized preaching (Liberation preaching, Black preaching), the new homiletic and Korean traditional narratives and performances to my proposal for a model of Korean contextual preaching.
Chapter One
Pauline Letter as a Model of Contextual Preaching:
1 Cor 8:1 -11:1 as a Case Study

I. How can we understand Paul as a contextual preacher?

To provide a biblical foundation for a model of Korean contextual preaching, this thesis investigates Paul’s words to the Corinthian congregation on the issue of food sacrificed to idols (1 Corinthians 8:1 ~ 11:1). While Paul has been traditionally understood to be a systematic theologian, William S. Campbell claims, “It has become increasingly clear to New Testament scholars in recent years that Paul did not set out to develop in his letters a systematic theology. We can no longer therefore legitimately use his statements as if they were abstract and timeless theology.”

This preconception which regards Paul only as a systematic theologian has led some to overlook the possibilities of considering Paul as a contextual theologian who focuses on pastoral care for specific congregations. Joop F.M. Smit explains Paul’s contextual features as follows:

Paul’s letters are occasional writings. This does not only imply that in each letter he addresses a particular local community, but also that he treats the specific problems of that community. In this context, each time he develops a theological argumentation which fits in with the occasion. In this way Paul is a contextual theologian.

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2 William S. Campbell, Paul’s Gospel in an Intercultural Context :Jew and Gentile in the Letter to the Romans (Peter Lang: Frankfurt,1991), 81. “E P sanders concluded from his study of Paul and the law that though ‘a priori’ one would expect Paul to have had a clear position on the law, in fact because Paul’s statement depend on the question asked or the problem posted, he does appear to have said different things on different occasions. This may be because ‘Paul did not abstract his statements about the law from the context in which they were made, nor did he consider them in their relationship to tone another apart from the questions they were intended to answer.’ There is general agreement, however, that although Paul’s statements on any topics are contingent upon the circumstances he addresses, nevertheless coherence as well as contingency is the hallmark of his thought. The relevance of this for our immediate enquiry is that we must interpret Paul’s statement about mission in Romans in light of the context out of which the letter originated and to which it was addressed.”

When Paul suggests diverse solutions to the issues raised in the letter sent to him by the Corinthians, he is taking a contextual approach to the questions of one early church community regarding the gospel. Therefore, my research aims to understand Paul’s contextual methods and their basis on the gospel.

The reason I have chosen to look at the issue of food sacrificed to idols in 1 Corinthians 8 to 11:1 is, above all, the fact that this issue raises questions about “Christianity’s relationship to its surrounding culture.”⁴ Therefore, this issue is one of the best examples to explore in order to understand how we can effectively preach the gospel in the particular context. Second, Paul’s handling of the issue of food sacrificed to idols arose out of Corinth’s unique context. By exegeting the text to discover how he addresses this issue, we can better understand the nature of preaching with regard to controversial contextual problems in a Korean congregational setting.

Finally, the issue of food sacrificed to idols has been important within the Korean church’s mission history. For example, in Korea, the food sacrificed to idols was a crucial reason for severe persecutions in the history of the Korean Catholic Church about two hundred years ago.

In addition, in preaching the gospel, the Korean Protestant church has struggled with ancestor worship and the food sacrificed to ancestor’s spirits. Therefore, through this case study of an issue which occurred two thousand years ago, preachers can look at Paul’s contextual methodologies to situate and discern how in tangled circumstances Paul sought to find a response based on his understanding of the gospel.

In addition, I believe that 1 Corinthians can be regarded as preaching. 1 Corinthians is a public epistle which was intended to be circulated and read in front of church members.\(^5\) Therefore, though it is a written communication between Paul and the Corinthian church members, Paul himself describes the letter as signifying his presence with them. James W. Thompson situates how we can regard Paul’s epistles as his preaching in the following way:

….the close relationship between Paul’s oral address and his letters is suggested by the fact that he….dictated his letters to an amanuensis. Therefore, the letters were the result of an oral event, and Paul’s communication was meant for the ear, not the eye….letters were an ideal substitute for Paul’s presence and communicated his apostolic self-understanding….the fact that Paul called for the public reading of his letters reflects the oral nature of his communication with his churches….we may assume that Paul expected that all of his letters would be read orally for the benefit of the community gathered for worship inasmuch as all writing was meant for vocalization….we may note that the letters actually repeat what Paul has said to the community already….the oral/aural dimension of Paul’s preaching undoubtedly determined both his style and his arrangement in the letters, inasmuch as they, of all written communication, may come closest to oral communication.\(^6\)

While there were tensions between Paul and some of the Corinthian Christians, it was an undeniable fact that Paul was the founder of the Corinthian church. It is also clear from the fact that they wrote asking for his assistance in solving their factionalism (7:1, 8:1, 12:1), that some Corinthians wanted Paul’s advice on certain matters because he was the founder. Thus, since this letter had Paul’s authority it can be considered as if it was Paul’s own voice advising and at times disciplining them, and thus, a preached event. With this point of view, I will examine 8:1-

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11:1 to find examples of a contextual approach which provides helpful insights for contextual preaching seeking to be faithful in a context.

To understand the unique context of Corinth, I will investigate the general ecology of Corinth and the Corinthian church in section two, and then examine more deeply the cultural and religious context regarding idol offerings in Corinth in section three. This study will provide background knowledge about the context of the Corinthian church of Paul’s period toward a model of Korean contextual preaching.

II. The Ecology\(^7\) of Corinth.

a. The Context of Corinth

Corinth was on a major trade route located between Cenchreae to the east and Lechaeum to the west. The city was connected north and south by land and it was between the Aegean and Ionian seas to the east and west. This location made Corinth a “prosperous commercial crossroads in classical antiquity,”\(^8\) and “one of the great commercial centers of the eastern Mediterranean.”\(^9\) According to the ancient geographer Strabo, “Corinth is called ‘wealthy’ because of its commerce, since it is situated on the Isthmus and is master of two harbors…. to Asia, and the other to Italy; and it makes easy the exchange of merchandise….\(^{10}\)” Therefore, Corinth was regarded as one of three great commercial cities on the road between

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\(^7\) “Ecology (from Greek: οἶκος, "house"; -λογία, "study of") is the scientific study of interactions among organisms and their environment, such as the interactions organisms have with each other and with their abiotic environment.” - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecology) (Accessed on Aug 29, 2013). I adopt the term “Ecology” to indicate more detail context in my research.


Rome and the East with Ephesus and Syrian Antioch.  

11 P. Coutsoumpos indicates four basic factors in Roman Corinth’s prosperity:

- Corinth had the reputation of being a great wealthy city and its wealth was based mainly on trade.
- A second factor is its banking system.
- A third factor is the production of the artisans. Strabo calls special attention to Corinthian “arts of the craftsman.”
- Metalwork production had declined in several cities, but Corinthian bronze, a special bronze alloy, was coveted.
- Finally, governmental administration must be mentioned. The senatorial province of Achaia had its capital at Corinth.

Historically, Corinth was destroyed by the Roman invasion in 146 B.C and then, Julius Caesar rebuilt the city as a Roman colony in 44 B.C. At that time, a number of freedmen and some veterans were sent out from Rome to the new colony, Corinth. S. J. Hafemann indicates this huge influx of people from Rome, “the city was settled largely by ‘freedman’ from Rome, whose status as manumitted servants was just above that of a slave.” Moreover, this influx gave Rome “a way to ease her overcrowding and the freedman a chance to take advantage of the socioeconomic opportunity offered by this new city.”

For example, the Roman-Corinth allowed that freedman can be elected as “duoviri, the chief magistrates of the city.” Jerome M. O’Connor asserts that there were in fact two Corinthians, one Greek and the other Roman, each with its distinctive institutions and ethos. With a rapid influx of people including veterans, lower classes and freedmen, many Jews gathered in Corinth. Thus, according to Philo, a vibrant

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Jewish community existed at Corinth. While Latin was the official governmental language for public inscriptions, Greek was used in daily life including the city’s social and commercial enterprises.

The city of Corinth was the host city of the Isthmian games, a biennial athletic competition. It was held both the year before and the year after the Olympic Games of ancient Greece and was regarded as a very important event. The event was popular in ancient Greek society and it gave additional revenue to the city.

Also Corinth was “the city of love”. Strabo describes flourishing prostitution in Corinth as follows:

And the temple of Aphrodite was so rich that it owned more than a thousand temple-slaves, prostitutes, whom both men and women had dedicated to the goddess. And therefore it was also on account of these women that the city was crowded with people and grew rich. For instance, the ship-captains freely squandered their money, and hence the proverb, “Not for every man is the voyage to Corinth.”

However, as Jerome M O’Connor explains, Strabo’s above description is referring to the time before the Roman invasion (146 B.C) and today’s archeology study verifies the numbers mentioned by Strabo are somewhat exaggerated. Therefore, Richard B. Hays concludes, “Strabo’s story of a thousand temple prostitutes in the temple of Aphrodite on Acrocorinth – which in any case referred to the ancient city before its destruction, not the city of Paul’s time - has been discredited by historical and archaeological investigations.” Therefore, when it comes

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16 “Moreover, Corinth also boasted a significant community of Jews, who exercised the right to govern own internal affairs (cf. Acts 18:8, 17). It is listed by Philo as one of the cities of the Jewish community of the Jewish Diaspora (cf. Philo, Leg. Gai. 281-282) S.J. Hafemann, Ibid.

17 “This background is reflected in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 in Paul’s use of the athletic metaphor and his emphasis on the imperishable crown reserved for believers.” Ibid.

18 Strabo, Geography 8.6.20 in Jerome M O’connor, St. Paul’s Corinth: Text and Archaeology, 55.

to the issue of prostitution in Corinth, we can regard this disputed background as a clue to situate the contextual questions about sexuality in the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians 5 –7.

One of the most important features of Corinth as a colony of the Roman Empire was the flourishing of an emperor cult. Richard A. Horsley assesses that the public life of Corinth was dominated by an emperor cult. He indicates,

Representations of the emperor and imperial family, honors for the emperor, and worship of the emperor pervaded the whole context of public life. Not only was the emperor cult the most widespread and ubiquitous religious practice-embodied in temples, shrines, statues, images, coins, inscriptions, sacrifices, citywide and provincial celebrations, and even the calendar that regulated the rhythm of social-political life …

Though the Roman Empire’s culture, religion, law and political system seemed to dominate Corinth, Greek tradition, including philosophies and eastern religions from Egypt and Asia, diffused and mingled in Corinth. These distinctive features of Roman Corinth gave the people of Corinth “both growing civic pride and individual pride”, an “honor-shame cultural orientation”, where public recognition was often more important than facts and where the worst thing that could happen was for one’s reputation to be publicly tarnished. 21 All these cultural factors are important in understanding the factionalism within the Corinthian church, as they learned what it meant to practice their new religion.

b. The Context of the Corinthian Church

The Corinthian church has an important place in early Christian history. After Jesus’ death and resurrection, the gospel of the Galilean Jesus spread out and many new believers

appeared. During that transition period, the most important change was that believers were not limited to the Jewish community but also expanded to include Gentiles. In addition, the number of believers was growing, particularly in urban areas. Therefore, P. Coutsoumpos affirms that the gospel made a notable advance in the cities, a fact that included a great change in the cultural social status of Christianity from a reforming movement inside Palestinian Judaism to a Hellenistic movement based in the cities of the Greco-Roman world.\textsuperscript{22} In this significant change, the church of Corinth was one of the leading and earliest communities. We do not know the exact date of the Corinthian church’s establishment. However, most scholars, including Wiseman and C. K. Barrett, based on Acts, have inferred that Paul reached Corinth in about March of the year 50, and stayed there till about September of 51.\textsuperscript{23} Therefore, we may assume that the Corinthian church was established around A.D. 50 ~ 51.

Several pieces of evidence verify that there was a Jewish community in Corinth. Luke describes a Jewish community in Acts 18:1-17, and Philo of Alexandria comments about the community (see \textit{Legatio ad Gaium 281}). Moreover, excavation by archaeologists found an inscription referring to the “Synagogue of the Hebrews.”\textsuperscript{24} The founder of the church in Corinth

\textsuperscript{22} P. Coutsoumpos, \textit{Community, Conflict, and the Eucharist in Roman Corinth: The Social Setting of Paul’s letter}, 40.

\textsuperscript{23} C. K. Barrett, \textit{A Commentary on the First Epistles to the Corinthians} (New York, NJ: Harper & Row publishers, 1969), 4-5. “....With divine encouragement, Paul continued his ministry for eighteen months. At this point(Accts 18:12-17), Acts narrates the appearance of Paul before Gallio, who was proconsul in charge of Achaia probably from summer A.D.51. It is reasonable to infer (though the date may be a year or so out) that Paul reached Corinth in about March 50, and stayed there till about September 51.” However, there is an academic debate. “An inscription referring to Gallio as proconsul of Achaia has been reconstructed from a number of fragments, discovered during excavation at Delphi, which has allowed the year in which Gallio held office to be determined as 50-51 or 51-52 CE. Thus Paul’s eighteen-month stay in Corinth has traditionally been dated sometime between 49 and 52 CE. However, Gerd Ludemann has argued in some details that the edict of Cladius should be dated to 41CE and that the account in Acts 18:1-17 is a conflation of accounts relating to two visits by Paul to Corinth(the other being hinted at in Acts 20.2)” David G. Horrell, \textit{The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence: Interests and Ideology from 1 Corinthians to 1 Clement} (Edinburgh: T&T Clark Ltd, 1996), 73-74.

\textsuperscript{24} Richard B. Hays, \textit{Interpretation: First Corinthians}, 4. This lintel with inscription was found in 1898. However, Joop. F.M. Smit claims that this archaeological evidence cannot be a proof of the presence in Corinth of a
was Paul and we assume the community was mainly composed of Gentiles, except for a few Jews such as Crispus. Hays writes, “This meant that Paul was faced with a massive task of resocialization, seeking to reshape the moral imaginations of these gentile converts into patterns of life consonant with the ways of the God of Israel.” 25 This reshaping become evident in issues such as idolatry (1 Cor 6:10-11; 8:7; 12:2) and partaking in temple feasts (1 Cor 8:1-11:1).

The Corinthian church did not have a public meeting place since Christianity was a “newly constituted religious movement.” 26 According to Acts 18:4, Paul started to preach at a synagogue, and as time went by, the Christians gathered in diverse houses. We can assume that the number of Christians gathered had to be limited depending on the sizes of meeting places. This fact of several separate house church gatherings, 27 was one of the reasons for tension or factionalism within the Corinthian church. Richard Hays estimates, “Over time, such house church communities might have developed different practices and even acknowledged different leaders, thus exacerbating the problem of factions within the community.” 28 Jerome Murphy-O’Connor assumes a base figure of about fifty people after studying Anaploga villa, which was excavated in the 1960s. 29 He gives two reasons as to why the Corinthian church was not easy to gather as a community:

Jewish community at the time of Paul. Because “this certainly dates from a time much later than Paul.” - Joop F.M. Smit, About the Idol Offerings, 55.


28 Ibid., 7.

29 Murphy-O’Connor’s this study has cited by many scholars, however few scholars such as David G. Horell questioned both descriptive work of Murphy-O’connor and those who have built on that description. David G Horell concludes, “There are, as we have seen, good reasons to doubt the plausibility of the imaginative
The difficulty of getting the whole church together regularly in one place goes a long way towards explaining the theological divisions within the Corinthian community, but the difficulties of the physical environment also generated other problems when all the believers assembled as a church.  

Paul’s ministry at Corinth was likely remarkably successful in making converts among the gentiles, the majority of whom would be urban poor of the city.  

Specifically Paul indicates at 1 Corinthians 1:26, “Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth”, and also describes the presence of gentiles in the Corinthian church at 12:2; “You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak.” Through Paul’s comment we can confirm that some of the church members were the urban-poor in the city of Corinth. Yet according to Theissen’s analysis, the text includes the names of seventeen persons (including one group) from the Corinthian church; Achaicus, Aquila, Erastus, Fortunatus, Gaius, Jason, Crispus, Lucius, Priscilla, Phoebe, Quartus, Sosipater, Sosthenes, Stephanas, Titus Justus, Tertius, and Chloe’s people. Theissen concludes that the great majority of the Corinthians known to us by name were upper class people who owned houses and were free to travel, and thus able to keep in touch with Paul.

About this, P. Coutsoumpos explains, “the Corinthian church was not homogenous, but included a fairly wealthy and high-class minority in its membership. The wealthy and more

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30 Jerome M O’connor, St. Paul’s Corinth: Text and Archaeology, 158.
31 Donald Engels, Roman Corinth: an alternative model for the classical city (Chicago, IL : The University of Chicago press, 1990), 108.
educated of the members were perhaps the leaders and hosts for their fellow believers.” The people who have understood that early Christianity was a movement of the underclass might be surprised by this fact. Therefore we can confirm that the church of the Corinth had a large range of social groups from prosperous household heads to slaves. This “socioeconomic diversity” was another important reason for tensions and difficulties within the Corinthian church. The most striking evidence regarding tensions among various social statuses is at the Lord’s Supper. A split between the “haves” and the “have not’s” resulted a crisis because of the Lord’s Supper in the church of Corinth. The church of Corinth was a conflicted community filled with disagreements caused by the extent of diversity in its midst. Thus, Michael J. Gorman describes the Corinthian church as Paul’s ‘problem child’

In addition, there was a hidden tension between Paul and the church. Indeed, this tension is not limited to the Corinthian church but was caused by Paul’s fundamental limitation as an apostle. In other words, not only because of his persecution of the church but also because of the unusual situation of his calling as an apostle (1 Cor 15:1-8), Paul’s apostolic status remained questionable. The fact that he preached only among gentiles affirming that their salvation did not include a adherence to the Torah law of Judaism increased the suspicion about his apostolic identity. Also in question was whether he had actually seen the earthly Jesus, a requirement for apostolic status.

33 P. Coutsoumpos, Community, Conflict, and the Eucharist in Roman Corinth: The Social Setting of Paul’s letter, 42.
34 Gerd Theissen, the Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essay on Corinth, 96.
Gordon D. Fee asserts that the most serious division in the church is between the majority of the community and Paul himself. In other words, some of the other leaders at Corinth and important Corinthian church members rejected Paul’s authority as a founder and apostle of the church. And finally, the variety of religious backgrounds in Corinth was a further reason leading to resistance against Paul’s authority. Donald Engels analyzes that the conflict between authority and individualism is ultimately a reflection of the Corinthian people themselves. The fact that the gentile converts came from many religious, social and economic backgrounds may have caused conflict within a church in formation seeking to establish a community system of values and beliefs.

III. Background to food sacrificed to idols.

a. Religious Background

In this section, I will investigate the religious backgrounds which led to food sacrificed to idols being a matter of conflict within the Corinthian Church. This section will confirm which religious contexts affected the issue of food sacrificed to the idols in Paul’s period. This will point toward the relations between today’s context and specific issues in certain congregations. Furthermore, Paul’s contextual approach to the specific circumstances will provide meaningful insight for constructing a model for Korean contextual preaching.

Research indicates that Corinth was full of deities’ temples and sanctuaries such as Aphrodite, Isis, Seraphis, Artemis, Dionysus, Poseidon, Apollo, Helius, Pelagrian, Necessity,


Fates, Demeter, Zeus, Askelpius, Hermes, Athena and Hera Bunaea.\textsuperscript{39} M. Gorman asserts that there were more than two dozen temples, statues, and monuments to Apollo, Asclepius, Athena, Demeter and Kore, Serapis, and other gods in Roman Corinth.\textsuperscript{40} Not only were there Hellenistic deities but also some Mystery religions and the emperor worship (imperial cult) were situated in Corinth. While Corinth under the Roman Empire could still continue its own Hellenistic religions,\textsuperscript{41} it is not always easy to identify these gods as either Greek or Roman. For instance, Greek gods such as Poseidon, Zeus and Aphrodite were very similar to Roman gods; Neptune, Jupiter and Venus. Donald Engels classifies three currents of religious belief among the Corinthians of the Roman Era. He points out, “First were the hallowed and traditional divinities of the Greek and Roman pantheon….In addition, specifically Roman cults, including the imperial cult, and oriental religions, including Judaism and Christianity.”\textsuperscript{42}

Mystery religions were flourishing with other cults. Asian theologian Khiok-Khing Yeo explains the backgrounds to the prosperity of mystery religions at Corinth through Angus and Engels’ analysis as follows:

First, mystery religions were popular in Egypt and the Roman world. They could have been brought by sailors and soldiers to Corinth. Second, the rejection of the intellectualism of the Platonic and Aristotelian concept of the gods may have produced

\textsuperscript{39} Alan F. Johnson, \textit{First Corinthians}, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP academic, 2004), 17.

\textsuperscript{40} Michael J. Gorman, \textit{Apostle of the Crucified Lord: Theological Introduction to Paul and His Letters}, 228.

\textsuperscript{41} Donald Engels introduces four possible inferences regarding this religious continuity: “First, specifically Corinthian cults may have been worshipped uninterrupted during the city’s eclipse from 146-44 B.C. by Corinthians who survived Mummium’s sack of the city. Second, Corinthians sold abroad as slaves may have retained some religious traditions from the old Greek city. When the city was refounded, the descendants of these slaves may have resettled in Corinth, bringing their traditions from the old Greek city. (Third) The continuity may reflect an antiquarian revival by Roman colonists and Greek settlers to the colony….Finally, the revival of the old Greek gods in the Roman city may have reflected a need the new colonists felt to worship the gods who protected the Corinthia, especially Aprodite and Poseidon. From time immemorial, these two divinities were thought to dwell in the Corinthia, as Athena dwelt in Athens. It would be to the colonists’ advantages to pay special reverence to the powerful spiritual forces that fostered the wellbeing of their city.” Donald Engels, \textit{Roman Corinth: an alternative model for the classical city}, 94.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., 95.
that environment; Angus speaks about the disintegrating influence of Greek philosophy. Third, the religious needs of the age, combined with the collapse of the city-state, caused the people to crave individualism, emotional freedom, security, syncretistic viability, and salvation….Fourth, politically, the emergence of personal religion can be explained by the incorporation of city-states into the empire when the public spiritual identity of the citizen was based not on the worship of the city-gods but on the imperial cults and personal religions.43

While some might wonder which deity or cult was most powerful in Roman Corinth, it is “difficult to determine which were the most important pagan cults of Roman Corinth, and whether different social groups worshipped different gods”44 since there is a lack of archeological and literal evidence. Nevertheless, it is evident that worshipping a god was an important part of the Corinthians’ daily life as evidenced by the religious place of weddings, funerals, regular seasonal feasts, banquets etc. In some ways, this religious atmosphere in Corinth offered a “fertile milieu” for the development of early Christianity “since beliefs in a dying and receiving savior, faith healing, and a blessed afterlife for the initiate were shared by them all.”45 On the other hand, this flourishing of religions was bound to affect the church members’ religious attitudes46 and contributed to them to having contending perspectives and leading to conflicted practices in the Corinthian church.47

b. Eating food in the Greco-Roman world

(1) When did they eat sacrificed meals?

44 Donald Engels, Roman Corinth: An alternative model for the classical city, 95.
Prior to dealing with the issue of eating sacrificed food in the Greco-Roman context, it is useful to understand the difference between public dining and private eating. Although Paul also deals with private dining in chapter 10, the issue of food sacrificed to idols in chapter 8 is related to public dining. Both public meals and private meals (10:32) were those that “could be attended by invitation (10:27), could occur in a temple precinct (8:10), could involve sexual relations (10:7-8), and at which diners would recline (8:10).”

Many, but not all meals involved food sacrificed to the gods. For the Corinthians, there were many possible occasions during which idol meat was consumed. First, was a formal public sacrifice to pagan deities such as Jupiter or Athena involving cultic meals in the temple. A second type of occasion would be quasi-religious social, tribal, or political gatherings such as social clubs or state festivals. Third, meat sacrificed to idols might be consumed during private meals in gentile homes or in dining rooms associated with temples of deities such as Asclepius, Dionysus or Zeus Hypsistos.

At the worship ritual place, the food offered to idols was usually divided into three portions. Michael Ashton indicates that some was consumed by fire on the altar; another portion was for the priest; and the remainder went to the participants and was usually eaten in one of the dining rooms associated with the temple. This third portion “was dedicated to the god and placed

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49 Wendell Lee Willis, *Idol Meat in Corinth: The Pauline Argument in 1 Corinthians 8 and 10*, 18-21. He indicates the meaning of cultic meals as well: “(1)The Sacramental view is that in the cult meal the worshippers consumed their deity who was contained(really or symbolically) in the sacrificial meat…. (2)The Communal interpretation: a meal with the deity. In this view the cult meal was a solemn occasion of worship in which the god and the worshippers together consumed the sacrifice…. (3) The Social interpretation: a meal eaten before the deity…. in the communal view the meal is an occasion of conscious worship in which the sacrificers consider the meal sacred because the deity ate with them. In the social view, while due regard was given the deity and a portion allotted to him, the focus is on the social relationship among the worshippers. The deity is more an observer than a participant.” Ibid.
upon the gods’ table.” 50 According to W.L.Willis, “In theory it was for the deity to consume, but in practice it was consumed by the worshippers and/or the cult officials.” 51 This understanding situates Paul’s descriptions about occasions in daily life related to sacrificed food: (a) in a pagan temple 52 (8:1-13); (b) at the table of a god 53 (10:14-22); (c) in the market 54 (10:25) (d) at a meal attended by a gentile-host’s invitation 55 (10:27-11:1). This list seems to indicate that each case was different. However, except for c, that is examples a, b and d could be single settings in which “meals attended by invitation at the table of a god could occur in pagan temples which served as a kind of banquet hall.” 56 The one other example indicated by Paul was sacrificial meat sold in the marketplace, having arrived from various temples after sacrifice. R. MacMullen describes the scene of the temple in sacrifice:

There would have to be wood stacked handy to the altars, and provisions to store the hides stripped off the carcasses, since at least in some temples they were reserved for the priest. He was entitled, after all, to make his living from the premises. It appears common for him to have received a portion of each victim which went to “the god’s table” and which he could then do with as he wanted: give for a feast or sell to retailers. That latter choice would explain Pliny’s remark that…. “the temples begin to be crowded and the meat of victims to be for sale everywhere”; but a number of cult regulations specify that the hide, the head, or set fraction of the whole animal belongs to

51 Wendell Lee Willis, Idol Meat in Corinth, 16.
52 “For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols?” (8:10, NRSV)
53 “You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.”(10:21, NRSV)
54 “Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience” (10:25, NRSV)
55 “If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience.” (10:27, NRSV)
56 John Fotopoulos, Food offered to Idols in Roman Corinth, 1.
the god (hostile observers making fun of the mean portion he receives), and such parts are to be sold.  

Thus, Corinthians could buy the meat at the market and eat it in private homes not knowing the source of the meat. Thus, the ritual of sacrifice to gods occurred not just in temples but also in private houses. This sharing of ritual action, including the death of the sacrificed animal and sharing the meat of the animal was a way of strengthening religious faith and the social cohesion among participants.

(2) Social meaning of eating sacrificed food.

The above research on the religious context of Roman Corinth indicates that eating sacrificed food was a common phenomenon in Roman Corinth, and that it was not merely a religious act but also at the heart of social life, even in the Christian community in Corinth. In other words, according to John Fotopoulos, dining in the Greco-Roman world was “a primary vehicle of social interaction, religious expression, and joyous entertainment.” Sacrificed meat was a core component of public dining and played a crucial role in the religious, political, public and social life of Corinthians. So significant was the practice that Wendell L. Willis describes an event of eating sacrificed meal as a social “obligation” beyond “interaction” as follows:

Ex-Pagan Christians in Corinth would have had many social obligations from family or business (marriages, funerals, puberty rites) which would have involved sacrificial meals,
normally in or near the temple grounds. Participation would be an expected part of family and social duty.\textsuperscript{60}

In other words, sharing sacrificed meals and participating in sacrifices was a necessary condition for those holding public status as well as patronage and familial obligation. Peter D. Gooch explains the social importance of the meal through a hypothetical case:

If Corinthian Christians following Paul’s advice were to attempt to avoid any situation where they would be asked to eat food explicitly identified as idol-food, then it is very likely that they could not accept invitations to frequent and important occasions. They could not attend weddings, funerals, celebrations in honour of birthdays, or even formal or relatively elaborate banquets—special meals of whatever occasion—since rites performed at the meals or referred to by the participants would mark the fare as idol-food.\textsuperscript{61}

Even Jews who wanted to follow their tradition and Law, which prohibited entering idol temples or eating sacrificed food to idols, must have felt social pressure in the atmosphere of Corinth.

Hence, eating sacrificed food had an important social meaning in Roman Corinth. Given the centrality of kinship and patronage, banquets in the temple were one of the crucial features of social relations in Greco Roman culture. W. L. Willis concludes that idol meat in Corinth could be a symbol of social interpretation rather than sacramental interpretation. He indicates, “in spite of widespread modern acceptance of the sacramental interpretation of pagan cult meals, there is insufficient evidence to support this theory.” On the contrary, he points out, “there is impressive evidence for a social interpretation: from writers approving the social pleasures of cult meals, from regulations in Hellenistic associations…”.\textsuperscript{62}

Furthermore, in this culture the quality of the meal indicated someone’s social status. For example, meat was a luxury item. The menu at meals depended on the social and economic

\textsuperscript{60} Wendell Lee Willis, \textit{Idol Meat in Corinth: The Pauline Argument in 1 Corinthians 8 and 10}, 63.


\textsuperscript{62} Wendell Lee Willis, \textit{Idol Meat in Corinth}, 62.
status of hosts and visitors. In Greco Roman culture, having a good meal with a social leader was an important event. It was part of the patron-clients system of societal interaction. In other words, “you were what you ate, and – more important – you were whom you ate with.”

(3) Were there certain divisions in the Corinthian church which would be exacerbated by the issue of the food sacrificed to idols?

It is evident that divisions existed in the Corinthian church. However, the relationship between these divisions and issue of food sacrificed to idols is unclear. Therefore, scholars who have studied the issue have different views about how it related to divisions within the community. J. Fotopoulos summarizes:

Some scholars (J. Weiß; C.K.Barrett; G. Theissen; J. Murphy-O’Connor; and B. Witherington) assert that there was a division within the Corinthian assembly between the “Strong” – those who advocated eating food offered to idols, and the “Weak”-those who were opposed to such things. Conversely, there are other scholars (H. Conzelmann; J. Hurd; G. Fee; W.L. Willis; P. Gooch; K.K. Yeo; A. Cheung; J. Smit) who do not think that divisions actually existed between the Strong and the Weak over idol-food within the Corinthian Church. Some of these scholars argue that there were indeed Strong and Weak Corinthian Christians, but no divisions existed between them over idol-food. Others assert that the Strong and the Weak were spoken of hypothetically or rhetorically by Paul. Thus, these scholars maintain that there was generally one unified Corinthian Christian position in favor of idol-food consumption.

Interestingly, while some recent scholars think that there were no actual divisions within the church related to the issue of the idol-food, other scholars assert that the “weaker brother”

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63 Peter D, Gooch, Dangerous Food: 1 Corinthians 8 – 10 in Its Context, 38.
64 John Fotopoulos, Food offered to Idols in Roman Corinth (Tubingen, J.C.B. Mohr:2003), 2-3.
65 “In the years 1974-1975 G. Theissen published three articles with sociological analyses of Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians….in one of these articles he deals with ‘the strong and the weak in Corinth’. In this essay Theissen supports the hypothesis that the weak in social respect….with regard to the eating of idol meat….To my judgment, the way in which Theissen elaborates this hypothesis does not bear critical examination. I mention three serious objections. Firstly, in his sociological analysis Theissen departs without any criticism from the interpretation of these chapters given by Weiß ….Secondly, Theissen reads Paul’s exposition on the idol offerings in the light of a controversy between the strong and the weak, which supposedly existed in Corinth. In 1 Cor. 8-10, however, the strong as such do not occur. Moreover, Paul does not focus his attention on the weak, but on the weak
appears to have been a hypothetical construction of Paul’s, created for the purposes of his argument. For example, Richard A. Horsley asserts,

The word strong does not even occur here (only in 1:27 and 4:10, referring to high spiritual status), and weak (8:7, 10), which refers specifically to “others” (Gk. “someone,” 8:10) being rhetorical-hypothetical, not a reference to particular persons.

Thus, we can see that the understanding about the existence of divisions regarding idol-food is one of disagreement among scholars. I agree with the group which argues that there were divisions in the church (1:10-17) which had complex problems, and understand the issue of the food sacrificed to idols as one of the issues which resulted in factionalism. In keeping with this understanding, I will now exegete important parts of 1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1 in order to situate how Paul contextualizes this conflict. This exegesis will more clearly locate Paul’s contextual attitudes regarding the issue of food sacrificed to idols. Paul’s approach will provide meaningful insights for contextual preaching, including a model of Korean preaching.

IV. The Exegesis of the Chapter 8 – 11:1 of 1 Corinthians

a. Research Points

My intent in this chapter is not to conduct an exhaustive exegetical study but to focus on the ways in which Paul may be considered a contextual preacher. To determine how best to establish the research points that will direct the exegesis, it is meaningful to look at how

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contextual preaching has been framed in recent research. Leonora Tubbs Tisdale provides a definition of contextual preaching as follows:

Preaching which not only gives serious attention to the interpretation of biblical texts, but which gives equally serious attention to the interpretation of congregation and their sociocultural contexts; preaching which not only aims toward greater “faithfulness” to the gospel of Jesus Christ, but which also aims toward greater “fittingness” (in content, form and style) for a particular congregational gathering of hearers.  

If traditional preaching is an exclusive one way communication, contextual preaching is a two way communication which embraces the congregational context. Thus, a starting point of contextual preaching has to be an understanding of the congregation’s context. In order to develop such an understanding, Tisdale suggests that pastors become amateur cultural anthropologists in order to understand congregations: “we will encourage pastors to become amateur cultural anthropologists, studying and interpreting the symbols of congregational life in order to gain greater understanding of congregational subcultural identity.” The context of the Corinthian congregation will be considered as a starting point in assessing Paul as a contextual preacher.

The second step is to look at the use of language for effective contextual preaching. In the following exegesis, I will focus on Paul’s use of insider language as the second feature in contextual preaching.

Tisdale asserts that contextual preaching must “exhibit a preference for the simple, plain, conversational speech of the local congregation.” Use of proper language, including insider language, creates a sense of kinship between preacher and congregation, and it helps lead to emotional communion among them. Tisdale explains this point out of her own experience:

68 Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, *Preaching as Local Theology and Folk Art*, (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1997), 32-33.

69 Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, *Preaching as Local Theology and Folk Art*, 56-57.
When I was in high school I had an English teacher who was fond of saying, “Why use a fifty-cent word when you can use a five dollar word?” She was, of course, trying to expand our facility with the English language by encouraging us to use words that were more complex and nuanced than our typical teenage vocabularies ordinarily provided. When preaching is viewed as folk art, however, there are actually very good reason for choosing a fifty-cent word over a five-dollar word: namely, that some of our five-dollar words may create unnecessary barriers and stumbling blocks for members of our congregations for whom they have little or no meaning.\(^{70}\)

She then proposes the use of insider language in contextual preaching as follows:

Preaching as folk art encourages pastors to employ more “folk speech” – the ordinary, everyday, language of local congregations – in their proclamation. The more the preacher can interpret Scripture and its symbols with in particular language of the congregational subculture-employing its peculiar idioms, turns of phrase, colloquialisms, and proverbial sayings-the more “down to earth” the sermon will seem to a local community.\(^{71}\)

A third point asserts that contextual preaching values the congregation’s own narratives. Sharing narrative is an effective method in contextual preaching and “there are probably no more fruitful ‘texts’ for analyzing congregational subculture than the narratives participants in congregational life share with the pastor in the ordinary process of carrying on ministry.”\(^{72}\)

Sharing their own history, and featuring their own narrative in contextual preaching, works to bond their connection as a community and offer a better understanding of the congregation. In this regard, I will explore Paul’s use of common narrative in his contextual preaching.

There is no formulaic form or style for contextual preaching. Thus, contextual preachers have to find an effective form or style for his/her congregation. Contextual preaching “has potential not only to influence what people think, but also how they think.”\(^{73}\) Therefore, the contextual preacher should focus on not only what to speak, but also how to preach. In this

\(^{70}\) Ibid.,127.

\(^{71}\) Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, Preaching as Local Theology and Folk Art, 127.

\(^{72}\) Ibid., 65-66.

\(^{73}\) Ibid., 143.
exegesis, I will seek to understand the form of contextual preaching which Paul used in the Corinthian congregation, and then seek the possibility of applying these insights to contemporary contextual preaching.

To sum up, through this exegesis, I will concentrate on seeking characteristics of contextual preaching in 1 Corinthians 8:1 – 11:1. The primary research points will be: understanding the congregation, the use of insider language, a common narrative, and its unique form or style of the sermon. This case study will focus on features of contextual preaching mentioned above.

b. Exegesis of 1 Corinthians 8:1 -11:1

From a macro viewpoint, Paul’s use of language in 1 Corinthians is different than in Paul’s other epistles. In other words Paul is best understood as a pastoral theologian with each letter focusing on the specific concerns of the community to which he is writing. Thus, basically, 1 Corinthians should be seen as a contextual letter. Horsley explains:

The highly distinctive language of 1 Corinthians reflects its ad hoc character. Because it is focused on issues that arose in the life of a particular community at a certain point toward the beginning of its development, the “typical Pauline” language of law, sin, righteousness, and faith hardly appears. Instead, oppositions such as wisdom versus foolishness, mature versus infant, rich versus poor, strong versus weak, and pneumatic versus psychic, dominate whole sections.74

Before beginning a detailed exegesis, I want to address a point of scholarly debate regarding consistency in 1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1. Some scholars have asserted that these chapters which treat the food sacrificed to idol’s issue were fragments of several short letters

because of inconsistency of the content.\textsuperscript{75} J. Weiß claimed that the core of the problem is the deviating views, which Paul offers on the one hand in 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; 10:23-11:1, and on the other hand in 10:1-22.\textsuperscript{76} According to his assertions in chapter 8:1-13 and 10:23-11, Paul’s attitude is that the main groups of the Corinthian church have liberated themselves from most obstacles. In specific in 10:23-11:1, “Paul proclaims a grand freedom by rejecting as evil the anxious inquiry after the origin of the meat.”\textsuperscript{77} In other words, Paul seems to say that idol meat is actually harmless, “while nonetheless encouraging the enlightened to abstain for the sake of other people’s scruples.”\textsuperscript{78} On the contrary, in 10:1-22, Paul seems to prohibit any contacts regarding food sacrificed food to idols. J. Weiß asserted that Paul takes the stance of the “Weak” in 10:1-22, which he identifies as mainly of Jewish background and as having concerns regarding Moses’ law which prohibits sacrificed food. Then Weiß concludes that the reason for the opposing view in 1 Corinthians comes from two separate letters. This hypothesis was developed by other scholars.\textsuperscript{79}

On the other hand, other scholars have rejected the hypothesis and asserted the coherence of 8:1-11:1. For example, Richard Hays asserts:

Some critics have suggested that these chapters do not hang together and must be fragments of different letters. This theory is, however, unnecessary, for the argument does make sense when we read it as a whole.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{75} “Until 1876 the unity of I Corinthians was generally assumed, since there is no manuscript or patristic evidence to the contrary. In that year, however, Hagge suggested that chapters I -6,9 (vv. 1-18) and 15 should be taken with 2 Corinthians 10-13 as a vigorous letter written by Paul in defense of his apostleship which he had heard (1 Cor. 1:11; 5:1) had been questioned by the Corinthians.” - John Coolidge Hurd, Jr. The Origin of 1 Corinthians, 43.

\textsuperscript{76} Joop F.M. Smit, About the Idol Offerings, 29.

\textsuperscript{77} Joop F.M. Smit, About the Idol Offerings, 30.

\textsuperscript{78} Richard B. Hays, Interpretation: First Corinthians, 135.

\textsuperscript{79} For more details, John Coolidge Hurd, Jr. The Origin of 1 Corinthians, 43-47.

\textsuperscript{80} Richard B. Hays, Interpretation: First Corinthians, 135.
More systematically, Joop F.M. Smit has analyzed the coherence of 1 Corinthians 8-11:1 from syntactic, pragmatic and semantic perspectives. Through several chapters of analysis, he concludes,

The conclusion of the analysis at the syntactic level is that any removal of tone or several parts (from 8-11:1) brings about a fundamental disruption of the network which informs this entire passage....its syntactic unity exhibits a clear coherence at the pragmatic level as well....Each part of this discourse offers its specific of his letter, Paul displays an identifiable specimen of deliberation in accordance with classical rhetoric....None of the parts can be transposed without seriously distorting the well-considered strategy....we gradually discovered that also at the semantic level 1 Cor. 8:1-11:1 forms a reasonably coherent whole.\(^81\)

At this point, although there is some ongoing controversy, I understand that 1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1 has coherence. When we see these chapters as a whole, they are connected by a topical theme: food sacrificed to idols and they have a flow seeking to broker between two factions, one fearful and one claiming their own freedom and rights.

In general, most scholars have agreed that 8:1-11:1 presents a controversy over food sacrificed to idols. However, their classifications of the issue differ. For example, in 1968, Barrett divides this part into five sections: first, the source of the trouble-exaltation of knowledge over love; second, even an apostle will renounce his rights for the sake of the gospel (9:1-27); third, even baptized communicants are not secure (10:1-13); fourth, Christianity inconsistent with idolatry (10:14-22); fifth, Nature, extent and limitations of Christian freedom (10:23-11:1).\(^82\) In 1997, Richard Hays classifies four movements regarding Paul’s treatment about food sacrificed to idols; first: knowledge puffs up, love builds up (8:1-13); second: the apostolic example of renouncing right (9:1-27); third: warning against idolatry (10:1-22); conclusion: use

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your freedom for the glory of God (10:23-11:1). Though the details differ, most scholars divide 8:1-11:1 into four or five sections. With this understanding, I will divide these chapters into four sections and structure the exegesis by focusing on those parts which best reveal Paul as a contextual preacher. The classifications I will use are as follows: 1. Love is more important than your knowledge in building up the church (8:1-13); 2. I (Paul) am doing contextual ministry to save people for the sake of the gospel (9:1-27); 3. Flee from the worship of the idols. (10:1-22); 4. Live for God’s glory and Seek others advantages for their salvation. (10:23-11:1)

(1) Love is more important than your knowledge in building up the church (8:1-13)

In this section, I will explore Paul’s understanding of the Corinthian congregation by investigating his use of insider language and its potential to provoke emotional empathy.

Chapter 8 clearly reveals features of Paul’s contextual preaching. Paul starts his new discussion at 8:1; Περί δὲ τῶν εἴδωλων θυτῶν- “Now concerning food sacrificed to idols.” His expression “Περί δὲ” works as an indicator that Paul in this verse wants to introduce a new topic to readers. According to Moulton and Geden’s Concordance to the Greek New Testament, Paul uses the term “Περί δὲ” 6 times in 1 Corinthians at 7:1, 7:25, 8:1, 12:1, 16:1 and 16:12. The term “concerning; Περί δὲ” is not a unique term of Paul’s, in fact, it was “a stock phrase in Hellenistic letters” and an “epistolary cliché” but it is used in several letters. In 1
Corinthians, the term introduces a new topic, setting out the expression, \( \Pi\epsilon\rho\iota \delta\epsilon \) a “topic marker”\(^{88}\) in 1 Corinthians. Paul’s use of this term implies that the topic, which will appear in the following messages, is a well-known matter for both Paul and Corinthian Christians. For instance, In 1 Corinthians 7:1, Paul uses the term “\( \Pi\epsilon\rho\iota \delta\epsilon \)” in relationship to a letter from the Corinthian church to Paul; “Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: \( \Pi\epsilon\rho\iota \delta\epsilon \ \omega\nu \ \varepsilon\gamma\rho\alpha\psi\alpha\tau\varepsilon \)” Margaret M. Mitchell expands on this:

We note that \( \Pi\epsilon\rho\iota \ \delta\epsilon \ \tau\omega\nu \ \epsilon\iota\delta\omega\alpha\theta\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu \) is the way in which Paul chooses to introduce this first treatment of the subject. We cannot infer from this means of introduction that this is the exact phrasing which the Corinthians used..., but only that it is a term which he expects them to understand. This is an important point, because, by the way in which he names the disputed matter, Paul already enters into the debate on someone’s terms.\(^ {89}\)

Paul’s use of \( \Pi\epsilon\rho\iota \ \delta\epsilon \) in his epistles can be evidence that Paul followed the Greco-Roman rhetoric of the period. In addition, the Greek term \( \epsilon\iota\delta\omega\alpha\lambda\theta\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu \), translated as “food sacrificed to idols” in the NRSV does not appear in the Greek version of the Old Testament including the Septuagint. Moulton and Geden indicate that the term can be found at Acts 15:29, 21:25, 1 Corinthians 8:1, 8:4, 8:7, 8:10, 10:19, and Revelation 2:14, 2:20.\(^ {90}\) Therefore, there is a possibility that the Greek word \( \epsilon\iota\delta\omega\alpha\lambda\theta\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu \) is a new term which might have come into use in the early church period. The term \( \epsilon\iota\delta\omega\alpha\lambda\theta\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu \) is “a compound, consisting of two parts: ‘idol’ and ‘to offer’.\(^ {91}\)

We can assume the term \( \epsilon\iota\delta\omega\alpha\lambda\theta\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu \) would be understood by the Jewish people since Moses’ law bans any idolatry. Charles .K. Barrett describes three reasons for Jewish

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\(^{88}\) John Fotopoulos, *Food offered to Idols in Roman Corinth*, 208.


\(^{91}\) Joop F.M. Smit, *About the Idol Offerings*, 33.
prohibitions of idol food: “(a) it was tainted with idolatry; (b) it could not be supposed that the heathen would have paid a tithe on it; (c) if it was meat, it could not be supposed that it had been slaughtered in the proper way.”92 While traditional Jews treat the food sacrificed to idols strictly under Moses’ law, the more Hellenized Jews would likely have a more generous attitude regarding the idolized food. Not all Jews in the Corinthian church were dominated by Moses’ Law. Paul and Apollos, an Alexandrian Jew, seem to have more flexibility than other Jews regarding the food sacrificed to idols. Moreover, some Gentile Christians, the majority group in the Corinthian church were somewhat different when compared with the Jewish group.93 Richard Hays describes their attitude regarding the εἰδολοθύτων:

As enlightened Christians, they possess “knowledge” that there is only one god and that pagan idols are nothing other than lifeless statues, having no power to help or harm anyone(v.4)….Just as Gentiles need not to seek God’s approval by keeping Jewish dietary laws, so also they need not worry about the source of the meat they eat. Those Christians who fear defilement from idol meat are simply ignorant and superstitious.94

Paul’s message to them in 8:1 is as follows: “we know that ‘all of us possess knowledge.’ Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.” Some argue that “all of us possess knowledge” is a quote from the letter the Corinthians wrote to Paul and that Paul defines it. 1 Corinthians 8:1 is a crucial sentence for Corinthians who suffered inner conflicts regarding food scarified to idols, because this verse reveals Paul’s interest and intention in focusing on building up the Corinthian church as his spiritual children (3:6-10). In other words, in Paul’s mind, the most important thing was to build up the Corinthian church as a loving community(10:24).

92 C.K. Barrett, A Commentary on the First Epistles to the Corinthians, 188
93 When we treat this matter, we need to understand that there might be another Gentile group - a group that would be fearful of the idol temple because it had exercised such power over them.
Because of this, Paul’s approach to the Corinthians is very careful in that the primary goal is not to solve the issue but to reduce the divisions that exist regarding this issue.

Paul mentions “knowledge (γνῶσις)”, and it represents most “Strong” Corinthian Christians’ minds and attitudes to food sacrificed to idols. Some scholars have interpreted this verse as evidence about the existence of Gnostics in the Corinthian church. However, R. Hays claims, “Paul’s use of this word does not mean that there were Gnostics at Corinth. Gnosticism as a formal religious movement, with its dualistic cosmology and elaborately developed speculative teaching, did not emerge until the second century.” Therefore, Paul’s use of γνῶσις does not represent Gnosticism, but likely reveals the source of some Corinthians’ concern for true spirituality. It is also evidence of Paul’s awareness of their situation and how divisive this problem is, and his intention in speaking of it according to their own knowledge.

Attention should be paid to his use of a plural subject, “we know that ~ (οἱ διαμενόντες)”. If Paul wanted to emphasize his position as a founder or leader of the Corinthian church, he would use, “I know that ~ ”. There are three possibilities in Paul’s usage of the term. First, it is possible that the use of the term is just simple quotation from the letter which the Corinthians sent to Paul. Second, in terms of judging Paul as a contextual preacher, he might use this expression in order to open their minds to what he wants to say and to connect with the gospel. Finally, Paul might have wanted to prove his own authority for what he is saying. The verb “know; οἴδα” is used 25 times in 1 Corinthians. However, Paul uses only twice the expression

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95 In addition, he affirms, “Paul’s letter gives no hint of confronting the Gnostic heresies that later Christian writes such as Irenaeus battled. Among the Corinthians of Paul’s day, we see only incipient tendencies, the seeds that later sprouted into Gnosticism.” - Richard B. Hays, *Interpretation: First Corinthians*, 138.

“we know; oîðaμεν” at 8:197 and 8:498. This expression, which can inspire an emotional sense of kinship, reveals not only Paul’s communication skill and persuasive strategy influenced by Greco Roman rhetoric, but also Paul’s intended argument about the issue of the food sacrifice to idols.

Moreover, Paul seems to make excessive use of key terms already used among Corinthian Christians such as “knowledge”, “right”, “conscience,” “weak” etc. In other words, in chapter 8, Paul intentionally makes many contact points with their letter in order to create emotional empathy between himself and the Corinthian Christian. This attempt clearly appears in 8:8; “Food will not bring us close to God. We are no worse of if we do not eat, and no better off if we do.” Though this verse does not include the expression, we know that ~ (oîðaμεν ὁτι), adding “we know that~” at the starting point of 8:8 cannot be a problem. In this verse, Paul repeats the Strong’s understanding about food sacrificed to idols. However, the following verses leads to more flexibility on both sides. Dean Flemming explains, “In order to expose the faulty assumptions of the so-called strong (a term Paul does not actually use) in Corinth, he adopts a ‘yes, but’ strategy.”100 This “yes, but” pattern is an important contextual feature which appears throughout chapter 8. At first, Paul seems to agree with the thinking of one faction in order to access and open their minds, and then secondly, invites all of them to join him in mediating the conflicts in the community.

(2) I am doing contextual ministry to save people for the sake of the gospel (9:1-27)

97 oîðaμεν ὁτι πάντες γνώσεις ἔχομεν
98 oîðaμεν ὁτι οὐδὲν εἶδομεν ἐν κόσμῳ καὶ ὁτι οὐδεὶς θεὸς εἰ μὴ εἶσ
100 Ibid., 185.
In chapter 9, Paul suddenly changes his tone, and begins to defend his own apostolic office. Through this long justification, we can confirm that Paul had experienced challenges regarding his apostolic rights. If his own apostolic status had been agreed to by all the Corinthian church members, Paul would not have needed to defend his rights. Richard Hays explains Paul’s situation:

In verse 3 Paul openly declares that he is now replying to those who presume to scrutinize his apostolic work. The sentence addresses not a hypothetical possibility but a situation that Paul regards as a present reality (NIV: “This is my defense to those who sit in judgment of me.”)^101

At this point, Paul makes a startling proclamation about his own contextual ministry in 9:19 to 9:23,

For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law) so that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings. (NRSV)

Paul confessed that to save people, and for the sake of the gospel, he has become all things to all people, even though he has lost all benefit. Margaret Mitchell explains this confession:

“I have been all things to all people.” This is a suitable (and extreme) characterization of a non-factionalist—he is a member of no party, because he shares equally with all and is a partner, not of men or factions, but of the gospel. To be “all things to all people” is a perfect epithet of a political chameleon.^102

In Paul’s confession we find one of the best explanations of the purpose of contextual ministry and preaching. Mitchell calls Paul a “political chameleon.” I assert that this description of Paul reveals that, for the sake of the gospel, everyone who does contextual ministry is a gospel

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chameleon! At this point, we confirm that there are two critical purposes in his ministry seen through the food sacrificed to idols issue: one is that through the above confession, we can see Paul’s ministerial purpose for people is to “save some (τινὰς σωσώ)“for the sake the gospel, (διὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) ”, by adopting a contextual attitude to all circumstances around Paul himself. In other words, though Paul had many claims to superiority, i.e. Roman citizenship, a disciple of Gamaliel, “the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee” and as a blameless to righteousness under the law”103, Paul declares that he can give up his own vested rights to save people for the sake of the gospel.104 Second, Paul’s broader contextual approach is not primarily the issue itself. Rather the goal is to build up the church as Christ’s body. His argument effectively states that because he gives up his rights for the sake of the gospel, so should the Corinthian Christians.

Through the chapters regarding food sacrificed to idols, Paul’s main interests are keeping the Corinthian church from division and building up the church as a healthy community by giving advice that will moderate the extreme viewpoints. In short, through an analysis of chapter 8 and 9, I found that the purpose of Paul’s contextual preaching is not theological corrections nor systematic argument, but the well-being of this particular community of faith.

(3) Flee from the worship of idols. (10:1-22)

At this point, Paul invites all in the Corinthian church to affirm a common narrative. With regard to contextual preaching, the unique usage of the Old Testament in this section reveals the importance of encouraging the community to embrace a common narrative. Paul

103 Philippians 3:5-6.

104 Similarly, Paul proclaims in Philippians 3:8, “More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ.”
describes God’s punishments of idolatry through Israelite history in the Old Testament through a continued midrashic exposition.\footnote{“Paul’s use of the Exodus account bears similarity to rabbinic haggadah (the story) and halakah (the behavioral imperative). In the midrashic exposition of a text, rabbis often had recourse to other scriptural passages.” – Raymond F. Collins, \textit{First Corinthians} (Collegeville, MN:The Liturgical Press, 1999), 364.} While the first two chapters, 8 and 9, have an indirect and encouraging mood, the tone of chapter 10 is strong and direct. In 10:1 Paul proclaims, “I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea.” Someone who does not know that most members of the Corinthian church were not Jews, might be confused by Paul’s special term, “our fathers; πατέρες”.\footnote{The Greek term πατέρες is translated to both our father (KJV, NKJV, RSV), our forefathers (NIV) and our ancestors.(NRSV) In this paper, I want to use KJV’s translation only for the term.} Why did Paul use the term πατέρες for Gentile Christian members of the church? Richard Hays explains as follows:

….but Paul’s language reveals something essential about his understanding of the church. His gentile converts, he believes, have been grafted into the covenant people (cf. Rom. 11:17-24) in such a way that they belong to Israel (cf. Gal. 6:16). Thus, the story of Israel is for the Gentile Corinthians not somebody else’s story; it is the story of their own authentic spiritual ancestors.\footnote{Richard B. Hays, \textit{Interpretation: First Corinthians}, 160.}

At this point, I think Paul’s use of the term “πατέρες” and the narratives of the Old Testament in chapter 10 reveals one of the important principles of contextual preaching. When gentile Christians heard Paul’s expression in the epistle, some of them might be uncomfortable and confused about its meaning. Yet it is through such reflection upon the Old Testament that Paul is setting up their identity as one family united under God. He claims they are from the same spiritual ancestors and are one, even though they disagree with one another. In other words, Paul proposes an extended spiritual family which serves the same God in order to maintain the congregation’s unity.

In 10:16~17, Paul adds another aspect to their shared narrative that of bread and wine.  

108 This example would be more familiar to the whole body of Corinthian Christians. Thus, at this point Paul appeals to their shared experience, emphasizing “one bread” as the body of Christ, and “one body” as the partaker of the bread, adding to the shared narrative. These verses show clearly Paul’s intention to keep unity in the Corinthian community as one people of God. In other words, these verses confirm that “Paul’s concern for unity and peace in the community undergirds his exhortation.”  

109 In order to persuade the different factions, he appealed not only to a past narrative but to something held in common by all within the community.

In 10:20-21, Paul affirms a sub-conclusion about the food sacrificed to idols issue.  

110 In these verses, Paul reveals the “radically exclusive character of Israel’s monotheistic faith.”  

111 As we have seen, participating in idol worship and eating food sacrificed to idols were not just religious events but also symbols of social network in Roman Corinth. Alex T. Cheung explains the importance of idol food in Corinth:

The occasions on which idol food was consumed at homes or temples were indeed many. It might have been possible to avoid religious festivals. But what about weddings, birthdays, funerals, or just a simple meal with a religiously-minded host who happened to be one’s superior or relative? To refuse to eat idol food presented at such meals would mark one as antisocial and invite misunderstanding and hostility. It would be risk ostracism. By forfeiting a major means of social advancement, it would

108 “The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.” - NRSV


110 “No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be partners with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.” - NRSV

also be economically detrimental. Therefore the potential social impact of a prohibition of idol food cannot be over emphasized.\textsuperscript{112}

Some of the Corinthians Christians denied being involved in any type of idolatry, seeing in the conflict a need to seek a proper balance between the church and its context in a particular society. However, eating idol food matter was a very complicated matter, balancing their religious belief (idolatry) with the need to sustain social and economic kinship with one another.

Paul strongly concludes the food sacrificed to idols issue, exhorting the church to never eat idol food, as it belongs to a demon, not God. He is hopeful that his creation of a common narrative has convinced them and he will be successful in overcoming this source of conflict that is a threat to community cohesion. This fact reflects how seriously Paul thought about the food sacrificed to idols issue in the Corinthian church. At chapter 10, Paul elevates the food sacrificed to idols issue from a merely practical matter to a spiritual matter related to God.\textsuperscript{113}

At this stage, it is possible to reconfirm Paul’s strategy of contextual preaching. In chapter 8 and 9, we found Paul’s “yes – but” and “both-and” patterns in dealing with food sacrificed to idols issue. This somewhat unclear and ambiguous attitude of Paul is an intended method of contextual preaching. He first needed to get the emotional empathy of the church members. Then, he moved them toward a new understanding of family in terms of an Old Testament narrative, which established a new theology of belonging and a new framework for eating (bread and wine). Such a flow suggests a possible pattern of contextual preaching that I will describe in the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{112} Alex T. Cheung, \textit{Idol food in Corinth}, 38.

\textsuperscript{113} Collins points out, Paul asserts, “to participate in idol worship is, implicitly, to deny the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus.” - Raymond F. Collins, \textit{First Corinthians} (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 364.
(4) Live for God’s glory and Seek others advantages for their salvation (10:23-11:1)

Paul concludes the issue of food sacrificed to idols in a gentle tone, invoking a principle that emphasizes that life is for both glorifying God, and seeking the others’ advantage. On the surface, this section seems to lack consistency; “because he is making two different points, and he swings back and forth between them in a potentially confusing way.”114 In other words, Paul repeats “both-and” and “not-but” patterns in this section. I think that this technique of Paul confirms a feature of his contextual preaching. As I mentioned, one of the main interests in Paul’s ministry is building up the healthy church as a Christ body. Paul acknowledges one’s freedom but he values more the building up of the church. Thus, “the church” can be added to the end of verse 23, “‘All things are lawful,’ but not all things are beneficial. ‘All things are lawful,’ but not all things build up (the church).”115

For Paul, both the Strong and the Weak are his spiritual children, and he therefore tries to keep balance among them by privileging the principle: building up that befits the glory of God. For example, though he already emphatically banned food sacrificed to idols in the previous section, Paul’s attitude in verse 25 to 27116 seems to agree with the Strong’s opinion about sacrificed food. In verse 25, Paul indicates that meat which is sold in the market or is provided by an unbeliever’s table can be eaten.

This example of eating meat might be more relevant with regard to the rich group, because poor people could not get enough opportunities to eat the meat. Some who are wealthier

114 “A: All our actions should glorify God by seeking the benefit of others rather than ourselves. B: Within the framework of that principle, we are free to eat whatever we like with thankfulness.” - Richard B. Hays, Interpretation: First Corinthians, 174.

115 NEB translates, “We are free to do anything,’ but does everything help the building of the community?”

116 “Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience, for “the earth and its fullness are the Lord’s. If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience.” (NRSV)
might eat meat without any hesitation, because according to their wisdom, they had understood the food as nothing compared to God’s sovereignty. In addition, for the Weak who were influenced by Moses’ Law or their fear of the idol’s power, meats is an idol’s food which they are prohibited from eating. For the Strong, Paul quotes Psalm 24:1, proclaiming that you can eat the meat if you do not need to know the source of the meat. Keeping this delicate balance between the Strong and the Weak in one community is one of the crucial points of Paul’s contextual preaching.

Paul’s ultimate declaration about food sacrificed to idols is found in 10:31.117 Through this positive conclusion to a negative incident, Paul is “trying to move his readers from an anthropocentric view to a theocentric one, from an emphasis on rights to an emphasis on obedience and service.”118 In other words, Paul orders the food sacrificed to idols issue away from a matter of value judgment in ordinary lives to a spiritual matter toward God’s glory. According to Moulton and Geden’s analysis, the term “glory; δόξα” is used 76 times in Paul’s epistles from Romans to Titus.119 Therefore, we found that one of Paul’s main interests in communication with the Corinthian Christians is the matter of glory. In same regard, the notion of glory of God provides a strong argument for the unity of the Christian community in the early church. In those usages, indicating “God; θεός.” with “Glory; δόξα” is 21 times120; and in 1

117 “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.” (NRSV)
118 Richard B. Hays, Interpretation: First Corinthians, 179.
119 Moulton and Gede, Concordance to the Greek New Testament 6th Edition, 228-229. Most scholars conclude that Titus is not Pauline but represents a later contextual moment in the churches founded by Paul. Therefore, I include Titus in my analysis.
Corinthians, the expression appears 3 times at 2:7, 10:31, 11:7. Inter alia, 10:31 is a declaration to clearly reveal a purpose of his ministry for the Corinthians.

From the lens of contextual preaching, Paul claims his purpose at the end of 10:33. Through 10:32-33 121, Paul reveals an “evangelical flexibility”122 which accommodates him to the values of diverse situations and groups. I think this seemingly excessive flexibility is Paul’s contextual approach to gaining empathy and encouraging them to see that their unity is more than important the issue of meat. Then, Paul’s invitation appears at 11:1. At this point, I confirm that Paul’s preaching is not merely objective teaching and speech but also shows an understanding of the unique context of his hearers.

V. Pauline Letter as a model of Contextual Preaching

Until now, I have researched the framework of Paul’s contextual preaching through the issue of food sacrificed to idols in 1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1. Prior to beginning this exegesis, I set up four research points which can be regarded as features of contextual preaching (understanding the congregation, using insider language, using common narrative, a non-fixed form or style of the sermon). This exegesis has confirmed that 1 Corinthians 8:1 – 11:1 has these characteristics of contextual preaching. In addition, I identified two more features in Paul’s contextual preaching. In this section, I will summarize the features of contextual preaching in these verses, and suggest applicable points for contemporary contextual preaching.

First of all, Paul fully understood and addressed specifically the situation of his congregation. Paul realized that tensions and factions existed among the Corinthian church

121 “Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in every thing I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, so that they may be saved.”-(NRSV)

122 Richard B. Hays, Interpretation: First Corinthians, 179.
members. This information had come to him through their letter, the delegation from Chloe, and his own experiences. Knowledge of the external circumstances of the Corinthian church members was the foundation of Paul’s contextual preaching. With a broad understanding of the congregation and its social and economic context, Paul preached to mediate each faction’s own understanding about the food sacrificed to idols. He sought to present a theological and personal argument about a third possibility that might prevent a division within the community.

Paul used his authority in different ways depending on the context. In the verses I have examined, Paul adjusted his authority in order to enable church members to open their minds to his words. In other words, Paul appeared neither as an apostle nor as a powerful founder of the church, but as a mediator seeking to unify several factions, and to maintain a healthy-faithful community. His approach to the congregation started from his understanding of the context of the Corinthian church. Therefore, recognizing a congregation’s context and condition is a starting point of contextual preaching. Similarly, a preacher’s knowledge of the congregation’s context is an initial process that creates mutual trust between preacher and hearer. If the hearers feel that a preacher participates in their situation, they feel comfortable and they are more ready to trust, and hear the preacher’s message. Hearers are able to feel that they are crucial partners in forming the message, and so open their minds to hear the message for themselves. Thomas R. Swears affirms the importance of hearers’ open minds in preaching as follows:

When the listener feels recognized and valued as an essential factor in preaching act, he will become much more present to and engaged in the sermon, just as is true of people participating in normal conversation. It is when people sense themselves to be valued participants in the conversation and not simply passive receptacles for someone else’s opinions and biases that they willingly, often energetically, become engaged in it themselves, because now they are active in the conversation and no longer observing it.

Second, Paul uses “their” rhetoric and language. Roman Corinth was influenced by Greco-Roman rhetoric; therefore, there are many examples in which Paul followed the established patterns of rhetoric. In addition, when he wrote messages to the Corinthian church members, Paul used expressions which were popular in the Corinthian church such as the “Strong”, “knowledge”, “right”, “conscience,” “weak.” In effect, he quoted their own words back to them. Through this use of their rhetoric and special expressions, Paul could reveal an impartial attitude, and show that he was hearing all sides, thus creating emotional empathy between himself and the members. Paul was trying to bridge the gap among the factions by conceding some ground to each. George Lindbeck asserts the importance of languages:

human experience is shaped, molded, and in a sense constituted by cultural and linguistic forms…. There are numberless thoughts we cannot think, sentiments we cannot have, and realities we cannot perceive unless we learn to use the appropriate symbol systems…. (Language)….is a communal phenomenon that shapes the subjectivities of individuals rather than being primarily a manifestation of those subjectivities.\(^\text{124}\)

James W. Thompson explains Paul’s usage of the hearers’ unique language as follows:

Communities define themselves and create corporate expectations by their own use of insider language. They tell stories that contribute to communal identity. To tell a small part of a story, sometimes even to use a single word or image, is to evoke the corporate memory of the community. Because not all Christian experience can be translated, Paul initiated his listeners into their own distinctive insider\(^\text{125}\) language.\(^\text{126}\)

Thompson notes Paul’s commitment to use “insider” terms. In addition to what Thompson states, I think the use of “insider language” is an intentional action of the contextual preacher. By using

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\(^{125}\) Thompson quotes examples of 1 Thessalonians. “Indeed 1 Thessalonians has numerous examples of ‘insider language’ that would not have been immediately intelligible to those who had received no prior education in the faith. Such terms as ‘election’ (1:4), ‘the wrath that is coming’ (1:10), ‘coming’ (2:19) and the frequent reference to sanctification (3:13; 4:3, 7; 5:23) reinforce the community’s corporate identity by continuing to initiate them into the ‘peculiar speech’ that distinguish them from the larger society.” James W. Thompson, *Preaching Like Paul*, 98-99. I think, Paul’s use of “Strong”, “knowledge”, “right”, “conscience,” and “weak” at 1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1 are same case.

\(^{126}\) James W. Thompson, *Preaching Like Paul*, 99-100.
insider language, Paul prepares the hearer’s minds for the ideas which will follow. Therefore, Paul’s method offers much guidance for contextual preaching. Each language has unique conversation patterns and methods of persuasion which suit that particular language group; thus, one cannot overemphasize the importance of a language’s special pattern for effective persuasion and delivery in contextual preaching. Moreover, the preacher's employment of an “insider language” works both to show the preacher’s deep understanding of the congregation’s situation, and simultaneously, to make an emotional identification between the preacher and hearer. Therefore, preaching which includes a congregation’s unique contextual features such as their rhetoric and “insider” terms is preaching contextually.

Third, Paul uses biblical narratives to bring the congregation together as being part of a family story. In my opinion, through the blend of narratives and indicating “our fathers,” Paul wanted to remind them of their common spiritual heritage as members in the Corinthian church. Moreover, Paul’s creative link between Old Testament narratives and the Lord Supper is critical, and provides valuable insights to today’s preacher. He sought to help the Corinthian congregation gain more awareness that they belong to the same spiritual family whether Jew or Gentile. From a perspective of contextual preaching, Paul’s emphasis on a common story has an important meaning. A modern contextual preacher should realize the importance of the biblical story as a common story. This goes beyond memorizing bible passages to making “the story” central to life and to practice. In other words, telling the biblical story in a particular context brings a sense of kinship, reminding members of their spiritual affiliation. Through this

[127] At this point, we need to recognize a point of difference regarding the biblical story between Paul’s days and today. In Paul's day it would not be enough to bring the community together because it was not a shared narrative. However, at present, the biblical story is enough to tie congregation members as a spiritual union. Therefore, my point is that the modern contextual preacher needs to find a common story, which is likely the Biblical story.
the hearer can recognize that God has worked through all contexts in past and present, and will continue to work in the future. It also adds the more recent common narrative of bread and wine, wedding it to the older story of bread and water in the desert.

Fourth, when Paul communicated to the Corinthians, he did not emphasize his authority as a founder and an apostle to the members; rather he acted as a mediator. Moreover, he did not suggest an ultimate, clear solution to resolve this divisive situation within the Corinthian community. This contextual attitude of Paul gives an essential insight for contextual preaching. A more traditional model of preaching gives the preacher extraordinary authority as an exclusive vehicle of God’s word. However, for authentic contextual theology, the preacher needs to relinquish excessive authority and appear as one of the community, or in the case of conflict, work as a mediator who privileges the congregational context. In addition, sometimes the preacher must keep the options open, resisting the urge to impose conclusions. This is similar to open-endedness of the New Homiletic.

Fifth, Paul seeks to lead hearers to their own conclusion based on the gospel that he hopes all the members will affirm. Paul’s seemingly excessive flexibility in dealing with the issue of food sacrificed to idols, which looks like open-endedness, is a contextual tool to lead the members to his intended destinations. He is helping them to frame the issue in terms of building up the church and the glory of God. Therefore, the open-endedness of Paul’s contextual preaching is based on a larger biblical frame. In other words, Paul seems to allow various responses regarding the food sacrificed to idols, yet allows the common family narrative to direct them in a particular way. Through Paul’s contextual preaching on food sacrificed to idols, contemporary Korean contextual preachers can understand one of the most important points for their preaching: various contextual methods are tools for leading God’s people to unity in the midst of conflict. It is obvious that Paul’s objective was to maintain unity. In addition, preachers
should not forget to focus both on salvation for individuals and also on building up the church for community. Both purposes exist for the glory of God. From this perspective, contextual preachers should not limit their preaching range to the individual area, but should expand the range to the entire society.

Sixth, the contextual features found in 1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1 confirm that Paul was a contextual preacher. It is useful to ask, however, why Paul used contextual preaching for the Corinthian Christians. In other words, why did Paul determine to be a contextual preacher? Though we do not know if Paul’s contextual approaches were successful or not, we have to see Paul’s original intention for God’s people in Corinth. As I indicated before, the treatment of the issue of food sacrificed to idols in 8:1-11:1 reveals Paul’s intention to the community and also shows features of a contextual preacher. Emphasis on one bread and one body represents his aim to expand the common narrative in order to sustain the unity of the community as a Christ’s body.

VI. Conclusion

I have examined Paul’s contextual preaching in the food sacrificed to idols issue in 1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1. In section 1, I claimed the importance of the food sacrificed to idols as a case study for Korean contextual preaching. In section 2, I described general ecology of Roman Corinth. In section 3, I focused on the religious background of Roman Corinth and food sacrificed to idols in Paul’s time. Through the study, I concluded that eating food sacrificed to idols and participating in a feast or dinner when it was served was not just a religious event, but also an essential part of networks in a dyadic society for Roman Corinthians. In addition, I researched the situation in the Corinthian church regarding food sacrificed to idols issue. In section 4, I identified Paul’s contextual approaches to solve the Corinthian church’s difficult situations, concluding that Paul is clear theological destination was to keep unity in the church
and to build up the church. I showed that various contextual methodologies of Paul’s preaching worked as tools to point people of God toward unity. In section 5, I suggested homiletical links between Paul’s contextual features described in section 4, and contemporary contextual Korean preaching. I suggested several steps for effective contextual preaching: understand deeply the hearers’ situations as a foundation of contextual preaching; use their “insider” language to make emotional empathy; use narratives of the Bible and new tradition of the early church Bible to reconfirm meanings of a spiritual family under one God. In the end, I conclude that Paul is a representative contextual preacher who understands and uses “their” ways to lead them to the gospel of Jesus.

Having identified a biblical model for contextual preaching, the next chapter will deal with modern contextual theology and contextual preaching in order to locate meaningful theological and homiletical foundations for a model of Korean contextual preaching.
Chapter Two
Contextuality and Homiletics

I. Contextual Theology

As an essential foundation of contextual preaching, we need to understand contextual theology before we proceed to build up a model of Korean contextual preaching. Most contextual preaching is based on a particular contextual theology, and reflects its context. Thus, it is important to be aware of contextual theology to set up a model of Korean contextual preaching.

a. Various Terms Regarding Contextual Theology.

It is necessary to clarify the definition of contextual theology employed in this paper. Scholarship uses several terms such as *indigenization*, *inculturation*, *local theology*, *ethnotheology* and *contextualization* in relation to contextual approaches. These terms are similar in meaning, but have slightly different nuances. An investigation of them serves to reveal the manner in which historical contextual approaches have been processed and applied by contemporary contextual theologians.

*Indigenization* was affirmed by missionary strategists Henry Venn (1725-97), and Rufus Anderson (1796-1880) under the influence of the rapid expansion of the mission movement of the nineteenth century. This mission movement coincided with British imperialism and colonialism. For missionaries influenced by imperial reality, the purpose of indigenization was to transplant an unchanging gospel into the static and generally ‘primitive’ culture of non-
Christian people. Venn and Anderson, however, argued that churches planted by foreign
mission should become self-supporting, and should reflect local culture. B.J. Nicholls offers the
following comment about indigenization:

This movement was primarily concerned with indigenizing the forms of worship, social
customs, church architecture and methods of evangelism. This emphasis is still valid as
the current interest in cultural anthropology and the Church Growth movement indicates.
The failure to indigenize has resulted in the perpetuation of colonialism and the growth
of a ghetto mentality among Christian communities. However, in recent years the
adequacy of the indigenization principle has been seriously questioned.

The term *indigenization* relates to another term, *indigenous theology*. While general or
universal theology has focused on a way of thinking and speaking about the Gospel that fits all
people in all places, indigenous theology “emphasizes the fact that theology is done by and for a
given geographical area, by local people for their area, rather than outsiders,” and this
contributes to the “the integrity and identity of the enterprise.”

The term *inculturation* represents “Roman Catholic missiological thinking.” This
term first appeared officially in 1979 in an address by Pope John Paul II to the Pontifical Biblical
Commission. A quotation from that address appears in the 1979 Apostolic Exhortation
*Catechesi Tradendae.* Joseph Healey and Donald Sybertz explain:

Of many possible definitions we prefer “earthing the Gospel in local cultures” or
“rooting the faith in local cultures.” Inculturation is the process of incarnating the good
news in a particular cultural context. Most specifically it is a process by which people of
a particular culture become able to live, express, celebrate, formulate and communicate

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128 B. J. Nicholls, Sinclair B. Ferguson ,ed., *New Dictionary of Theology*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity
129 Ibid.
Press, 2008), 192.
Orbis Books, 2002), 50.
their Christian faith and their experience of the Paschal Mystery in terms (linguistic, symbolic, social) that make the most sense and best convey life and truth in their social and cultural environment.\textsuperscript{133}

This concept of \textit{inculturation} “is a combination of the theological principle of incarnation with the social-science concept of acculturation (adapting oneself to a culture)\textsuperscript{134}, and is “concerned with the process of proclaiming and explaining the gospel in a language a particular people understands.” Moreover, \textit{inculturation} “expresses the process by which the church becomes inserted in a given culture in a transformative way.”\textsuperscript{135}

Another term, \textit{local theology}, has been used to express a contextual interest in the local church. This term is an English translation of Vatican Council II’s \textit{ecclesia particularis},\textsuperscript{136} and it emphasizes “the circumscribed context of logical reflection and having also some ecclesial overtones through its association with local churches.”\textsuperscript{137}

Evangelical scholars such as Charles H. Kraft\textsuperscript{138} and Peter Back\textsuperscript{139} have adopted terminology from the social sciences, \textit{ethnotheology}, to refer to the biblical concept of nations. This is a useful term which focuses on the unique character of theology in a particular region, although the term has limitations. Schreiter evaluates it in this way: “(ethnotheology) also


\textsuperscript{134} Robert J. Schreiter, \textit{Constructing Local Theologies}, 5.


\textsuperscript{136} Robert J. Schreiter points out the somewhat insufficient translation of local theology: “Its principal disadvantage is that the use of the word ‘local’ does not translate well into Germanic languages, where \textit{lokal} has a much different meaning.” - Robert J. Schreiter, \textit{Constructing Local Theologies}, 6.

\textsuperscript{137} Robert J. Schreiter, \textit{Constructing Local Theologies}, 6.


\textsuperscript{139} Peter Back, “Ethnotheology in the Light of the Authority of Scripture and Linguistic Relevance Theory” in \textit{Church & Mission: Building the Kingdom} (UK: Tentmaker Publication, 1999), 34.
carries for many ears a slightly unsavory ring. The biblical allusion connotes for some a reference to pagans or the heathen, somehow inferior to the chosen people…. The term ‘ethnotheology’ has not received widespread acceptance.”

The term *contextualization* as a theological word was introduced in 1972 in a document of TEF (Theological Education Fund) by Shoki Coe and Aharoan Sapsezian of the World Council of Churches. According to T.D. Gener, “In their definition contextualization goes beyond indigenization and stresses the prophetic or critical function of doing theology as it engages a changing society.” In other words, “the term contextualization includes all that is implied in the older indigenization or inculturation, but seeks also to include the realities of contemporary secularity, technology, and the struggle for human justice,” which characterize nations of the third world.

Having researched the above terms relating to contextual approaches and offered a brief history of each, I will now propose a definition of contextual theology, and research some noticeable contextual theologies in modern church history.

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140 Robert J. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 5.

141 Dean Flemming points to misuse of the term *contextualization* – “No doubt its very popularity has contributed to the fuzziness of its meaning. Today the term is used within a number of theologically related disciplines and by thinkers from a wide range of philosophical and theological perspective. As a result, there are different perceptions of what it is about. For example, some writers speak of contextualization as a hermeneutical activity that is virtually equivalent to what has traditionally been thought of as application of Scripture. Others define it theologically as the process of developing local theologies in a context of rapid social and cultural change. For still others, it is a missiological activity that involves the crosscultural communication of the gospel and various other functions of the Christian mission.” Dean Flemming, *Contextualization in the New Testament: patterns for Theology and Mission*, 18-19.


b. Definition of contextual theology

The term *context* is a compound of the Latin prefix *con* plus *textus*. Therefore, a linguistic meaning of context is “the parts of a text that precede and follow the text in question which are important for its understanding.”\(^{146}\) This linguistic meaning has expended to particular geographical, social, cultural, political and ecological circumstances. Sigurd Bergmann names the work of contextual theology as “ongoing incarnation” and asserts characteristics of contextual theology as follows:

…. it aims at a theological method. Contextual theology is an interpretation of Christian faith, which arises in the consciousness of its context. The interpretation of "God today" occurs in connection and in dialogue with people, phenomena and traditions in our age and the surrounding world. Contextual theology not only gathers the experiences that arise in specific situations. It also strives to actively change the context. In this way, theology becomes part of the process of cultural renewal.\(^{147}\)

In this regard, he defines contextual theology as “the interpretation of Christian faith which is conscious of the importance of the situation and connection for shaping the theology.”\(^{148}\) Contextual theologians will emphasize particular contexts rather than attend to ‘the universal.’ Stephen B. Bevans asserts that today’s theology must be a contextual theology,

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\(^{147}\) Sigurd Bergmann, *God in Context: A Survey of Contextual Theology*, 4. Moreover, he asserts, “the notion indicates a group of attempts, which in different circumstances use and develop this method. The common traits in these attempts can be listed as follows: the significance of the subject’s specific experiences, in particular experiences of suffering and deliverance, the criticism of the theology of eternity and the confusion between local and universal claims to validity, the striving for social and emancipating relevance, the renewal of theological ways of expression in close collaboration with local forms of culture, the assumption of the unity of the world and history caused by belief in the Creation and a positive estimation of cultural and biological multitude in the wholeness of Creation.”

and pluralism in theology and everyday Christian life must be positively encouraged and cultivated.\textsuperscript{149} Furthermore, he claims a necessity for contextual theology as follows,

As our cultural and historical context plays a part in the construction of the reality in which we live, so our context influences our understanding of God and the expression of our faith. The time is past when we can speak of one right, unchanging theology, a \textit{theologia perennis}. We can only speak about a theology that makes sense at a certain place and in a certain time\textsuperscript{150}

Thus, Bevans would argue against a universal theology. He defines contextual theology as a way of doing theology in which one takes into account: “the spirit and message of the gospel; the tradition of the Christian people; the culture in which one is theologizing; and social change in that culture.”\textsuperscript{151} While Bevans asserts four essential elements (gospel, tradition, culture and social change) in doing contextual theology, Schreiter understands that creating local theology requires “dynamic interaction” among gospel, church and culture,\textsuperscript{152} and contextual theology should “focus upon a sensitivity for and consciousness of the importance of the social and cultural connections.”\textsuperscript{153} Although how they express their approach to contextual theology is not exactly the same, their assertions are very similar. For the purposes of this thesis, I define contextual theology as a theological reflection on the life of a contemporary people in a particular context that includes aspects of tradition, history, culture, social change and church.

\textsuperscript{150} Ibid., 4.
\textsuperscript{151} Ibid., 3.
\textsuperscript{152} Robert J. Schreiter, \textit{Constructing Local Theologies}, 21.
\textsuperscript{153} Schreiter claims to distinguish local theology and contextual theology. For him, contextual theology is a broader term than the local theology of certain community. - Robert J. Schreiter, \textit{Constructing Local Theologies}, 1-38. His notion of contextual theology has developed in his book, \textit{The New Catholicity: Theology between the Global and the Local}. Schreiter offers two types of approaches to contextual theology: the integrated concepts of culture and the globalized concept of culture. According to Schreiter, general understanding of contextual theology is in category of “the integrated concepts of culture.” His “globalized concept of culture” is a new kind of intercultural theology. Both have strengths and weaknesses. Despite the potential of the intercultural approach, I will focus the current study on a general understanding of contextual theology which is based on the integrated concepts of culture. For more information see Robert J. Schreiter, \textit{The New Catholicity: Theology between the Global and the Local} (Maryknoll: NY, Orbis Books, 1997), 46-61.
c. Classification of Contextual Theology

So far, I have examined some essential frames for understanding contextual theology. In order to strengthen this understanding, I will look more particularly at the theory of Schreiter and Bevans. They are Roman Catholic theologians whose theory of contextual theology has been widely accepted by mainline and evangelical churches. Through this study about various types (models) of contextual theology which were classified by Schreiter and Bevans, I will acknowledge that there are diverse theological approaches to understanding different contexts. Furthermore, these diverse types of contextual theology will necessitate a variety contextual preaching which reflects different contexts including the contemporary Korean Protestant church.

1. Classifications by Robert J. Schreiter

In *Constructing Local Theologies*, Schreiter suggests three types or models for analyzing cultural context. He argues that these models reveal the relationship between a cultural context and theology, and the theology of a particular community. Schreiter asserts, “‘Model’ suggests not only a procedure for engaging in theological reflection, but also some specific interests or principles that help to guide the use of the procedure.”  

Schreiter’s first model is a translation model, which has been the most popular model throughout church history. This model is composed of two steps: eradication of the cultural elements from the gospel, and its translation into a new cultural context. Schreiter explains this model using the image of “kernel and husk.” In other words, if “the basic Christian revelation is the kernel; the previous cultural setting in which it has been incarnated constitute the husk. 

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The kernel has to be hulled time and again, as it were, to allow it to be translated into new cultural contexts.\footnote{155} As examples of the translation model, Schreiter offers the “De-Hellenization\footnote{156}” project of nineteenth century theologians; “liturgical renewal” after Vatican II; and the biblical teaching of the protestant church. The “dynamic-equivalence”\footnote{157} method of Bible translation is another notable example of the translation model.

Though it is an easily accessible model for mission and ministry, Schreiter points out two major weaknesses of the translation model. First, some may look only at superficial patterns of a given culture, overlooking deeper meanings and dynamic interactions within the culture. Second, this model premises that “biblical revelation, conciliar pronouncement, or magisterial statement occurs in some privileged, supra cultural sphere, which allows for immediate translation into any given culture.”\footnote{158} In reality, all information including that contained in the gospel is influenced by the culture, and interacts with the culture. Thus, Schreiter asserts that translation model requires a “more fundamental encounter” between the revelation of the Bible and the new culture.

The second model is the adaptation model, which tries to overcome the weaknesses of the translation model, as well as encouraging a “more fundamental encounter” with the culture. In practice, the adaptation model has three applications. The first type comes from collaboration between expatriates and local leaders. Together, they try to develop a worldview based on Western philosophy and theology which will lead to effective mission in the culture.

\footnote{155} Ibid., 7.
\footnote{156} This refers to an insistence that Greek categories be removed from the biblical revelation. Ibid., 7.
\footnote{157} “… Whereby biblical imagery is first translated into concepts, the equivalents of which are then sought in the local language. These concepts are then translated into imagery specific to the culture. For example, in cultures do not know sheep or shepherds, an attempt is made to discern the theological concepts might be conveyed in the new culture, albeit with different imagery.” – Ibid., 7.
\footnote{158} Ibid., 8.
The second type is comparable to the first type, except local leaders with knowledge of the Western world may suggest a new philosophy or theology that is a combination of Western and local worldviews. While the adaptation model “can quickly help to achieve the twin goals of some authenticity in the local culture and respectability in Western church circles,” its basic limitation is the emphasis on Western thought which has “difficulty explaining the role of local communities in theological process” and “often will try to force cultural data into foreign categories.” The third type of adaptation model does not use “philosophical models from the West” nor “reformation concepts about the early church.” Schreiter writes: “….the method is one of the planting the seed of faith and allowing it to interact with the native soil, leading to a new flowering of Christianity, faithful both to the local cultures and to the apostolic faith.” This approach values particular cultures and context, yet it may prove more difficult in practice.

The third model is a contextual model which concentrates “more directly on the cultural context in which Christianity takes root and receives expression.” Schreiter suggests two types of contextual models, “ethnographic approaches” which are concerned with cultural identity, and “liberation approaches” which are concerned with social justice issues including oppression and poverty. Ethnographic approaches in the contextual model have commonalities with the adaptation model, yet a key difference of the ethnographic approach is that “a local theology begins with the needs of a people in a concrete place, and from there moves to the

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159 Ibid., 10.
160 Ibid., 10.
161 Ibid., 11.
162 Ibid., 11.
163 Ibid., 12.
traditions of faith.” Schreiter argues that the ethnographic approach is the most suitable for dealing with problems of identity, although it has some weaknesses, including the danger that it will remain a conservative force and be excessively influenced by cultural romanticism. The liberation approach concerns the “dynamics of social change in human societies.” This approach has been widely used in Latin America, although it “can be found wherever Christians are experiencing political, economic, and social oppression.” In other words, oppressed people everywhere are in need of liberation. When this need interacts with God’s word, the oppressed are enabled to find strength in their faith. Schreiter identifies an essential shortcoming of this model: “Often they are better at hearing the cries of the people than at listening to the biblical witness or to the testimonies of other churches.” Despite this drawback, liberation approaches are “a major force” in contextual models. “Their ability to speak the language of Christian communities attests to their power and importance.”

2. Classification by Stephen B. Bevans

While Schreiter classifies three models of contextual theology, Bevans employs a more itemized classification in *Models of Contextual Theology*. Bevans argues that “models” are

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164 Ibid., 13.
165 Ibid., 14.
166 Ibid.
167 Ibid., 15. Minjung theology is an example of a liberation approach to contextual theologies. Schreiter’s view contributes to an understanding of Minjung theology.
168 Bevans suggested five models (Translation, Anthropological, Praxis, Synthetic, and Transcendental) in the first edition which was published in 1992. In the expanded edition published ten years later, he added another model (Countercultural). I will use the recent book for my research.
related to actual practice and ‘doing’ theology in a particular context. He warns that there is no superior model, and various models should be used in diverse contexts.¹⁶⁹

In agreement with Schreiter, Bevans lists the translation model as the first model of contextual theology. In comparison with Schreiter, Bevans is more focussed upon the issue of language translation in this model. Bevans suggests that the translation model presupposes that “essential message of Christianity is supracultural or supracontextual,” and the gospel is superior to any other culture and contexts. He explains the value of translation model:

If, for example, gospel values and cultural values come into conflict in the evangelization or contextualization process, there is no doubt that the content of the gospel message must be preserved, rather than the values and practices of the culture. Ultimately the gospel is the judge of all contexts, even though it seeks to work with and within all contexts.¹⁷⁰

This model is faithful to the gospel and church tradition, recognizing the “ambivalence of contextual reality,”¹⁷¹ and making easy access the first step for mission. However, Bevans warns against the exclusive use of the translation model. First, the model contains the logical fallacy that “every culture is roughly similar to every other culture and that what is important in one will be important in another.”¹⁷² In addition, he questions the view that the Christian message is supracultural and supracontextual, and also criticizes “implicit notion of revelation as propositional”¹⁷³ within the translation model. In other words, God’s revelation is not a one way message, or a request from God to the people. Rather, revelation reveals God’s presence in people’s actual lives and context.

¹⁶⁹ Bevans, Models of Contextual Theology, 33.
¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 41.
¹⁷¹ Ibid., 42.
¹⁷² Ibid., 43.
¹⁷³ Ibid., 44.
The second model analyzed by Bevans is the anthropological model. While the translation model focuses on Christian identity in cooperation with several contexts, the anthropological model primarily concerns the “establishment or preservation of cultural identity”\(^\text{174}\) by Christians. In other words, in order to effectively spread the gospel in a given context, the translation model is more motivated to conserve the original gospel than is the anthropological model. Bevans notes that the terms “indigenization,” “ethnographic” or “inculturation” share the nuance of the anthropological model. This model presupposes that human nature is basically good, and thus human culture and context is good and valuable. According to this view, God’s revelation exists in human culture: the “Bible is the product of socially and culturally conditioned religious experiences arising out of the very life of Israel and the early Christian community.”\(^\text{175}\) Interestingly, in emphasising the uniqueness of culture, this values the particular language of the context. Bevans argues, “…language is the entire way that a people or culture views the world, a “metalinguistic” analysis of language is very helpful in getting at the heart of a culture where God manifests God’s self.”\(^\text{176}\) The strength of this model is that it treats human reality seriously and provides new insight for Christianity. It begins its theological struggle “where people are, with people’s real questions and interest,”\(^\text{177}\)

\(^{174}\) Ibid., 54.

\(^{175}\) Ibid., 56.

\(^{176}\) Ibid., 58. This understanding provides a meaningful insight for contextual preaching. Language represents the unique life style and culture in a particular context. In developing contextual preaching within a particular culture, it is important to think carefully about the role of language.

\(^{177}\) Ibid., 60.
and where “the faith actually lives, and that is in the midst of people’s lives.”178 A major drawback of the model is that it “easily falls prey to a cultural romanticism.”179

Bevan’s third model is the praxis model. This model is somewhat similar to Schreiter’s contextual model, especially the liberation approach. Bevans compares his first three models of contextual theology as follows:

If the translation model focuses on Christian identity within a particular context and seeks to preserve continuity with the older and wider tradition, and if the anthropological model focuses on the identity of Christians within a particular context and seeks to develop their unique way of articulating faith, the praxis model of contextual theology focuses on the identity of Christians within a context particularly as that context is understood in terms of social change.180

In other words, the translation model emphasizes that the Christian gospel is supracontextual, while the anthropological model values the unique contexts of particular cultures. The praxis model is aimed at social justice for people who live in a particular context. This model presupposes that “the highest level of knowing is intelligent and responsible doing,”181 and values God’s revelation as it appears in history and social context beyond the limited text. Liberation theology, Black theology, feminist theology and Minjung theology are variations of the praxis model.182 Bevans has a more positive view of the praxis model than the translation and anthropological models, saying that it has “great strength” in “its method and its

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178 Ibid., 61.
179 He explains, “On the one hand, this romanticism is evidenced by what is often a lack of critical thinking about the particular culture in question….On the other hand, such cultural romanticism is blind to the fact that the idyllic picture of a culture that practitioners of the anthropological model paint does not really exist. The fact is….that accumulation, or the encounter of one culture with another, is happening all time, even despite efforts of some societies to seal a culture off.” - Ibid., 60.
180 Ibid., 70.
181 Ibid., 73.
182 Ibid., 77-78.
undergirding epistemology,” and provides an “alternate vision”183 for theology as well as challenging static theology. However, some scholars have criticized the model as having a close connection with Marxism.184

The synthetic model is located at the centre of Bevan’s models. This model pursues a strategic balance between “emphasis on the experience of the present (i.e., context: experience, culture, social location, social change) and the experience of the past (scripture, tradition).”185 In other words, rather than forcing a choice between A and B, the model is “both A and B.”186 Bevans argues that this model could also be named dialectical, dialogical, conversational, or analogical.187 According to the synthetic model, it is almost impossible to simplify human context and culture, instead emphasizing the diversity within and among contexts. To do contextual theology based on the synthetic model is “to emphasize both uniqueness and complementarity.”188 This model acknowledges the ambivalent and neutral nature of context, and values openness and dialogue. The synthetic model sees God’s revelation as culturally conditioned:

God’s revelation, therefore, is understood to be something that is historically circumscribed within the particular contexts in which the scripture came to be written, and so has a particularly contextually conditioned message. But it is also understood at the same time to be operative in one’s own context, calling men and women to perfect that context through cultural transformation and social change. Revelation is both something finished, once and for all, of a particular place-and something ongoing and present, operative in all cultures, and uncircumscribable in every way.189

183 Ibid., 77.
184 Ibid., 78.
185 Ibid., 88.
186 Ibid., 89.
187 Ibid., 90.
188 Ibid.
189 Ibid., 91.
In highlighting the strengths of the synthetic model, Bevans quotes Schreiter regarding the adaptation model, indicating that these two models share many insights about culture and context.\(^{190}\) Openness to all cultures and contexts including various churches, valuing ongoing process, and witnessing “to the true universality of Christian faith”\(^{191}\) are notable strengths of the synthetic model. Critics suggest, however, that this model is in danger of “selling out” and might seem “wishy-washy.”\(^{192}\)

The fifth model presented by Bevans is the transcendental model, which values individual experience. Bevans draws on Immanuel Kant to explore the transcendental method which interprets “intellectualism” through “modern subjectivity and historical consciousness.”\(^{193}\) This model assumes that people “begin to theologize contextually” by focusing on their own experiences as a subject, “not by focusing on the essence of the gospel message or the content of tradition as such, nor even by trying to thematize or analyze a particular context or expression of language in that context.”\(^{194}\) Individuals begin to question her/himself as a subject and expand the understanding to articulate the context of others. In other words, individual experience is a door to the experience of others. Individual experience “is conditioned by the radical communal nature of humanity.”\(^{195}\) People’s experiences reveal God’s revelation. According to the transcendental model, revelation is not content, but an

\(^{190}\) Ibid., 94. from Robert J. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 10.
\(^{191}\) Ibid.
\(^{192}\) Ibid., 94 - 95
\(^{193}\) Ibid., 103.
\(^{194}\) Ibid., 104.
\(^{195}\) Ibid., 109.
event; “it is something that happens when a person opens himself or herself to reality.”

This model resituated the role and position of individuals in doing theology, and focuses on theology as an activity. At the same time, it is too abstract and idealistic, and thus limited in its usefulness for actual practice.

The final model, which Bevans added in 2002, is the countercultural model. He argues this new model is “countercultural” rather than “anticultural,” yet it is a somewhat radical model. The countercultural model could also be called the encounter model, the engagement model, the prophetic model, the contrast model and the confessional model. It is highly concerned about “the radical ambiguity and insufficiency of human context.” In comparison to insufficient human context, revelation is “not essentially the disclosure of truths, but the ‘total fact’ of Christ.” In understanding God’s revelation, this model views narrative and the biblical story as clues for understanding entire contexts. Bevans gains insight from Newbigin:

It is a story that is a clue to the entire story of humankind: it does not know where that story will end, or how it will end but know where it is going. It is because the gospel story holds the clue to the future that it can be so involved with history, so concerned with what is authentically human, so “political.” Christianity is not only historical in that it is based on historical facts; it is an interpretation of history and committed to involvement in history.

Christian community is a place of concretization or incarnation between the gospel and human context. This model also emphasizes Christian practices as “ways to provide ‘meaning,
orientation, and purpose” within the community and within the surrounding world. Similar to the translation model, this model is deeply rooted in scripture and Christian tradition, and concerns the “deep ambiguity and even antigospel character of context,” especially the Western context. Bevans evaluates these points as strengths of the transcultural model, but also identifies weaknesses of this model including the danger that it will be anticultural, sectarian, monocultural and exclusive.

Thus far, I have explored Schreiter and Bevans’ classifications of contextual theology in order to access more deeply the varied possibilities of contextual theology. Schreiter’s three classifications and Bevans’ six classifications locate points of contact between present experience (context; personal or communal human experience, secular or religious culture, social location and social change) and past experience (scripture, tradition). If analyzed in more detail, it might be possible to further subdivide these classifications for practice. I argue that there is no superior model. Each model has strengths and drawbacks, and will work better in different situations. Bevans’ insight is helpful:

Though each model is distinct, each can be used in conjunction with others….In the same way, it is my contention that no one model can be used exclusively and an exclusive use will distort the theological enterprise. While every one of these models is in some sense a translation of a message, an adequate theology cannot be reduced to a mere application or adaptation of a changeless body of truth….There is no one completely adequate way of doing theology….no model is exhaustive or applicable to all situations of faith….One may choose a particular model in a particular context, but one must also be aware that other models may be equally valid in other contexts.

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203 Ibid., 123.
204 Ibid., 124.
205 Ibid., 125-127.
206 Ibid., 32-33.
I argue that Bevans’ synthetic model is especially applicable to Korean contextual preaching. According to Bevans, the synthetic model is “a middle-of-the-road model,” which is “at the center of the continuum, midway between emphasis on the experience of the present (i.e., context: experience, culture, social location, social change) and the experience of the past (scripture, tradition).” 207 In other words, the synthetic model pursues “both/and” rather than ‘either/or.’ 208 A model of Korean contextual preaching based on the synthetic model will value traditional narrative and the narratives of the Bible which are regarded as the experience of the past, as well as emphasizing the interpretation of the present contexts of Korea. Moreover, with regard to Korean traditional narratives and performances, a model of Korean contextual preaching interacts with several other methods of contextual preaching such as Pauline preaching, indigenized preaching, and the New Homiletic, in order to integrate meaningful insights for a model of preaching. Thus, a model of Korean contextual preaching holds on to the idea of “both/and” emerging from Bevans’ synthetic model.

Having provided a framework for understanding contextual theology, I will now turn more particularly to contextual preaching. The following discussion of contextual preaching will offer a basic framework for the development of Korean contextual preaching.

II. Contextual Preaching

In Chapter I, I identified the contextual features of Pauline preaching and the issue of food sacrificed to idols, in order to set up a framework for contextual preaching. At this point, I will review some definitions of contextual preaching and a brief history of contextual preaching.

207 Bevans, Models of Contextual Theology, 88.
208 Ibid., 89.
and then deal with two models of representative contextual preaching to bring useful insights towards a model of Korean contextual preaching. Liberation preaching and Black preaching are similar reactions to oppression and suffering realities, and also have value as highly developed indigenized preaching; therefore, this preaching can provide meaningful insights to build up a model of Korean contextual preaching.

a. Definition

As I indicated page 26, Tisdale defines contextual preaching as:

Preaching which not only gives serious attention to the interpretation of biblical texts, but which gives equally serious attention to the interpretation of congregation and their sociocultural contexts; preaching which not only aims toward greater “faithfulness” to the gospel of Jesus Christ, but which also aims toward greater “fittingness” (in content, form and style) for a particular congregational gathering of hearers. 209

While Tisdale’s definition limits the boundary of contextual preaching to a particular congregation and a particular preacher, John McClure offers a broader meaning of contextual preaching that goes beyond a particular congregation toward a larger social reality. McClure defines contextual preaching as “preaching that responds intentionally and dynamically to the social and cultural location within which the preacher prepares and preaches sermons.” 210 He describes features of contextual preachers:

209 Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, Preaching as Local Theology and Folk Art (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1997), 32-33. She situates the necessity of contextuality in preaching as follows: “1. Contextualization helps preacher remove ‘false stumbling blocks’ to the hearing of the gospel in their proclamation….2. Contextualization in proclamation reflects the “accommodating” way in which God has dealt with humanity in revelation….3. Contextualization can give new meaning to gospel proclamation and occasion a fresh hearing of it for a particular people.” – Ibid., 34-38.

210 John S. McClure, Preaching Words: 144 Key Terms in Homiletics (Louisville, Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 17. He also describes contextual hermeneutics: “In this approach the Bible contains an inner meaning, hidden from view, awaiting this particular situation so that it might be drawn out into plain view. This inner meaning might not be unique. It could have been discovered before, but it is always developing further implications and meanings as it is interpreted in different epochs and situations. For instance, the deeper meaning of the Bible regarding slavery did not come into plain view until modern civil rights movement came along and brought out latent meaning for Pauline phrases such as ‘no longer slaves.’ Hidden meanings for forgiveness in the Bible could
The contextual preacher never assumes that there is a common form of human experiences within which to proclaim the gospel. Rather, there are many socially influenced forms of human experience to take into consideration, each of which impinges on the process of sermon preparation and delivery. Sensitivity to context for preaching, engage in contextual forms of biblical hermeneutics, ...and prepare sermons that address directly issues that pertain to life in a particular social and cultural situation. 211

Homiletical understandings of ‘contextual preaching’ may vary according to definitions of ‘context.’ 212 For the purpose of this thesis I affirm that contextual preaching is based on theological interpretation applied to the actual lives of people. Thus, the starting point for preaching (though not necessarily the starting point of an individual sermon) should be the people and their lives. In addition, preaching should focus on how to deliver God’s word more effectively to people who live in a certain context. What then, is the meaning of Korean contextual preaching? Jung Young Lee asserts the meaning of Korean preaching as follows:

Korean preaching is not genuine unless it discloses the wholeness of being a Korean who embodies both witness to the incarnate Word and the heritage of Korean history and culture....We are product of our own history and culture: long years of humiliation and oppression by other nations, the emotional and physical scars caused by a civil war in the 1950s....In spite of painful history, we have rich cultural resources which have forged in us the endurance that distinguishes Koreans from all other nations....Korean preaching is distinctive not because Christ is different, but because Koreans are different. When Koreaanness is lacking in preaching, it is no longer Korean preaching. Thus,

not have been discovered until issues of domestic violence and apartheid came into view. The contextual interpreter reads the Bible by peering at it between the lines of today’s cultural and social texts, looking for ways in which the context for faith today becomes a catalyst for the discovery of new implications or trajectories of meaning.” – Ibid., 49-50.

211 Ibid., 17.

212 A similar term “preaching in context,” has a slightly different connotation. While contextual preaching focuses more on the current context including the congregation, and allows the congregation as a subject of interpretation, preaching in context tries to find a bridge between intended meaning by the authors of the Scripture and today’s context. In other words, preaching in context emphasizes the original meaning of the Bible. James A. Sanders situates contextual hermeneutics between the “adaptability” and “stability” of the canon, and defines biblical preaching in context as “re-presenting today the message of a biblical passage for the contemporary context, scoring as closely as possible for the modern hearer the point or points scored originally by the biblical authors and thinks in their time.” – James A. Sanders, God has a Story too: Sermons in Context (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 5.
authentic preaching, which is alive and real to Korean church, must include the heritage of Korean history and culture.213

Based on the observations of these three scholars, I wish to suggest a definition of Korean contextual preaching as preaching which effectively bridges the Word of God in the Bible, which was written several thousand years ago, and contemporary Koreans who live the post-modern world. A hermeneutical foundation of Korean contextual preaching must be based on the current Korean context, including its culture, history, tradition, social change and politics.

b. History of contextual preaching

The preaching of Jesus as told by the Gospel writers can be viewed as a model of contextual preaching that addressed the situation of ordinary people. His preaching is presented as an imaginative narrative that used metaphor to heighten people’s interest and to fit with the ordinary experiences of the hearers. As explored in section one, Paul preached contextually through his epistles to the early church. He used Old Testament narratives combined with the community’s common experience and insider languages to preach effectively to his congregations.

Explicit references to contextual preaching did not develop until the modern period. As this concept was developed different understandings emerged. The differences between Tisdale and McClure’s definitions of contextual preaching indicate possible directions, that is to say, it is possible to view contextual preaching according to two classifications: a narrow sense (micro view) and a broad sense (macro view). For convenience, I will call the narrow sense

“congregational contextual preaching,” and the broad sense “social contextual preaching.” As seen in Tisdale’s definition, there is a tendency to limit context to one’s own congregation. Allen understands that this trend was influenced by cultural anthropology, which he defines as follows:

Congregational studies is a discipline that seeks to help the pastor develop a “thick” description of the congregation; that is, one that describes not only the surface elements of a culture, but also the underlying (and often less obvious) ones. A thick description includes the full fabric of community dynamics-formal and informal thoughts, feeling, and behavior. Congregational studies emphasize that each congregation is a distinct culture and must be understood in its particularity.

Though Allen does not identify the relationship between “congregational studies” and contextual preaching, “congregational studies” has value for “congregational contextual preaching.” McClure claims that congregational study in preaching began in the 1980s and “has become an important practical theological discipline.”

Don. M. Wardlaw employs a congregational study approach. He begins by questioning the presuppositions of traditional linear type, two-dimensional preaching. He then suggests a new model of preaching which

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214 The term “congregational contextual preaching” came from a term “congregational study” in preaching developments.


217 “First, the model presumes that the sermon is fundamentally data about Scripture to be shared, truth as treasure buried in biblical soil waiting to be unearthed, delved into, and offered to the hearers. Second, the preacher most often stands apart from and above the people in the things of the Spirit. This frequently translate into a hierarchical, authoritarian stance in which the preacher….Third, ….sees the congregation as passive recipients of the message. Sometimes, this passivity takes the form of a corporate body unquestioningly accepting a denominational party-line from the pulpit.” Don M. Wardlaw, “Preaching as the Interface of Two Social Worlds: The Congregation
interfaces two social worlds: the world of the biblical text and the world of the congregation. He explains the value of this frame as follows:

 Where scriptural text, with its own social dynamics, interacts with preacher and people in social context at the preaching moment, then God speaks from that swirl as surely as Yahweh spoke to Job from that swirl as surely as Yahweh spoke to Job from the whirlwind. In this harmonious communion of two social worlds the Word of God speaks meaning to a people and even becomes the chemistry of change in that people.  

 Wardlaw highlights the importance of the congregation in the practice of preaching.

Tisdale develops congregational contextual preaching, and is indebted to Schreiter’s study. She proposes:

 Congregational Christian preaching is then, at its best, a highly contextual act of constructing and proclaiming theology within and on behalf of a local community of faith. It requires of the preacher interpretation of biblical texts, interpretation of contemporary contexts (including congregations and their subcultures), and the imaginative construction and communication of local theology that weds the two in a fitting and transformative way.

 While “congregational contextual preaching” focuses on the preacher’s own congregation, “social contextual preaching” expands the context of preaching beyond the congregation into other groups such as ethnic groups, or groups politically and socially oppressed. Social contextual preaching, then, can also be called “marginality preaching.” The social rights movement in the 1960s produced some preachers who reflected their social contexts such as Martin Luther King Jr. and William Sloane Coffin Jr. King’s civil rights preaching, and Coffin’s preaching for civil rights and against war, can be categorized as contextual preaching,
which in these cases has considerable overlap with prophetic preaching that addressed specific contexts.

Social contextual preaching has been followed by the development since the 1960's of other contextual theologies such as “Latin American liberation theologies, Feminist informed theologies, Black theologies, Body, sexual, queer and postcolonial theologies.” Each of these theologies has arisen from the lives of people who have experienced oppression. In this sense, these theologies are interconnected and may be collectively termed theologies of marginality. In the same vein, social contextual preaching shares a common value with these theologies, in terms of how it addresses the concerns and troubles of real people. In addition, the theological background of some contextual preachers is not a specific contextual theology, but several intertwined. Carol M. Noren describes this feature in *The Woman in the Pulpit*: “women’s sermons regularly manifest several features in exegetical method that concur with liberation and/or feminist hermeneutics as set forth by Justo and Catherine González and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza.” It is not always easy to categorize a particular contextual preacher according to a single contextual theology.

From the 1970s, social contextual preaching has been developed by preachers who were influenced by particular contextual theologies. Liberation preaching, introduced by González, has affected other perspectives such as feminist preaching and justice preaching.

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(African American) preaching has been one of the prominent examples of contextual preaching in the North America. In the diverse field of contextual preaching, liberation preaching and Black preaching are highly developed indigenized preaching methods which have deeply affected other methods of contextual preaching.

In other words, these two modes of contextual preaching can be regarded as older brother and sister to other contextual preaching. Furthermore, these representative types of contextual preaching started from a certain region’s oppressed context such as the context of South America (liberation preaching) and North America (Black preaching). My model of Korean contextual preaching aims specifically at Christian in Korea; therefore, reflections from certain regions’ realities of oppression can provide meaningful insights through confirming common characteristics of contextual preaching for peoples who have lived in other regions including Korea.

Therefore, the following sections will examine Black and liberation preaching to identify common features of contextual preaching. My exploration will focus on the liberation preaching of Justo L. González and Catherine G. González, and the Black Preaching of Henry Mitchell.

III. Liberation Preaching

a. Liberation Theology

Liberation Theology is a contextual theology first named so by Gustavo Gutierrez of Peru in 1971. After a 1968 bishops’ meeting in Medellin, Colombia, and following Vatican II, he sought a more effective pastoral strategy. Gutierrez’s book Teologia de la liberacion (A
Theology of Liberation) has been regarded as “the Magna Carta” of liberation theology.\textsuperscript{225} The introduction to the original edition reveals his purpose:

This book is an attempt at reflection, based on the gospel and the experiences of men and women committed to process of liberation in the oppressed and exploited land of Latin America. It is a theological reflection born of the experience of shared efforts to abolish the current unjust situation and to build a different society, freer and more human.\textsuperscript{226}

Gutierrez defines liberation theology as “a critical reflection on Christian praxis in light of the word of God.”\textsuperscript{227} Its starting point is “the service of this proclamation of the reign of love and justice”\textsuperscript{228} for the Latin American, and the theology reflects on the question, “What relation is there between salvation and the historical process of human liberation?”\textsuperscript{229} His theology also seeks to answer this question: “what is the proper role of theology and of the theologians in the attempt to be faithful both to the Christian gospel and to the poor of Latin America?"\textsuperscript{230} In its earliest phase, liberation theology “focused heavily on the relationship between faith and socioeconomic issues.”\textsuperscript{231} Throughout its history it has sought to provide “two new epistemological novelties” to the church: a new way of interpretation of the bible and context, and privileging in theological reflection “the perspective of the poor,”\textsuperscript{232} His work has provided

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{225} Deane William Ferm, Third World Liberation Theologies: An Introductory Survey (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1986), 16.
\item \textsuperscript{227} Ibid., xxix.
\item \textsuperscript{228} Ibid., xxxvii.
\item \textsuperscript{229} Ibid., 29.
\item \textsuperscript{230} Deane William Ferm, Ibid., 17.
\end{itemize}
abundant insights for other contextual theologies, effectively working as a cornerstone for the development of contextual theologies such as Black theology and feminist theology. Despite rapid social and context changes, liberation theology is still at work, although perhaps less powerfully than in the past.

b. Definition of Liberation Preaching

While liberation preaching is a contextual form of preaching mainly influenced by Latin American liberation theology, it also has broadened to include a set of diverse contextual theologies. Justo L. González writes:

…the name of ‘liberation preaching’ is usually reserved for preaching informed by the various theologies of liberation that have evolved in recent decades. This includes Latin American liberation theology, black theology, feminist theology, Hispanic-American theology and other theologies developed from the perspectives of the nonindustrialized nations or of ethnic and cultural minorities in the so-called developed world.234

Pablo A. Jimenez has a more limited view of liberation preaching than González.235 He writes, “Although today authors related to different minority communities employ the principles of liberation criticism, the method originally emerged in Latin America.”236 O.C. Edwards Jr. identifies liberation preaching with “social protest preaching,” preaching that was “more in touch

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235 Jimenez does not address “Liberation Preaching,” but his explanation of liberation criticism is useful, especially since liberation preaching is not a methodology, but a hermeneutic focused on liberation for the oppressed.

with the attitude of those oppressed by society and was more likely to assume that social and economic systems needed to be replaced rather than improved.”

In spite of these differences, the basic frame for liberation preaching was liberation theology, and it subsequently interacted with other contextual theologies such as Black theology and feminist theology because of shared common values such as justice for the “underprivileged.” Liberation preaching does not so much suggest a preaching methodology as provides a form of biblical interpretation for preaching that takes seriously issues of justice and the needs oppressed people. McClure employs the term “hermeneutic of suspicion,” which he summarizes as follows:

Justo González and Catherine González demonstrate how an assessment of the current situation and experience of injustice lead the interpreter to be suspicious of traditional interpretations, wondering if they harbor subtexts of oppression or domination. From there, the preacher critiques the current situation, theology, and interpretations of the Bible. Then the preacher decides on a new way of interpreting and experiencing the text, theology, and current situation.

c. Liberation Preaching and a “Hermeneutic of suspicion”

One of the essential foundations of liberation hermeneutics for preaching is an analogy between the biblical narrative and the present situation of oppressed persons. Justo and Catherine González explain,

If the major portion of the Bible records the perspective of those who, in their own social situation, are the powerless and oppressed, if it is their perspective on the activity of God that is given us by Scripture, then surely a more accurate interpretation of the biblical

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237 O.C. Edward Jr, A History of Preaching, 741
238 Ibid.,
239 John S. McClure, Preaching Words: 144 Key Terms in Homiletics, 50
240 This section is based on Justo and Catherine González’s more recent work; The Liberation Pulpit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), which was a thorough revision of Liberation Preaching: The Pulpit and The Oppressed published in 1980.
word can be gained by those who currently stand in a parallel place in our own societies
than by those who are powerful.”241

Liberation preaching regards the Bible as a record of God’s salvation and liberating
activity for oppressed and powerless people. Above all, the Bible occupies the core of preaching,
and biblical narratives are an essential connection point between God’s liberation and the actual
lives of the powerless and the oppressed. The Gonzalezes summarize the importance of biblical
narrative in the following way:

The Bible is first of all a historical narrative (or a series of interrelated narratives) that
provides the inspiration and the direction for present-day commitment to liberation. This
is often related to a typological interpretation in which creation, the exodus, the exile,
the incarnation, and Pentecost play a central role.”242 They acknowledge the insufficiency of current interpretations of preaching, and name
those doing these insufficient interpretations as “the neglected interpreters.”243 They situate
problems of “excessive emphasis on private Bible study,”244 which results in a “Lone-Ranger”
phenomenon, which“....rather than attempting to put us under the scrutiny and the mercy of the
Word of the God, uses the biblical text as a pretext, as a jumping off point from which to go far
afield.”245 The “obvious shortcoming” of this kind of preaching is of “ultimate” ignorance or
circumvention to “the authority of Scripture”.246 The Gonzalez’s claim that this is common
among white-male preachers in North America, and they assert that in order to overcome the

242 Justo L. González, Catherine Gunasalu González “Liberation preaching” William H. Willimon and
243 Justo L. González and Catherine Gunasalu González, The Liberation Pulpit, 47.
244 Ibid., 47-49.
245 Justo L. González and Catherine Gunasalu González, The Liberation Pulpit, 49.
246 Ibid.
“Lone-Ranger” syndrome, the preacher must understand “the pain and struggle of the hermeneutic circle.”

Preachers who see to develop this understanding can gain insight from diverse resources including Christian tradition and contemporary sources. They argue that the Word of God has to relevant today’s context, there is something “that must be recovered” in Christian tradition like the pearl in the mud. They claim:

It may well be that a rereading of documents from the Christian past, particularly those produced by people who were persecuted, maligned, or otherwise opposed by the powerful, will yield fresh insights into the meaning of Scripture when read, so to speak, “from below.” We need to remember that early monasticism was a protest against the way the church changed once it became dominated by the concerns of the powerful. Therefore, theology written by those who have taken vows of voluntary poverty often reflect the view of the poor….Their writings can be very rewarding.

There are valuable contemporary resources, including “living dialogue partners” that will assist preachers to “avoid the Lone-Ranger syndrome.” Preachers might, for example, study lectionary texts with “neighboring ministers.” The Gonzálezes emphasize how important it is to understand interpretations of other minority groups in society, including Third world. Such understanding does not simply mean knowing about the life context of others, but instead means to step into others’ lives “in the struggle against injustice.”

Their works provide important hermeneutical practices for preachers. First, preachers must start from a political question and read the political situation of the preacher and the

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247 Ibid., 51. The hermeneutic circle means diverse oppressed group of people. They claim, “He cannot live out of another’s experience of oppression. He must discover how the system that oppresses the African American, the Hispanic, the native American, and the woman, also oppresses him.” Ibid.

248 Ibid., 52.

249 Ibid., 57.

250 Justo L. González and Catherine Gunsalus González, The Liberation Pulpit, 57.

251 Ibid., 65.
Beyond thinking about the political context of the Scripture, liberation preachers are thinking about the politics of the sermon itself. “Preaching is itself a political act in which there are relations of power and dependence,” therefore, liberation preaching especially values the “setting” of the actual sermon. Language remains a problem, since “most languages reflect the culture which gave them shape; and, since such cultures are often sexist, language also tend to be sexist.” Most liberation preachers understand that there are various dynamics with different groups depending on social status, ethnic, gender among other factors. To respond to these dynamics, liberation preachers should choose language that suits the congregation.

Justo and Catherine González offer the following example:

Since women are the clearest example of the traditionally powerless who are present in most of our congregations, the issue of gender-specific language cannot be avoided. Gender problems arise in most languages, but English has its own peculiarities…Suffice it to say that the male pastor who does use inclusive language, who does acknowledge the validity of the issue, has taken a political stand that will be noticed and supported by those in the congregation who are struggling with the need for new roles for women….The content of what is said will be interpreted partly by the context provided by the choice of language. That is to say, a male pastor who thinks he is quite liberating in his preaching but whose language remains unreconstructed will find that a certain skepticism greets his statement, whereas a pastor who does use careful language will be given the benefit of the doubt by those women who feel oppressed, even when some of his statements could otherwise be misinterpreted.

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252 Ibid., 67. Though most Latin American theologians concern about political, social and economic contexts, González emphasize the political situation only in this stage.


254 Justo L. González and Catherine Gunsalus González, The Liberation Pulpit, 58.

255 This emphasis on language is one of the common features of most contextual preaching, including liberation preaching.

256 Justo L. González and Catherine Gunsalus González, The Liberation Pulpit, 70-71.
Second, liberation preachers need to “include the wider context”\textsuperscript{257} in order to interpret the text in a way that addresses “the (spiritual and material) needs of those who are physically present in the congregation.”\textsuperscript{258} In other words, in sermon preparation, the liberation preacher must ask the question: “How would his biblical text be heard and applied authentically by someone in a radically different political and social setting.”\textsuperscript{259}

Third, the liberation preachers have to “consider the politics of the text.”\textsuperscript{260} According to their explanation, “political” refers to “the interplay of power, the question of who is expected to have authority over whom, or of who is an ‘insider’ and who is not,” and “the manner in which God intervenes in such relations, and how God responds to the power or powerlessness”\textsuperscript{261} of diverse people. In liberation preaching, it is very important to examine the political context of scriptural events and characters, as these help the contemporary listener to understand God’s plan for humanity.

Fourth, the liberation preacher should “reassign the cast of characters”\textsuperscript{262} in narratives of the Bible and the parables of Jesus. Often, this reassignment of characters can lead the preacher to see the narrative and parable in new ways. However, when reassigning the cast of character, the preacher should avoid “allegorizing,” because allegorizing is a poor interpretation of scripture and cannot address “the concrete, political setting of the text and of its hearers.”\textsuperscript{263}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{257} Ibid., 71.
\textsuperscript{258} Ibid., 74.
\textsuperscript{259} Ibid., 72.
\textsuperscript{260} Ibid., 75.
\textsuperscript{261} Justo L. González and Catherine Gunsalus González, \textit{The Liberation Pulpit}, 75.
\textsuperscript{262} Ibid., 81.
\textsuperscript{263} Ibid., 84.
\end{flushleft}
Fifth, in order to gain new insights about the core meaning of the text, liberation preachers need to “imagine a different socio-political setting” for the text. For example, it is possible to have various interpretations of Psalm 23 in different settings depending on whether that setting is a funeral, an underground church in Nazi Germany or a group of Christians in a slum in the Dominican Republic. Through this exercise, liberation preachers can imagine different settings of powerless and oppressed contexts, which can enable them to hear God’s voice in a new way.

Sixth, liberation preachers should “consider the direction of the action” of the original text. There is a danger in employing simple and unchangeable interpretations for all contexts. Oversimplification of Scripture can fail to interpret scripture and the present context in ways that honour both. To avoid this risk, Justo and Catherine González claim that preachers should, “…. inquire after the direction of the action in its original setting and then seek to act, and to invite others to act, in the same direction.”

Seventh, for varied insights, preacher should “avoid avoidance!” This means that preachers should to avoid a tendency to select only preferred or understandable portions of the Scripture depending on his/her taste. Looking at generally ignored portions of the Scripture with a liberation perspective can lead to deeper understanding of the meaning of the text and may give abundant insight to liberate people from oppressed reality.

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264 Ibid., 85.
265 Justo L. González and Catherine Gunsalus González, The Liberation Pulpit, 87.
266 Ibid., 92.
267 Ibid.
In addition to these practical hermeneutic strategies, the González’s emphasize the value of liturgy. Preaching is not the event itself, but “midwife” of an event. In other words, liberation preaching should synergize with a well-formed liturgy. They claim:

The sermon points to the current historical setting in which the congregation lives its daily life and in which this liturgy is set, with its pain and injustice; with its yearnings and hopes. It points to the ancient word in which God spoke to the People of God in their historical setting. The sermon shows the parallels and the differences, preparing the Word to become present. The liturgy is the vehicle for this presence: in the recognition of our baptism, in the celebration of the Eucharist, in the seasons of the year, in the prayers of the people, or by other aspect of worship. The sermon is not an end in itself, nor is its effect necessarily directly upon the worshippers. Its power and fruitfulness may only be seen in the whole event of the gathering for worship.\(^{268}\)

Through this examination of the liberation preaching of Justo and Catherine González, I have sought to demonstrate the way in which liberation preaching provides useful insights into the common features of contextual preaching. These insights provide a helpful framework from which to consider Korean contextual preaching.

In addition to liberation theology there are other theologies that could be presented here. Due to space constraints, only one will be explored, Black preaching. It provides an important variation on liberation contextual preaching that is insightful for the development of Korean contextual preaching. Most contextual preaching including Black preaching falls into the category of liberation preaching. Moreover, African Americans, who are the main subjects of Black preaching have experienced a history of oppression that is similar to the Korean people. Therefore, the reactions of African Americans to an oppressed reality and context share some common elements and values. Thus, reflecting on Black preaching is perhaps more essential for a Korean contextual preaching than other models of contextual preaching.

\(^{268}\) Justo L. González and Catherine Gunsalus González, *The Liberation Pulpit*, 119.
IV. Black Preaching

a. Black Theology

Black theology in North America is a contextual theology which looks for biblical resources to address the historical oppression and suffering of people of African origin. More generally it has been “the attempt by oppressed Black people to utilize a contextualized re-interpretation of Christianity in order to make sense of their dialectical, existential struggle.” Therefore, Black Theology may exist wherever African people in diaspora are present. This has resulted in various types of Black Theology in which African-American theology is one distinct development.

African-American theology emerged in late 1960s, influenced by the civil rights movement and Black Power movements, paralleling the development of Liberation

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269 Anthony G Reddie asserts that in order to understand Black theology, it is necessary to understand the true meaning of the term “Black.” “The term ‘Black’ not only refers in socio-cultural terms to people of African descent, whose ancestry includes the tumultuous historic-geo-politico breach of the slave trade, but it also refers to all persons who might be described as ‘minority ethnic’ people within the wider frame of Western Christendom. The term ‘Black’, in Black theological discourse, represent God’s symbolic and actual solidarity with oppressed people, the majority of whom have been consigned to the marginal spaces of the world solely on the grounds of their very Blackness.” - Anthony G. Reddie, Black Theology, Slavery and Contemporary Christianity (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2010), 7.

270 Anthony G. Reddie, Ibid., 5.

271 Caribbean Black Theology, South-African Black Theology, European Black Theology and African theology.

272 Dwight N. Hopkins emphasizes that Black Theology was initiated not by theologians in seminary, but church and society. He explains, “Contemporary black theology commended with a July 31, 1966, published in the New York Times of a favorable theological assessment of the Black Power slogan. (The slogan was issued form Greenwood, Mississippi, to the nation and the world on June 16, 1966.) African American pastors and church administrators published the July reflection document. Black theology, therefore, is one of the few contemporary global theologies that arose from the churches and people’s movements in the streets outside of the academy.” - Dwight N. Hopkins, Bing Human: Race, Culture, and Religion (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2005), 9.

273 The movement was triggered by a racial incident on a city bus involving a black female worker, Rosa Park, on Dec 1, 1955 in Montgomery Alabama. The Black society treated this incident seriously. Under the leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King the black community of Alabama boycotted the bus company to protest unfair segregation. According to Dwight N. Hopkins, “Black theology arose from black pastors who had participated in King’s Civil Rights movement. These ministers were veterans of civil rights resistance in the South and desegregation activities of the North.” - Dwight N. Hopkins, Black Theology: USA and South Africa: Politics, Culture, and Liberation (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1990), 9.
Theology. Thus, Black Theology “soon adopted the terminology of liberation.”

In 1969, James H. Cone, one of the original advocates of this theology, argued as follows:

Black Theology must take seriously the reality of black people—their life of suffering and humiliation. This must be the point of departure of all God-talk which seeks to be black-talk….Though the Christian doctrine of God must logically precede the doctrine of man, Black theology know that black people can view God only through black eyes that behold brutalities of white racism.

The task of Black Theology is “to analyze the black man’s condition in the light of God’s revelation in Jesus Christ with the purpose of creating a new understanding of black dignity among black people, and providing the necessary soul in that people, to destroy white racism.”

Black Theology began as a reaction against white racism and universalist theology which represented only white-European’s perspectives. Building on Cone’s understanding, Black theologian J. Deotis Roberts declared in 1971: “liberation and reconciliation are the two main poles of Black Theology.”

His book argues for a balance between liberation for Blacks,
and reconciliation between black and white in the United States. In other words, the first stage of Black theology in the U.S. pursued liberation alongside reconciliation with the white population. This confirms that Black theology accepted various individual perspectives and theological positions.

In summary, Black Theology is a contextual theology that rejects racism and white-dominated European theology in order to achieve liberation from injustice and oppression for people of African descent. In other words, the Black theology is a theology which seeks equality in society, in the church, and in Christian theology.

b. Black Preaching

It is difficult to simply define Black preaching, since “the term ‘Black preaching’ describes a rich and varied tradition, covering a broad configuration of motivations, theological points of view, art forms, structures, and styles of delivery.” The current discussion will be limited to Black preaching in North America, which emerged directly from Black Theology, also known as African American preaching in the United States. To be more specific, as Olin P. Moyd asserts, Black preaching is strongly influenced by Black Theology in practice. This form of preaching seeks to provide a point of contact between the oppressed, powerless and marginalized context of African Americans, and the revelation of Scripture. According to Larue’s analysis, Black Preaching has unique characteristics such as strong biblical content, a

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280 Olin P. Moyd asserts, “To the African American community, preaching and theology have been opposite sides of the same coin...Theology is like a mother guiding her child in a swimming pool to keep the child....Preaching’s role in theology is similar to that of a father....Preaching has been the primary vehicle of theology in the African American churches.” – Olin P. Moyd, *The Sacred Art: Preaching & Theology in the African American Tradition* (Valley Forge:Judson Press, 1995), 9.
creative use of language, an appeal to emotions and ministerial authority. Later, he subdivides these features into ten “fundamental features” of Black Preaching. These include the imitation of the masters, the hermeneutic of an all-powerful God, the importance of wrestling with the text, a sense of divine encounter, the significance of the waiting congregation, an astute awareness of the culture, the importance of a manuscript, a fitting close, the sermon as continuous creation, and the power of living voice. While Larue concentrates on broad and general features, Henry M. Mitchell summarizes the more phenomenological features of Black preaching as follows:

First among black preaching characteristics is intonation, or “whooping,” commonly considered the most stereotypical elements of black preaching…. In fact, a second and universal characteristic of African-American preaching is not whooping, but spontaneity-the ability to respond to the movement of the Spirit among preacher and congregation and to express deep feeling without shame…. A third characteristic of African-American preaching is its basic structure: imaginative, narrative, and prone to generate encounter.

How have these characteristics permeated Black preaching? Above all, these features have developed through the history and traditions of suffering, oppressed, powerless, and underprivileged people. Therefore, Black preaching is a reflection of wounded reality, an

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284 LaRue confirms the source of distinctiveness of Black preaching: “Many people-preachers, homiletics, and lay folk-praise black preaching. They admire its vitality, relevance, and communicational effectiveness. But what is it about African American preaching that makes it so distinctive and worthy of regard? Some have pointed to the high place of scripture in the African American tradition, others to the black preacher’s creative use of language and storytelling, and still others to the free play of emotion and celebration in the preaching event or to communication techniques such as call-and-response. However, none of these traits is the exclusive property of black preachers. All of them can be found to some degree outside the African American preaching tradition, and none of them fully accounts for the extraordinary character of black preaching. They are important qualities, to be sure, but the reason for the distinctive power of black preaching lies deeper, resting finally in the soul of black Christian experience, that is, in the way that African Americans have come, in the refining fires of history, to understand the character of God and the ways God works through scripture and sermon in their lives today.” - Cleophus J. LaRue, *The Heart of Black Preaching*, 1.
expression of inner sorrow and anger, a healing power to sustain life, and a source of hope for a better future. However, Black preaching can be applicable to other contexts, including a Korean model of contextual preaching.

Though there are several influential homileticians in the development of Black preaching, the work of Henry H. Mitchell has provided important foundational insights for Black preaching. His core insights about Black preaching are helpful for building a model of Korean contextual preaching.

c. Theory of Henry H. Mitchell about Black Preaching

Black preaching has an almost three hundred years history, yet it was not systematized until Henry H. Mitchell’s monumental work, *Black Preaching*. Mitchell claims, “The dullness of most mainline preaching is due to its being conceived of as argument rather than art – as syllogism rather than symbol.” He urges preachers to be inspired artists, to concentrate on “the most profound themes of the gospel,” employing active “narrative, picture, and poetry” in their sermons. In his own work Mitchell has integrated the spiritual and homiletical heritages of the African American people into the stream of the New Homiletic. L. Susan Bond evaluates Mitchell as “the first African American homiletician to formulate explicitly Afrocentric

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287 Ibid.

288 Though Henry H. Mitchell has been regarded as a homiletician in the tradition of the New Homiletic, I treat his theory separately from the New Homiletic. I perceive that Mitchell first systematized Black preaching, and his treatment of Black preaching as a racial contextual preaching is of primary concern here, rather than his contribution to the New Homiletic.
interpretations and norms for preaching."\(^{289}\) As a matter of fact, his work is not just a systematic compilation of Black Preaching, but also a fresh way to preach from the unique spirit of African American people that provides possibilities for all preaching including white, middle class North American and Korean preaching. Therefore, none can deny this remarkable contribution in offering the gift of Black preaching to the field of homiletics. In order to gain meaningful insights from Mitchell’s theory of Black preaching for Korean contextual preaching, I will concentrate on those features that are most relevant to contextual preaching, rather than exploring his entire theory.

Preaching aims to offer an “experience” of the Word of God. The experience can plant “the Word deep in human consciousness.”\(^{290}\) Thus, Mitchell declares, “The goal of Black preaching is to recreate a meaningful experience which communicates transconsciously, nourishing the whole human being.”\(^{291}\) The experience takes place “in the Spirit and with the Word.”\(^{292}\) In this sense, he defines the meaning of preaching as follows:

To preach is so to be used by the Holy Spirit that the gospel is communicated, to the end that hearers are saved and then helped to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord. It is the hope of every preacher that every sermon will be used by the Spirit to move Christians to grow from point A to point B, in the direction of the life modeled by Jesus Christ. And every sermon should focus on one such behavioral goal as stated or implied by the biblical text.\(^{293}\)

Thus, for Mitchell, the notion of the “experience” is not just a private feeling or emotion within preaching, but also an “encounter” among the hearer, the Spirit and the Word of God. His
emphasis is on the Bible as the Word of God. Indeed, most Black preachers have regarded the Bible as a “backbone” of their preaching, viewing the Bible as full of God’s wisdom to liberate people from their oppressed reality. Therefore, the Bible is a core element to lead the congregation to the “experience” and also a partner of the experience through the work of the Holy Spirit between the hearer and the Word of God.

To enable “experience” in preaching, Mitchell emphasizes the preacher’s role in providing “images” to the congregation. He reminds us:

Human experience is not recalled in words and sentences in print; memory is in images or pictures. Although a story or account may come to us in words, the image formed in our recall of the story will be in “color TV,” so to speak. If a preacher wishes to be used of the Spirit to lead hearers into an experience of the Word, that preacher must provide clear word pictures or images for that experience.  

He understands that experience should take place with “celebration.” In other words, Mitchell views “celebration” as a visible expression of the “experience” from the hearer’s responses in an encounter with the Word of God in the Holy Spirit. Thus, “celebration” is one of the most important concepts and a core aspect of Black preaching. For Mitchell, the act of preaching itself should be an experience of celebration, and this celebration needs to be clear to all participants in the sermon: both preacher and hearer. McClure defines celebration as “a peak moment of emotional, cognitive, and spiritual release occurring during the sermons.” This celebration might be interpreted through “the experience of liberation,” from every sort of oppression such as social, economic, racial situations. For Mitchell, “The best of gospel preaching is at once proclamation and celebration.” He declares that “Preaching without celebration is a de facto denial of the good news, in any culture.” Mitchell further emphasizes

295 McClure, Preaching Words, 12.
the importance of celebration in preaching: “Preaching with celebration greatly enhances the transconscious retention and the true understanding and application of the gospel.”

He indicates five functions of the celebration in preaching:

The first …in preaching is reinforcement for retention and availability…. A second…is its fulfillment and affirmation of personhood and identity by means of free expression, which is accepted in the religiocultural context…. The vast crowd also illustrates a third function of celebration, that of drawing people into community… A fourth…is that of defining a habitable “living space”-the establishment of a celebrative island of consciousness in an ocean of oppression and deprivation….The final role of celebration is that fitting climax to a balanced proclamation which already included exegesis, exposition, explanation, application, and deeply meaningful illustration.

Celebration in Black preaching is a dynamic expression of self-esteem and unique personhood, an expression of joy, whooping, from the inner mind that might provide the power to forget their painful and sorrowing reality. Therefore, celebration helps and encourages (underprivileged) people to overcome their suffering and wounded minds through the light of the Word of the God. Interestingly, celebration aims to produce a communal response, beyond private boundaries. Celebration with others in a congregation provides an opportunity to have the “same goodness” from God, and then experience an emotional connectedness to all recipients of the same goodness. In other words, celebration “binds the ritual congregation into a warm and emotionally permissive symbolic community.”

Preachers should have ability to lead the congregation to celebration. This celebration does not come from one’s emotion, but from the dynamic of the Holy Spirit, which is an essential foundation for celebration: “the preacher does not “use” emotion; holy emotion uses the preacher. She or he is used by the Holy Spirit to achieve the transformation of the hearer in the

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297 Ibid.,56-58.
298 Ibid., 57.
direction of the text and the behavioral purpose of the sermon.299 In the framework of a sermon, he particularly emphasizes celebration at the end of the sermon. According to Mitchell, practically, when celebration occurs at the end of the sermon it prevents listeners from forgetting the core message of the sermon:

….the celebration at the end of the sermon serves as ecstatic reinforcement, the last blow of hammer to drive in the nail. …The celebration has been called the “gravy,” and dismissed as manipulation….Celebration is gladness about the text, and people remember what they get glad about. This is focused, intentional, and productive emotion. Without it, the sermon may be easily forgotten, and ignored as an influence on behavior. With a celebration, as opposed to a paste-on conclusion, the experience becomes etched in the heart and mind, and impossible to forget.300

Celebration is “the best way” to effect communication among the text, the preacher, and the congregation under the work of the Holy Spirit. “The Black climax, at its best, is a kind of celebration of the goodness of God and the standing of Black people in his Kingdom….“301 In summary, celebration is “the best way for preachers to be used of the Holy Spirit, to motivate hearers to grown in grace and do the will of God, is to help them celebrate-to rejoice and be glad about the Word with which they have been led to identify.”302

Along with this emphasis on experience and celebration in preaching, Mitchell focuses on the power of biblical narratives and stories from actual lives of people, even the slave history of African American ancestors.303 Traditionally, Black preaching is narrative preaching which

300 Ibid. In this paper, Mitchell asserts that abundant heritages of Black preaching can help “faltering” US mainline churches for their “survival and revival”.
301 Henry H. Mitchell, Black Preaching, 188.
303 “Slave narratives by the dozens recall sermon stories and pictures with astounding accuracy. It is clear that these sermons were so meaningful because the storytelling and picture painting arts were excellent, because the issue at hand was so relevant, and because the hearers were not mere spectators, but were real participants in the experience. There can be no doubt of the providential blessing of the Holy Spirit through this story.” – Henry H. Mitchell, Black Preaching: The Recovery of a Powerful Art, 34.
“draws upon the stories of Scripture and insists that the preacher both know and tell the story.”

James H. Love indicates: “In black churches, the one who preaches the Word is primarily a storyteller.”

Mitchell confirms: “all that has been said about the Black Bible involves or implies storytelling.” According to Mitchell, “The Black pulpit is at its best when the gospel is communicated in the form of a folk story. That is to say, there is no better vehicle for the unforgettable portrayal of a powerful truth than an engaging tale; and Black tradition has excelled in this art form.”

In addition, the narratives of the Bible have been integrated and internalized by the preacher through the unique historical and cultural frames of African Americans. Therefore the Black preacher can “interpret the gospel in terms that are readily grasped and easily identified with and appropriated” by its distinctive hermeneutic, so that the hearer will receive the narratives of “the Bible as my story.” The use and purpose of narrative in preaching is not “for the sake of mere entertainment.” Instead, narrative is one of the essential vehicles for experience in preaching.

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309 There are slightly different understandings of “narrative” among homiletics. James H. Harries summarizes it well: “When the word narrative is used within the discipline of homiletics, it is important to carefully discern the manner in which the word is applied to the actual process of preaching….For many preachers, it is the narrative or literary form of the biblical text which should guide the preacher in developing the sermon. But other ways are used to incorporate aspects of narrative into the preacher’s use of biblical narrative into the preacher’s use of biblical materials. For example, Richard Thulin invites the homiletician to retell biblical narratives, Henry Mitchell and James Sanders implore the preacher to identify creatively with characters in biblical narratives, and Charles Rice asks the preacher to discover the manner in which the contemporary human story can be imaginatively discovered in the metaphors and images of the biblical story.” – James Henry Harris, *The Word made Plan: The Power and Promise of Preaching* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 113.


effective tool to lead people to experiential encounter with Word of God and natural celebration in or after encounter, and the celebration should aim “beyond the teller to the source of the message - to God’s will for the worshiper.” For Mitchell, preaching should be “folk culture” based on one’s own culture and “meaningful personal experience.” For preaching to be folk culture and incorporate meaningful personal experience, the role of biblical and personal narratives are essential. It is not only the combination of unique historical narratives including painful stories of conquer, death, poverty and slavery, but also the methods of African American story telling such as lamentation of sorrow that contribute to effective Black preaching. To be a good Black preacher one must effectively integrate both Bible story and one’s own narrative, and to deliver their insights from this integration using the vehicle of traditional telling methods.

Mitchell describes the encounter between African American’s oral tradition and the Bible as follows:

…..we preach Christ, and the message requires far more tapes from the Bible than from any other source or sources combined. It is vitally important, therefore, that the artistically transconscious preacher learn the art of telling a Bible story meaningfully. No single art is nearly so important as this….The greatest single element in the genius of Black preaching has been the application of the African oral traditional methods to the biblical oral tradition…. comprehensive information must be fused with inspired imagination. Then the narrative becomes so much one’s own that it can be shared on a deep-undo-deep basis.

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312 Both Black preaching and the New Homiletic emphasize the value of narrative in preaching, yet they have slightly different perspectives on narrative. I will discuss this matter in chapter 3.


314 “Black preaching style is a product in large part of a confluence of cultures beginning with African roots, because the everyday culture of the masses of Blackamericans is intimately involved and extremely important in their preaching tradition. Their sermons have been in the folk-cultural mode, and they have had great impact and given great support and guidance in both communal and individual life.” - Henry H. Mitchell, The Recovery of Preaching, 11.


316 Ibid., 35.
In summary, the encounter between abundant traditional African American narrative and the narrative of the Bible will enrich the insights from the pulpit for congregation.

Mitchell also focuses the use of its own language: “Black English.” L. Susan Bond evaluates Mitchell’s insistence about “use of common language and ordinary vernacular” as one of his “most significant contribution” to Black Preaching theory.³¹⁷ It is obvious that the appropriate use of the common language of a particular group can increase the sense of kinship between the preacher and the hearer. Thus, this use of a unique language is one of the core elements of contextual preaching, at least according to Black preaching theory. Mitchell asserts, “Black preaching requires the use of Black language-the rich rendition of English spoken in the Black ghetto.”³¹⁸ He points out that there are several English variants depending on region, history, social class and ethnic, yet only “the North-Midland White” English is recognized as “Standard” American English.³¹⁹ In response to this reality, Mitchell declares that “no language is improper among its users, since it alone is most capable of the task for which all language exists: communication.”³²⁰ From this point of view, he suggests the need to use familiar inner language as much as possible, employing Black intonation and accent for an African American congregation. He claims three advantages of using Black English in preaching:

In the first place it presents the message in a familiar and authentic folk-art form, and it attracts attention by giving pleasure and making folks at home, or comfortable. Second, it reinforces and supports Black identity by putting in the mouth of God the language of the people….No Black person can truly identify with a God who speaks only the language of the White oppressor….Finally, the message is made much more understandable by the use of familiar language.³²¹

³¹⁹ Ibid., 79.
³²⁰ Ibid.
³²¹ Ibid., 83.
Black English has distinct features such as the slower rate of delivery and simpler sentence structure. These characteristics cannot be taught by force, but naturally learned with “a healthy Black identity, born of acute exposure to the Black experience and of complete Black self-acceptance.”\textsuperscript{322} In this sense, use of Black English when preaching to an African American congregation is essential since these communities have suffered at the hands of ‘White English’ speakers. Moreover, the use of a groups’ own language is an effective way to emotionally communicate with one another. Black English preaching is reinforced by special characteristics of Black Preaching such as the “use of mannerism\textsuperscript{323}, the use of unique tone and rhythm, the use of call and response and repetition, the use of role playing and storytelling, the use of subjectivity and rhetorical flair, the use of slow delivery, and the use of aphorisms and hesitation.”\textsuperscript{324}

These unique features of Black preaching can provide abundant insights for a model of Korean contextual preaching, which will be applied to a model of Korean contextual preaching in Chapter 5.

\textbf{V. Conclusion}

This chapter has described contextual theology and contextual preaching, and the relationship between them. With regard to contextual theology, I have explored representative terms regarding contextual theology such as 	extit{indigenization}, \textit{inculturation}, \textit{local theology}, \textit{ethnotheology} and \textit{contextualization}. In addition, I have summarized classifications or models of contextual theology as set out by Schreiter and Bevans. Through this study, I have confirmed

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{322} Ibid., 84.
\item \textsuperscript{323} Mitchell explains, “Black-culture Christians generally enjoy mannerisms, provided they are natural and not overworked. Mannerisms add interest and signal a freedom and authentic personhood in which the congregation participates vicariously, by identification.” – Ibid., 89.
\item \textsuperscript{324} Ibid., 88-99. Mitchell evaluates these unique features: “Such liberty in the Spirit exemplifies the liberation preached to the oppressed in the Black church.” – Ibid., 88.
\end{itemize}
that although there are diverse approaches among different theological perspectives and denominations, most approaches toward contextual theology value the unique life situations of a particular group of people depending on geographic, social status, economics, and ethnics. The approaches aim to explore effective delivery methods for God’s story, and to focus on proper applications of the Word of God to their unique and/or oppressed reality. In this regard, contextual preaching and contextual theology have a close relationship.

In the section addressing contextual preaching, I investigated the definition and history of contextual preaching. Contextual preaching was divided into two categories: “congregational contextual preaching” and “social contextual preaching.” This reflects the application of congregational studies of homiletics to the category of contextual preaching as suggested by Tisdale. Furthermore, I investigated two highly developed and indigenized contextual preaching perspectives: liberation Preaching and Black preaching. Both kinds preaching grew out from oppressed contexts as a reaction of underprivileged powerless people, and each value the narrative of the Bible and their own unique stories. Both are in the category of social contextual preaching. Some useful insights from Black and liberation preaching discussed in chapter 5 as a framework for Korean contextual preaching.

In the following chapter, I will argue that the New Homiletic is a contextual preaching. I am convinced that trying to understand the New Homiletic as contextual preaching will be a fresh and meaningful approach, and will confirm that the New Homiletic result from the North American context of the recent period and reflects modern trends and needs. My study will resituate the position of the New Homiletic in the Korean Protestant church, giving Korean

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325 Again, though Mitchell is regarded as a New Homiletician and his theory provided some useful insights to the developments of the New Homiletic, the Black preaching tradition cannot be limited to the category of the New Homiletic. African Americans have experienced oppression similar to Koreans, and their reactions to that oppressed reality are valuable. Moreover, Black Preaching is a highly systematized and developed racial contextual preaching, and thus provides insight into the creation of Korean contextual preaching.
preachers fresh insights to add contextual meaning to their current understanding of the New Homiletic. Therefore, since the New Homiletic is contextual preaching, it offers useful insights to a model of Korean contextual preaching.
Chapter Three
The New Homiletic as a model of contextual preaching

I. The New Homiletic

Contemporary churches in North America are faced with rapidly changing circumstances. Lower attendance and decreasing authority are signs that the mainline church in particular is in decline. Technological advances such as the Internet and smartphones are changing Christian lifestyles. Now people can participate in worship services via the Internet, and many make their offering by credit card payment. Robert G. Duffett describes what he perceives to be the most difficult challenge facing today’s church:

Most of our speaking styles, theology, and Christian traditions come from a time when Western culture was on “the Christian court.” Today we speak the Christian message in an entirely new context. We communicate to a different audience, on their court, and without help from social structures. The contemporary situation calls for a major reassessment of how the Christian message is communicated. What, then, may be done? How Should the Christian message be communicated in light of the contemporary situation?326

From the late 1960’s on has been described as a time of “The Pulpit in the Shadows,”327 and a great effort has been made in the field of homiletics to respond to these challenges. The New Homiletic is a term which describes this effort.

The term “New” Homiletic may be disputed by some, since over forty years have passed since its initial development.328 However, the term, “the New Homiletic”329, has been

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327 The expression is captured from the title of first section of Fred Craddock’s book, As One Without Authority. Craddock diagnosed the period as a time of preaching-crisis. – Fred B. Craddock, As One Without Authority, 4th ed (St. Louis, MI: Chalice Press, 2001), 3.
used to represent a pioneering movement which sought to renew preaching. This thesis will use the term, New Homiletic to indicate a homiletic movement begun in the late 1960’s that “turned away from rational-cognitive models of homiletics and pursued homiletic models grounded in dialogue, narrative, induction and imagination.”

People who live in the same time and place share a particular life experience, as well as particular narratives. However, these shared narratives are complicated by other narratives that are unique to individuals and groups. Thus, narratives reflect the context of a people, and by sharing those narratives they also share their unique context and life stories. In this regard, contextual preaching values the particularity of a people’s own narrative as well as valuing biblical narratives. It is not surprising then that one of the essential features of the New Homiletic is its emphasis on narrative.

In this chapter, I will explore the manner in which the New Homiletic developed within its historical context, arguing that the New Homiletic is a contextual preaching movement which reflects the North American context in the latter part of the twentieth-century. I will begin by surveying how the field of homiletics has defined contextual theology and contextual preaching,

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329 Paul S. Wilson summarizes characteristics of the old homiletic: “point form, mechanical notions of structure, vertical notions of authority, use of the Bible in propositional ways, deductive sermons, stories used as illustrations of points already made, objective ideas of truth, religious experience as universal, and sermons that stressed faith as information,” in comparison to features of the New Homiletics: “emphasizes organic form, narrative plot, horizontal notions of authority, recovery of the Bible for the pulpit, inductive sermons, stories making their own points in their own ways, contextual understanding of truth, dynamic and tensive notions of language, and sermon as transformational experience.” Paul S. Wilson, “New Homiletic,” in *The New Interpreter’s handbook of Preaching*, Paul S. Wilson, ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008), 398-399.

330 Specifying the initiation date of the New Homiletic is controversial. As early as the 1950’s homileticians were seeking a new homiletic. (see Paul S. Wilson, “New Homiletic,” 398). The term was coined in Randolph’s book in 1969.

and then identify the external contexts and internal contexts which have affected the initiation of the New Homiletic. My goal is not only to demonstrate that the New Homiletic represents a contextual model in preaching, but to draw from it insights for a Korean model of contextual preaching.

II. External contexts and the New Homiletic

O.C. Edwards Jr. names the embryonic period of the New Homiletic as a period of “crisis in communication,” and points to a pessimistic climate in this period regarding all speech, including preaching. He writes: “A deep distrust of words and a preference for action over speech had been expressed in the 1960s.” Edwards describes the scene in North America in the time:

…Trust was eroded on every hand. The Vietnam War, Watergate, and other evidences that notational leaders had feet of clay undermined public confidence in government. The resistance met by various rights movements that prevented their living up to their promise encouraged cynicism among those who had tasted hope. Meanwhile, church membership and participation were plummeting. Deep suspicion of the threat to human life posed by thermonuclear weapons, combined with the damage done to the environment through technology, replaced the awe and optimism with which the scientific enterprise had previously been regarded….Consumption became the measure of success, and the hollowness of its victory was reflected in a bumper sticker that read: “The one who died with the most toys wins.” People seemed to live as isolated individuals, yearning for but achieving sense of personal fulfillment.

This context contributed to, and deeply affected, the beginning of the New Homiletic. Thus, in the following sections, I will analyze the internal and external contexts out of which arose the New Homiletic. This analysis will form the basis of an understanding of the nature of the New Homiletic as a contextual model of preaching.

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333 Ibid., 800.
334 Ibid., 798-799.
War and Protest

An examination of the birth of the New Homiletic begins with the Vietnam War and anti-war movement of the 1960s in the United States. Vietnam became a colony of France in 1884. Although the Vietnamese had periods of relative independence under colonial rule, they remained under French rule until World War II. Japan’s invasion and defeat in Vietnam led to the First Indochina war (1946-1954), in which France attempted to keep its colonies. After the war, world Powers including the US, the Soviet Union, and China desired to maintain influence and power in Indochina, and consequently partitioned Vietnam. These actions were an omen of the war to come.

However, the war was not just a conflict within Vietnam, but also drew the United States and the Soviet Union into the conflict, since each nation and its allied forces supported opposing sides. U.S. forces directly participated in the war between 1965 and 1973, and as a result, 58,220 soldiers were killed and 303,644 were wounded in the War.\(^{335}\) In addition, from 1965 to 1975, the U.S government had to spend $111 billion on the war\(^{336}\), thus contributing to a financial shortfall in the federal budget. The result was anti-war movements and protests throughout the United States.

Other movements appeared as a reaction to the Vietnam War and the social atmosphere of the period. For example, the Hippie movement\(^{337}\) arose in the western U.S and spread

\(^{335}\) American War and Military Operations Casualties: Lists and Statistics, dated 26 February 2010


\(^{337}\) On July 7, 1967, Time magazine dealt with the Hippie movement as a cover story entitled, "The Hippies: The Philosophy of a Subculture." The article described the guidelines of the hippie code: "Do your own thing, wherever you have to do it and whenever you want. Drop out. Leave society as you have known it. Leave it utterly. Blow the mind of every straight person you can reach. Turn them on, if not to drugs, then to beauty, love, honesty, fun.” - Marty, Myron A. *Daily life in the United States, 1960–1990* (Westport, CT: The Greenwood Press, 1997) 112.
throughout America. The Hippie movement, while reacting to the Vietnam War, was in reality a reaction to the massive wealth of the US following the First and Second World wars. Perhaps ironically, this excessive prosperity gained by the wartime munitions industry had a negative effect on U.S. society. Some felt that the wealth resulted in a serious ‘emptiness’ in society. These factors encouraged the growth of the Hippie movement, which became a protest movement against the existing social system, and against youth being sent to Vietnam to fight in what was felt by some to be an unjust war.

In addition, other protest movements took place across the United States. For example, the Civil rights movement sought equality before the law for African Americans. Unrest also occurred on university campuses. University students’ protests against government policy occurred more frequently after a 1970 incident at Kent State University in which the Ohio National Guard killed or wounded several students during a protest against the American invasion of Cambodia.338

These protest movements rejected the existing power gives to various authorities and institutions. Both President Johnson and President Nixon lied to the American people concerning the war and thereby undermined the office of the President. The dishonorable resignation of President Nixon which was trigged by the Watergate scandal339 in the early 1970s symbolized

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338 “The Kent State shootings—also known as the May 4 massacre or the Kent State massacre—occurred at Kent State University in the U.S. city of Kent, Ohio, and involved the shooting of unarmed college students by the Ohio National Guard on Monday, May 4, 1970. The guardsmen fired 67 rounds over a period of 13 seconds, killing four students and wounding nine others, one of whom suffered permanent paralysis. Some of the students who were shot had been protesting against the American invasion of Cambodia, which President Richard Nixon announced in a television address on April 30. Other students who were shot had been walking nearby or observing the protest from a distance. There was a significant national response to the shootings: hundreds of universities, colleges, and high schools closed throughout the United States due to a student strike of four million students, and the event further affected the public opinion—at an already socially contentious time—over the role of the United States in the Vietnam War.”. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kent_State_shootings (Accessed on Sept 05, 2012)

339 “Watergate scandal, interlocking political scandals of the administration of U.S. Pres. Richard M. Nixon that were revealed following the arrest of five burglars at Democratic National Committee (DNC) headquarters in the Watergate office-apartment-hotel complex in Washington, D.C., on June 17, 1972. On August 9,
the weakened authority of government leaders. Moreover, the unexpected defeat in the Vietnam War confirmed externally that “the US monopoly of global power was dramatically limited,”\(^{340}\) and internally called into question government policy creating a national crisis of confidence. In summary, every sort of innate or traditional authority was being questioned during this time.\(^{341}\) In this somewhat unstable social atmosphere, it is not surprising that Fred Craddock named his groundbreaking book, *As One without Authority*.

a. Broadening Suspicion of Authority

The issue of the authority of the preacher\(^{342}\) has been an important topic for the New Homiletic. This issue arose in the 1960’s and 1970’s not only because of the protest movements and the political situation, but also from more complex realities such as the growing influence of postmodernism.

For a long time, preachers had been seen as God’s messengers. Harry Stout describes the preaching scene in colonial New England: “sermons were the only voice of authority that


\[^{342}\] McClure collects and classifies sources of the preacher’s authority: the traditional authority of the office of preaching within the church, the relationship a between preaching and biblical text, the professional competence of the preacher, the perception of a preacher’s unique giftedness or charisma, the preacher’s commission to God’s power and mighty acts in history, and ‘star quality’ through mass communication. - John. S. McClure, *Preaching Words:144 Key Terms in Homiletics*, 7-8.
congregations were pledged to obey unconditionally,”343 One hundred years ago, P.T. Forsyth indicated, “the preacher is the organ of the only real and final authority for mankind.”344 He goes on to say, “the authority of the preacher was once supreme.  He bearded kings, and bent senates to his word.  He determined policies, ruled fashions, and prescribed thought.”345 Forsyth recognizes that the preacher’s authority has changed:

He has proved unable to maintain the position he was so able to take.  He could not insure against the reaction which has now set in as severely as his authority once did. That reaction has long in force; and today, however great may be his vogue as a personality, his opinion has so little authority that it is not only ignored but ridiculed.346

Craddock describes the difficult situation of preachers in the 1960s and the early 1970s; “Hers is often the misery of one who is always pregnant but never ready to give birth.”347 He goes on: “No longer can the preacher presuppose the general recognition of her authority as clergy, or the authority of her institution, or the authority of scripture.”348 These insights confirm that the weakening authority of the preacher has been an ongoing issue in recent Christian history in the mainline Protestant churches of North America, and is deeply connected to the so-called crisis in preaching. The issue of preacher’s authority is more vividly revealed in


345 Ibid., 28.

346 Ibid., 28. Despite this gloomy situation of the preacher, Forsyth argued for the authority of preaching: “The pulpit has an authority. If it have not, it is but a chair and not a pulpit. It may discourse, but it does not preach. But preacher it must. It speaks with authority.” Ibid., 29.


348 Ibid., 14.
the 1960’s and 1970’s through church decline caused by complex social, political and philosophical factors in North America.\textsuperscript{349}

Listener-oriented homiletics including inductive and narrative preaching which sprouted at the same period, are based on a different kind of authority than what had gone before. McClure names this authority “relational authority” based on research about “the relational dimension of authority” in J.W. Carroll’s book, \textit{As One with Authority}. This relational authority derives from “developing good pastoral and personal relationships and fostering a sense of a human quest for authenticity and shared values so that listeners will trust what the preacher says.”\textsuperscript{350} In other words, relational authority is unbiased and symmetrical between preacher and listener. Craddock noticed the weakening authority of the preacher in the 1970’s, and welcomed an opportunity to suggest a way of understanding the authority of the preacher that was more reflective of the contemporary context and its relationship to modes of authority. Thus, he introduced inductive preaching.

For Craddock, the listener is not to be a passive recipient but an essential partner who experiences the Word of God through preaching, and the preacher should preach not only “to” the listener but also “for” the listener.\textsuperscript{351} In other words, Craddock argued for a complementary relationship between preacher and listener and, based on this understanding of the value of the

\textsuperscript{349} Ronald Allen understands that the issue of preacher’s authority is deeply related to postmodernism. Allen claims, “The shift from modern to postmodern perceptions of the world is particularly important with respect to authority…The modern preacher could assume the congregation’s assent to traditional authorities. The postmodern preacher cannot assume that the congregation will automatically recognize the validity of her or his position, sources, and reasoning. Thus postmodern preachers must often demonstrate why congregational should take their claims seriously. This presents a particular challenge when some in the congregation are modern and others are postmodern.” Ronald Allen, \textit{“New Directions in Homiletics”}, \textit{Journal for Preachers}, summer, 1993 Vol. XVIII. No 1. 20.


\textsuperscript{351} Ibid., 51.
listeners encouraged the preacher to find other than vertical and hierarchical ways of using authority.

Lucy Rose and John McClure also reject the hierarchical authority of the preacher and place more value on the authority of listeners in their conversational and collaborative preaching methods.\(^{352}\) While those who value the traditional authority of preachers might perceive that the New Homiletic weakens authority, the theory of authority in the New Homiletic can better be argued as a timely adaptation to a changing context. The lack of confidence in traditional authority in the context of North America has raised the importance of the trust granted to the preacher by the listener as a source of authority. In other words, “the entire listening community lends authority to the preacher when they are addressed in specific by the preached word.”\(^{353}\)

b. Postmodernism

Postmodernism\(^{354}\) is a trend which has gained significant popularity since the 1960’s\(^{355}\) and has affected all aspects of society including philosophy, religion, arts, literature, sociology.

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\(^{352}\) McClure claims that inductive preaching methods may differ from more recent preaching methods. For example, he views Anna Carter Florence’s testimonial homiletics to be similar in perspective to his collaborative preaching in its favoring dynamic interaction between preacher and listener. “Proponents of conversational, collaborative, and testimonial models of preaching have pointed out some of the limitations of the relational authority assumed by inductive preaching. Because inductive preachers assume an ideal symmetrical situation in which people’s experiences are essentially interchangeable, they can easily disregard actual differences between people. The assumption that the listener is ‘like me’ may preclude the realization that the listener can, in fact, be (temporarily) ‘above me’ as partner – teacher. Conversational, collaborative, and testimonial models of preaching try to assert a more dynamic, asymmetrical form of relationship as the key to the preacher’s authority.” - John. S. McClure, *Preaching Words*, 9.


\(^{354}\) Davis S. Dockery indicates five generally accepted characteristics of postmodernism: “(1) Things and events do not have intrinsic meaning. There is only continues interpretation of the world. (2) Continuous examination of the world requires a contextual examination; we ourselves are part of the context.(3) Interpretation depends not on texts or authors, but on the relative viewpoint and particular values of the interpreter. (4) Language is not neutral, but relative and value-laden.” In addition, he divides postmodernism to 4 categories: deconstructive, liberationist, constructive and restorationist postmodernism. See Michael W.
and politics. Its roots go back at least to the 1800’s and reactions against the Enlightenment overemphasis on reason and progress. There is no one definition of postmodernism as it has developed in complex circumstances and is viewed differently within different fields.

Postmodernism “is not a theory or a creed; it is more like an attitude or a way of looking at things.” D. Harvey offers a schematic comparison between modernism and postmodernism:

“While modernism is branded by purpose and form, postmodernism is characterized by play and antiform or dysfunction. While modernism attempts coherence, hierarchy, presence, and semantics, noticeably, postmodern pursuits chance, anarchy, absence and rhetoric. In addition, modernism aims at metaphysics, determinacy and transcendence, however, postmodernism substitutes these with irony, indeterminacy, and immanence.”

Thus, pre-modern and modern homiletics have been challenged significantly by postmodernism. The New Homiletic bears marks of that challenge.

While modernism affirms the existence of absolute truth, postmodernism affirms the nonexistence of absolute truth, or at least questions the ability to capture or possess truth in universal ways. In other words, postmodernists are not “necessarily concerned to prove themselves ‘right’ and others ‘wrong.’” They believe that beliefs are ultimately a matter of social context, and hence they are likely to conclude: “What is right for us might not be right for you,” and “What is wrong in our context might in your context be acceptable or even preferable.”

There are features of relativism in postmodernism. Allan Bloom describes the relativistic impact of postmodernism on a university campus, “There is one thing a professor can be absolutely


355 It is not possible to identify the beginning of postmodernism. For instance, some people indicate the 1930s, 1950s, or even 1989 when the fall of the Berlin Wall took place.


certain of: almost every student entering the university believes, or says he believes, that truth is relative.”

Features of postmodernism such as ambiguity, relativism, subjectivity, contingency, denial of the existence of absolute truth and questioning of existing authority have widely and directly affected the church, including preaching and preachers. This has resulted in a suspicion of traditional beliefs about the Word of God and the preacher. Therefore, some have regarded postmodernism as an enemy that will demolish the church and bring about a serious crisis for church.

Other view postmodernism as a fresh stimulation of God, sent to renew an old-fashioned church. The ambiguities of postmodernism allow various interpretations depending on one’s own perspectives and position. It is among these multiple and diverse understandings of postmodernism in the North American context that the birth of the New Homiletic took place.

The question to be asked, however, is in what particular ways has postmodernism contributed to the development of the New Homiletic, and how has the New Homiletic responded to postmodernism? James. K.A. Smith asserts that a foundational notion of postmodernism came from three slogans of the French philosophers; “There is nothing outside

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The relationship between the New Homiletic and postmodernism can be seen in a number of ways. Wilson’s analysis identifies a postmodern focus within the New Homiletic as follows:

The postmodern world changes three key modern notions, and the NH accommodates each: (1) The text does not refer to objective realities; rather, there is no world beyond what is disclosed by the text (or by language). The NH reclaims the centrality of the Bible and situates the interpretive act within specific communities. (2) Metanarratives, like the Christian story or science as the theory of everything, are subject to SUSPICION and disbelief. The NH recovers the importance of individual stories, biblical and otherwise. It avoids universal truth claims (with the possible exception of those revealed about God) in preference to individual confession or testimony, and values ways of knowing beyond the reason. (3) Knowledge and objective truth are not neutral but are determined by forces of power within social systems. The NH uses individual narratives and other ways of knowing to shape community and behavior.

Craddock’s discussion regarding “authority” in As One without Authority reveals a rejection of traditional authority, a characteristic of postmodernism. This open-ended inductive method of preaching also can be regarded as an expression of a postmodern mindset.

Although, there is some debate over the degree to which Craddock’s preaching method is a result of a postmodern trend, his view on authority and an inductive model of preaching may have been influenced by postmodernism. However, his assumption of an essentialist listener that is a universal proposition regarding the listeners’ preference for inductivity is not acceptable to postmodernism. Scott B. Johnson points out:

Craddock based his prescription for the health of preaching on a sweeping understanding of anthropology (that is, all people listen inductively). Postmodern scholars tend to reject such universal claim, and call presumed similarities between “all people” into question.

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Does everyone really listen inductively? Or do different people listen in different ways?364

On the other hand, according to Wilson, some scholars perceive the New Homiletic, including inductive preaching, to be a product of postmodernism. He indicates:

In 1994, Robert Stephen Reid wrote that the New Homiletic…. “is not a radical postmodern approach…[but it is] commensurate with much of the postmodern.” More recent essays by Reid and Lucy Lind Hogan, Eugene Lowry, Alyce McKenzie, Jeffrey Bullock, and James W. Thompson see the postmodern and the New Homiletic as identical. I take contemporary homiletics, New Homiletic, and postmodern homiletics to be synonyms.365

It is not essential here to determine whether or not the New Homiletic is postmodern. It is, however, important to recognize that the New Homiletic arose as a reflection of the circumstances of the North American context during this time period. Thus, most New Homileticians have a moderate attitude to the postmodernism; and some have developed postmodern preaching theories for the church in the postmodern world.366

c. The New Hermeneutic

If the Vietnam War and social protest movements informed the political context in which the New Homiletic arose, and postmodernism functioned as a social and a philosophical

365 Paul S. Wilson, Preaching and Homiletical Theory, 136-137.
366 “Postmodern preaching” does not mean preaching which defends or uses postmodernism; rather, it is the preaching that responds to the reality of the church in the postmodern world. McClure defines postmodern preaching as that preaching that responds to the postmodern situation. He claims that conversational preaching (Lucy Rose), collaborative preaching (John S. McClure), confessional preaching (David Lose), testimonial preaching (Anna C. Florence), postliberal preaching (Charles Campbell) are examples of postmodern preaching. Preaching Words: 112-113. Wilson does not agree with McClure’s inclusion of postliberal preaching since Campbell’s position seems to be “significantly different.” Wilson classifies John McClure, Joseph M. Webb, Christine M. Smith, L. Susan Bond and Lucy Rose as postmodern homileticians. Preaching and Homiletical Theory, 137. Interestingly, Lucy Lind Hogan and Robert Reid view the New Homiletic as Practical Postmodern preaching, and the postliberal preaching of Charles Campbell as Thoroughly Postmodern. Lucy Lind Hogan, Robert Reid, Connecting with the Congregation: Rhetoric and the Art of Preaching (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), 121-133.
influence, the New Hermeneutic operated as an essential theological source for the New Homiletic.\textsuperscript{367}

As produced by Ernst Fuchs and Gerhard Ebeling, the New Hermeneutic was influenced by Bultmann’s insights regarding the intelligibility of the Scripture in the scientific age. Their concern was about “how to allow revelation to become contemporaneous with us today.”\textsuperscript{368} Moreover, they followed Heidegger’s understanding of language\textsuperscript{369}; that is, the New Hermeneutic claims that language itself is interpretation\textsuperscript{370} and the New Hermeneuticians assert that language is existential in character.\textsuperscript{371} For instance, when somebody speaks, “he is said to be interpreting, thus the language act is hermeneutical.”\textsuperscript{372} Fuchs and Ebeling claim that the scripture of the New Testament does not “presuppose faith, but on the contrary creates faith.” They also emphasize the importance of Jesus’ parables, asserting that the parables seek the listeners’ input and decision.\textsuperscript{373} Fuchs explains the value of parables:

Jesus does not put his words into other people’s mouths. They themselves have to be able to say what they have understood. That is why he speaks to them in parables which simply portray the new situation. Between the present which they share with Jesus and the future in which God shall accomplish his rule, they find themselves as between a tiny

\textsuperscript{367} For instance, Randolph’s \textit{The Renewal of Preaching} and Craddock’s \textit{As One Without Authority}, directly indicate that they adopt the new hermeneutic of Fuchs and Ebeling.

\textsuperscript{368} Werner Jeanrond, \textit{Theological Hermeneutics} (London: SCM Press, 1994), 153

\textsuperscript{369} “Language has the task of making manifest in its work the existent and preserving it as such. In it, what is purest and what is most concealed, and likewise what is complex and ordinary, can be expressed in words….The being of man is founded in words.” – Martin Heidegger, \textit{Existence and Being} (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1949), 275-277.


\textsuperscript{372} Ibid.,14.

\textsuperscript{373} Anthony C. Thiselton, \textit{Hermeneutics: An Introduction}, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 56. This emphasis on parables has deeply affected the New Homiletic – most New Homileticians seek existential, experiential moments in preaching and value the parables of Jesus as the best examples of ‘event.’
beginning and a magnificent end….That is the decisive achievement of the parables of Jesus: whoever understands and goes this way moves already in a new context, in being before God.  

Fuchs and Ebeling drew attention to the existential power of language and developed a theology of the Word. In other words, they emphasized the subject matter of the text over experience or the intention of the author, resulting in the New Hermeneutic becoming a theological foundation for the New Homiletic. For Fuchs and Ebeling, the living Word meets reader and/or listener through a dynamic movement of language. Fuchs indicates this dynamic movement as a “Sprachereignis (language-event)”, and Ebeling uses “Wortgeschehen (word-event).”

Ebeling claims that beyond simply carrying meaning, words have power to change people’s lives. He thus raises the importance of language, by claiming that “language opens the space to us in which the event of the word can take place.” Furthermore, he understands that the word-event can create “new possibilities of addressing and understanding the reality” and can be “the source of light” which “lighten up the darkness of existence.” In that sense, the “event of the Word of God is necessarily bound up with the entire life of language.”

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375 This notion is indebted to Barth’s understanding about the Word of God. Barth claims the Word of God as an event of God’s encounter. With this understanding, “performativ nature of metaphor and language came together in the New Hermeneutic.” – Paul Scott Wilson, *Preaching and Homiletical Theory*, (St.Louis, MI: Chalice Press, 2004), 64.


377 Ibid., 188.

378 Ibid., 190.
This emphasis on language and word-event became a capstone for homiletics who sought a new way of thinking about preaching (such as David Randolph and Fred Craddock).\textsuperscript{379}

In other words, the New Hermeneutic had provided essential insights to the New Homiletic which focuses what preaching does (in listeners’ actual contexts), beyond what the biblical text says.

Randolph points out a connection point between the New Hermeneutic and the New Homiletic:

The new hermeneutic aids in this rebirth and overcomes the threat by imparting a new understanding of reality, one that champions preaching as the way to interpret the gospel so that it is addressed to contemporary man. In line with the new hermeneutic, a new homiletic would understand the uniqueness of the homily to lie in its character as \textit{event}. The new homiletic would be a discipline which would serve both as a creative stimulus and as a critical apparatus for authentic preaching. Dynamic preaching would be marked by concern, confirmation, concretion, construction, and communication.\textsuperscript{380}

Craddock situates the New Hermeneutic and preaching in terms of it being a time of language crisis which caused a crisis in preaching. He suggests that this time may be “a time in which God has actually grown silent, weary with so many empty and careless uses of God’s name.”\textsuperscript{381}

Thus, he claims the necessity of healing and recovering the meaning of language for the pulpit. In order to recover the meaning of language, he adopts a new “theology of speaking” drawn directly from the New Hermeneutic.

Dawn Ottoni-Wilhelm points out three essential gifts that the New Hermeneutic has granted to the New Homiletic:

\textsuperscript{379} It is interesting that the Randolph and Craddock quote Ebeling’s work more than Fuchs’ despite the similarity between the two. Randolph and Craddock may have been more attracted by work of Ebeling, because he more clearly revealed his concerns about preaching. He claimed that “….Proclamation is the Alpha and Omega of the church’s praxis.” See: \textit{The Problem of Historicity in the Church and Its Proclamation}, trans. Grover Foley (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), 22.

\textsuperscript{380} David James Randolph, \textit{The Renewal of Preaching}, 24

\textsuperscript{381} Craddock, \textit{As One without Authority}, 8-11.
Among the many contributions of the New Hermeneutic to the development of the New Homiletic in North America, at least three have had enduring impact: a sense of the “eventfulness” of preaching, a revitalized understanding of the relationship between the form and content of the sermon, and a greater concern for the listener (often referred to as the “turn to the listener”).  

Interestingly, Ottoni-Wilhelm understands the influences of the New Hermeneutic upon the New Homiletic to be extensive, and to extend beyond the eventfulness of preaching which is widely viewed as the main influence of the New Hermeneutic. Ottoni-Wilhelm claims that highlighting the relation between form and content and concerns for listeners are also contributions of the New Hermeneutic.

The recovery of the relationship between Scripture and its content, and rising concerns for the listeners were caused by a more complex context, not simply from the New Hermeneutic. For example, thinking about the form and content of scripture were affected by literary criticism in the 1960–1970’s, and an emphasis on the value of listeners’ feelings and responses was related to postmodernism. Having said this, it cannot be denied that the New Hermeneutic was a major theological foundation for the birth of the New Homiletic, although not the only foundation.

It has awakened an awareness of the essence and core meaning of language, and then the eventfulness of preaching.

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383 For more information, See Dawn Ottoni-Wilhelm, 19-21.

384 Recently, David Lose has claimed some drawbacks of the New Homiletics in relation to the New Hermeneutic. First, the New Hermeneutic presupposes that the interpreter know or possesses the right questions to ask of the Scripture text and to address in the sermon. Second, experience, like language, is ambivalent and both have limits as to what they can accomplish in preaching. Third, a focus on experience and language (and consequently, the formfulness of language) risks drawing our attention away from the distinctiveness of the Christian gospel. Fourth….the practitioners of the new hermeneutics, fail to grasp that language functions on the basis of convention, and is not in fact ‘reality’ or Being itself. David L. Lose, “Whither Hence, New Homiletic?” (Academy of Homiletics, annual meeting papers collection, 2000), 261-264.
d. Church Decline

Church decline, which started in the 1960’s, still continues. The decline is more serious in the mainline churches. According to Christianity Today’s analysis, membership in all mainline churches has declined since 1965. Presently, the decline of church membership is also affecting some evangelical churches.

The reasons for church decline are not straightforward. There are a variety of factors, including the influences of postmodernism, sociological and demographical changes, authority issues, and internal ecclesial problems. I have observed that the early New Homileticians, such as David Randolph and Fred Craddock, recognized this coming ‘tsunami’ of decline, and suggested new insights of preaching would offer protection against the crisis. As homileticians at the beginning of church decline, they diagnosed that the crisis of the church was a direct result of the crisis of the pulpit. However, in spite of their insights, membership has continued to decline.

I will now consider the internal context which affected development of the New Homiletic. These cannot be clearly separated from the external context. since all contexts are interrelated and affect each other, however each is important in understanding the New Homiletic as a contextual method of preaching and each has insights for the development of a Korean model of contextual preaching.

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385 Christianity Today, August 1997, 11. (From 1965 to 1994): American Baptist Churches in the USA - 3.3%; Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) -51.1%;Episcopal Church -27.0%;Evangelical Lutheran Church in America -8.5%;Presbyterian Church (USA) -13.1%;Reformed Church in America -19.8%;United Church of Christ -27.5%;United Methodist Church -22.4%”. While mainline churches have suffered loss of membership, evangelical churches grew steadily until 1990s, their membership growth in the period from 1965 to 1994 are: “Assemblies of God +306%;Church of God (Cleveland, TN) +252%; Church of God in Christ +1,232%; Church of the Nazarene +74%;Southern Baptist Convention +45%”

386 For example, the Southern Baptist convention, the largest protestant church in the U.S., lost 0.42% of membership in 2011 compared with 2010, and also has lost 0.15% in 2012 compared with 2011. – Eileen W. Lindner, Year Book of American & Canadian Churches 2012 (National Council of Church U.S.A), 151.
III. Internal Context and the New Homiletic

As Eslinger indicated, “the Copernican revolution” of preaching was coming. This revolutionary change is not a sudden intruder from space; rather it is a fruit of a changed and changing earthly, i.e. North American, context. In this section, I will analyze the internal context which has affected the birth and development of the New Homiletic.

a. Turn to the listener!

“Turn to the listener” is the most noticeable challenge of the New Homiletic to the homiletical method that had gone before. Throughout the history of preaching, no movement has focused on the listener as intently as the New Homiletic and there can be no doubt that such an intense focus is related to the internal context of the mainline church in North America. Above all, a sense of growing crisis about preaching triggered a desire to find a new way of thinking about preaching. This has led homileticians to focus on the listeners.

387 In this thesis, the ‘external contexts’ mean major external situations which led to the New Homiletic such as War and Authority, Postmodernism, New Hermeneutic and Church Decline. And the ‘internal contexts’ mean characteristics that have been integral to the development of the New Homiletic such as Turn to the Listener, Turn to the Bible, Thinking about Language, and Finding Narrative. In reality, the external contexts and internal contexts, which have affected the birth and development of the New Homiletic are interrelated, thus this cannot be clearly separated.


389 Paul S. Wilson describes the phenomenon in both church and society of the initiation period of the New Homiletics. “1. Faith was appreciated as having important experiential and affective dimensions. 2. Experience could no longer be considered uniform or universal. 3. Truth came to be understood largely as contextual. 4. Mass media and culture affected ways of communication and learning. 5. Society was understood as diverse and multicultural. 6. Biblical and other texts were understood to have many meanings. 7. Various theologies arose, reflecting, the experience of various groups. 8. Increased wealth and recreation time challenged the place of the church in society. 9. Authority in all of its expression was challenged. 10. Language was understood to be largely rooted in metaphor and experience.” Setting Words on Fire: Putting God at the Center of the Sermon (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008), 20-21
Second, a focus on the values of listeners was affected by philosophical and theological trends of the period. In the late 1960’s and 1970’s, several types of Civil rights movements, including the “Black Power” movement, took place and these led homiletical interests to focus on the listeners’ life contexts. The influences of postmodernism led homiletics to consider the values of the individual. Moreover, the New Hermeneutic provided new insights about place of the listener, which changed from the passive object to the core subject. Listeners were understood to create and experience the event in preaching.

Third, pastoral (counseling) preaching influenced the turn to the listener. Since the early twentieth century, some preachers brought in pastoral counselling methods to preaching. This so-called ‘pastoral preaching’ considered the congregation’s life contexts and admitted the individuals’ value in preaching. These features of pastoral preaching may have influenced the birth of the New Homiletic, despite the differences in the understanding of individual listener.

Harry Emerson Fosdick, one of the most influential preachers of pastoral preaching, claims:

Starting a sermon with a problem, however vital and urgent, suggests a discussion, as dissertation, a treatise. A sermon, however, is more than that. The preacher’s business is….not merely to debate the meaning and possibility of Christian faith, but to produce Christian faith in the lives of his listeners….A preacher’s task is to create in his congregation the thing he is taking about.

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390 For instance, David Randolph claims that the civil rights movement clearly reveals “the emergence and importance of a new preaching,” and “the civil rights movement is helping preaching to rediscover its foundations and to refine its basic methods.” And then, he suggests that preacher’s task is “to launch an offensive which will establish, clarify, and advance the truth which has come to light again in the civil rights movement and elsewhere” for “God’s sake and the world’s sake.” The Renewal of Preaching, 2-3.

391 A representative of a pastoral preaching—“life situation preaching” was Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878-1969), when he recalled his ministry in autobiography, The Living of These Days, he indicates, “it (Preaching) should be pastoral counseling on a group scale…. every sermon should have its main business the head-on constructive meeting of some problem which was puzzling minds, burdening consciences, distracting lives,” and he locates the individual problems of listeners to the center of his preaching. Harry Emerson Fosdick, The Living of These Days: An Autobiography (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 94.

392 Harry Emerson Fosdick, The Living of These Days, 99.
He asserts that listeners should live their lives according to the preachers’ preaching. In other words, the preacher’s task is to provide a clear guideline about the listener’s life situation, and the listener should follow the directions of the preacher. This form of pastoral preaching still treated the listener as a passive recipient, despite valuing the context of the listener. In contrast, the New Homiletic viewed the listener as much more than a passive recipient.

In summary, the “turn to the listener” of the New Homiletic developed out of diverse, yet often overlapping internal and external contexts, including signs of the decline in church and pulpit; response to the civil rights movements and postmodernism. Particular to the internal context is the New Hermeneutic’s view of the listener as a subject of preaching and pastoral (counseling) preaching’s valuing of individuals.

Here, I will briefly review some of the early New Homileticians’ views of the listener in order to determine the implications the New Homiletic could have for a contextual model for Korean preaching. In 1969, Randolph argued for the existence of a connection between preaching and the listener: “Preaching must be understood as event. The homily must then be understood in its uniqueness as the form of discourse designed to bring the word of God to expression in the concrete situation of the hearers.” Randolph’s notion of the event of preaching is limited to a focus on the situation of the listeners. Craddock expands the concept of the listener beyond a simple beneficiary of the sermon. For him, the listener completes the

393 In the following research regarding the listener issue in the New Homiletic, I will focus on Craddock’s understanding of listeners. Although Craddock’s inductive preaching may not represent the diverse methodologies of the New Homiletics, he contributed valuable insights, including the listener issue, to set up the New Homiletics.

394 Randolph, The Renewal of Preaching, 19. He also describes the importance of preaching for the listener as follows; “The failure of preaching to ‘come home’ to the congregation is a common and often justifiable complaint of laymen. Helmut Thielicke phrases their complaint in this way: ‘I did not occur in that sermon.’ The people to whom one preaches should ‘occur’ in the sermons. Their needs and longings, hopes and aspirations should, from the beginning, be part of the stuff of the sermon,…It is a turning point in preaching when the preacher begins to preach to faces, to particular persons and problems, seen against the landscape of modernity.” – Ibid.,45.
sermon. Listeners are “more than just destination of the sermon,” and have a right “to participate” in the sermon’s movement and can have their own conclusion, apart from the preachers.\textsuperscript{395} Thus, the listener does not simply implement the preacher’s message “post-benediction”, but actively participates. Craddock claims:

The process calls for an incompleteness, a lack of exhaustiveness in the sermon. It requires of the preacher that she resist the temptation to tyranny of ideas rather than democratic sharing….It requires a humility and a trust most of us lack to risk not having this control, to be willing to participate in sharing a matter that is bigger than the speaker or hearer and which they can only explore together in wonder, humility, and gratitude.\textsuperscript{396}

Craddock’s valuing of the listener resulted in the “open-endedness” of inductive preaching. In other words, in inductive preaching, the preacher should not lead the listeners to the preacher’s own conclusion but try to lead them to experience the Word in preaching, and reach their own destinations. This “turn to the listener” of the New Homiletic was a reaction against “cognitive-propositional”\textsuperscript{397} preaching, a type of preacher-oriented preaching, which no longer suited the needs of a changing context.

Since the early church, preachers have to some degree considered the listeners in their preaching. Yet the New Homiletic elevated the listener’s position significantly, so that the listener is an essential part of the preaching process. This aspect of the New Homiletic has continued to develop. For example, Lucy A. Rose indicates that preachers and listeners, in her conversational preaching, are “equal partners on a journey to understand and live out their faith commitments.”\textsuperscript{398} She discusses the relationships between preacher and listeners:

\textsuperscript{395} Craddock, \textit{As One without Authority}, 52.
\textsuperscript{396} Ibid., 54.
\textsuperscript{397} Charles L. Campbell, \textit{Preaching Jesus: New Directions for Homiletics in Hans Frei’s Postliberal Theology} (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1997), 120.
The experience of many of us in both the pulpit and the pew is that we are interdependent, not separated by a gap but joined in common discipleship and common tasks. For us the gap shifts. The preacher and the congregation stand together as explorers, while a text, meaning, or mystery lies on the other side or confront us as Other. Thus situated, we as preachers have no message, gospel, or experience for the congregation to receivers. The fundamental experience of connectedness redscribes the roles of the preacher and the worshipers and demands new probes into preaching’s whys, whats, and hows.  

Though some recent homiletic models have considered the listeners to an even more significant degree than Craddock’s inductive preaching, all models in the New Homiletic share the same impetus to “turn to the listeners.” Scholars have affirmed the value of the “turn to the listener” in terms of revitalizing preaching. Though Charles L. Campbell severely criticized the New Homiletic in Preaching Jesus, he admitted Craddock’s contribution - “his emphasis on the hearer’s participation in the sermon.”

b. Turn to the Bible! (The text is the Word of God)!

As evidenced in the “war and authority” section above, the birth period of the New Homiletic was a time in which every authority was being questioned, including the authority of the Bible. This questioning of biblical authority resulted from complex factors related to context: political, cultural, social and theological.

Homileticians reacted by affirming the importance of the Bible, a fact that might be overlooked because the New Homiletic’s valuing of open-endedness and the value of the listeners might appear to be inconsistent with biblical authority. Yet the New Homiletic has

\[399\] Ibid., 90.

\[400\] Charles L. Campbell, Preaching Jesus, 35. “no criticism should ignore the positive contributions and salutary effects of many of Craddock’s insights, particularly and salutary effects of many Craddock’s insights, particularly his concern to effect a new hearing of the gospel. Craddock’s exploration of the method – the ‘how’ – of the sermon has been a creative and positive contribution to Christian preaching….For example, his emphasis on the hearer’s participation in the sermon, including the important role of movement, anticipation, and concreteness in preaching is important.”
moved to recover the authority of the Bible, not the least through the lens of historical-literary criticism. While some have argued that historical criticism tended to weaken the authority of the Bible, the New Homiletic has made use of the positive fruits of “historical criticism” and literary biblical scholarship” to reclaim the Bible as “the source and driving force” of preaching.

Prior to the New Homiletic, some preachers favouring thematic preaching tended to diminish the focus on the Bible, or to overlook the literary features of the Bible. Many used the Bible as a jumping off spot. Thomas G. Long presents an example of this tendency and points out its problems as follows:

An unfortunate result of overlooking the literary properties of biblical texts is the tendency to view those texts by default as inert containers for theological concepts. The preacher’s task then becomes simply throwing the text into an exegetical winepress, squeezing out the ideational matter, and then figuring out homiletical ways to make those ideas attractive to contemporary listeners. The literary and rhetorical shape of the texts matters not at all; it is discarded as ornament.

In response to these circumstances, the New Homiletic sought to re-situate the position of the Bible in preaching, and has attempted to recover the centrality of the Bible. As Paul S. Wilson evaluates, “One of the New Homiletic’s significant accomplishments was to ground sermons in the first instance in the bedrock of the Bible rather than in the shifting sand of topics and issues.”

401 Of course, the literary criticism had some negative effects on the church. David Buttrick argues, “As a result, historical-critical method split-for some it was based on radical skepticism; for others it was dedicated to confirming the truth of the Bible. The split is still with us, particularly in America, and is exacerbated by the notion of ‘revelation in history.’” David Buttrick, A Captive Voice: The Liberation of Preaching (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 13.


404 Paul S. Wilson, Setting Words on Fire, 3.
The New Homiletic's emphasis on genre, stories, images and metaphors in the Bible has in many ways revitalized the position of the Bible in preaching. The argument is that all aspects of the Bible are organically interconnected to each other and cannot be disconnected from the whole Bible. Thus, emphasis on certain features of the Bible has naturally brought about a more intense interest in the Bible as a whole. Paul S. Wilson indicates that the New Homiletic has had the positive effect of offering a holistic view of the Bible:

The New Homiletics has helped to establish that biblical texts are holistic; their thoughts, images, and words cannot be separate from their meaning as though meaning is only informational content. Meaning can be rational, cognitive, discursive, intuitive, kinesthetic, and emotive. The literary form, expression, and rhetorical purpose of a biblical text are part of its meaning, and sermons need to be sensitive to this.  

In other words, the New Homiletic has not only developed methodologies, but also has created an essential momentum to rethink and discover the meaning of the Bible for preaching. Craddock strongly asserts the importance of the Bible in relation to preaching. He writes: “The Scriptures are normative in the life of the church. To serve preaching from that norm either by neglect or intent would be to cut the church off from its primary source of nourishment and discipline.” Furthermore, he claims, “sermons not informed and inspired by Scripture are objects dislodged, orphans in the world, without mother or father.”

The New Homileticians’ understanding of the relationship between the Bible and preaching both contributed to the development of the New Homiletic, and emerged from it. The theological and homiletical convictions of the New Homileticians about the Bible have continually affected the setting and position of the Bible in the development of the New Homiletics. At the same time, the New Homiletic is the fruit, or result, of thinking that places

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405 Ibid., 100.
407 Ibid.
the Bible at the centre of Christian life and practice. For example, narrative preaching, which focused on experiencing the gospel of the Bible narratives, arose from Lowry’s conviction that narratives of the Bible can still work for contemporary listeners even though the narratives were produced long ago. Lowry introduced his ‘homiletical plot’ as a means of experiencing the gospel through sequential movements. Today, Lowry’s narrative preaching method remains a popular preaching methodology. I argue that narrative preaching is not just a result of valuing the Bible, but it also has worked as a catalyst which continuously reinforces the value of the Bible through revealing the possibilities of the abundant narratives of the Bible. \footnote{In summary, the atmosphere of an anti-authority society has led New Homileticians to recover the central position of the Bible through interest in narratives, genres, images and the text itself.}

\textbf{c. Thinking about Language}

An emphasis on features of language such as imagination, images and metaphors is a further noticeable characteristic of the New Homiletic. One of the contextual realities which brought about this emphasis was a reaction to the development of mass media\footnote{I will analyze the New Homiletic’s valuing narrative in section d below, Finding Narrative.} and the literature of the period. As a reaction to the trend of the flood of words, the value of language

\footnote{Although this contribution of the New Homiletics, the New Homiletics have to focus more to the gospel, beyond the text. Paul S. Wilson points out, “…Thus in preaching, too heavy a reliance on historical criticism fostered preach-the-text, which became the dominant twentieth-century emphasis. The New Homiletic christened it. Whereas the ongoing strengths of this movement are plainly evident in rendering a trustworthy text understood against backdrop of its own times, its theological limitations only gradually became clear: the gospel was often missed. Or, rather, the gospel was hit-or-miss. Sermons in the New Homiletic might proclaim the gospel, but this, as a practice, was assumed and rarely tested or discussed; it was not named as the preaching goal, and no methodology was developed for obtaining or ensuring it.” – Paul S. Wilson, \textit{Practice of Preaching}, 249-250.}

\footnote{Craddock describes the flood of words of the period: “No doubt the fact that we are today bombarded with words has contributed to the decay of meaning. By limitless new forms, made possible primarily by electronic media, we are surrounded by words. The eyes and ears have no relief, and all the old silent haunts are now scarred with billboards and invaded by public address systems.” Craddock, \textit{As One without Authority}, 7.}
was considered by preachers, and this thinking led to a search for preaching which could be more easily received by listeners. This occurred in conjunction with the insights of the New Hermeneutic, which awoke in homileticians the importance and meaning of language.

As homileticians diagnosed the crisis in preaching, they focused on the degeneration of language as one cause of this crisis. For example, Craddock argues that a crisis in language – a loss of faith in the power of language - leads to a crisis in preaching. He describes the preaching crisis as a time in which it appears that God is silent and only human voices are heard:

This may be a time in which God has actually grown silent, weary with so many empty and careless uses of God’s name. If so, surely healing and recovery of meaning will come out of such silence. But people keep talking, and when God is silent, man becomes a gossip.  

As a result the new Homileticians turned their attention to recovering the power of language.

Consequently an emphasis was placed on both the eventfulness of the word and a focus on features of the language such as narrative, metaphor, imagination and images, etc.

Generally, the experiential event in preaching and the emphasis on imagination, image and metaphor are understood as individual characteristics which comprise the New Homiletic. However, when we see the New Homiletic through a macroscopic view, these elements combine in the flow of language. As noted above, when David J. Randolph first coined the phrase “New Homiletic” in 1969, the New Hermeneutic by Ernst Fuchs and Gerhard Ebeling was a popular theological movement. Its word-event concept influenced Randolph. Then Fred Craddock

411 Ibid., 11.
412 Thus, in As One without Authority, Craddock highlights Martin Heidegger’s emphasis on the importance of the language.
413 Bringing about an interest concerning language in homiletics is one of the essential contributions of the New Homiletics to the practice of preaching. As I have argued above, this contribution was indebted to the New Hermeneutic. Ronald Allen indicates, “Homiletical literature did not show great interest in language as such until the generation of the New Hermeneutic. Today, studies in the nature and function of language are one of the energy centers in homiletics.” “New Directions in Homiletics”, Journal for Preachers, 1993 Summer, Vol XVIII, No 1, 21.
published As One without Authority with its focus on inductive preaching. It is not surprising that his book highlights the importance of the eventfulness of language for recovering preaching, as he was also influenced by the word event concept of the New Hermeneutic. With a collaboration of “many romantic insights”, homileticians such as Eugene Lowry started to use narrative, imagination, images, and metaphors to create an experimental event in preaching. If the notion of the word event of the New Hermeneutic awakened the concept of “event” in preaching of the New Homiletic, the emphasis on features of language such as imagination, images, and metaphors have provided practical elements of “event” in preaching.

How did the concept of the “event” occur in the preaching of the New Homiletic? I have argued that the concept of event is based on the word event of the New Hermeneutic. According to this new understanding, language becomes not just a simple tool of delivery, but also the channel to make an experiential event to encounter between the listener and the God. David J. Randolph said in 1969: “preaching must be understood as event. The homily must then be understood in its uniqueness as the form of discourse to bring the word of God to expression in the concrete situation of the hearers.” In addition, “preaching is understood not as the packaging of a product but as the evocation of an event.” Randolph argued that any new homiletic, in agreement with the New Hermeneutic, “would understand the uniqueness of the

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415 As noted above, the word event concept of the New Hermeneutic was indebted to Barth. He said, “Through the new robe of righteousness thrown over it, it becomes in this its earthly character a fresh event, the event of God speaking Himself in the sphere of human events, the event of Jesus Christ’s vicariate plenipotentiary. Real proclamation as this new event, in which the event of human language is not set aside, but rather exalted, is the Word of God… The Word of God preached now means, in this fourth and innermost circle, man’s language about God, in which and through which God Himself speaks Himself.” Church Dogmatics, trans G.T. Thompson (Edinburgh, Scotland: T.&T. Clark, 1936), I:1: 106.
417 Ibid., 19.
homily to lie in its character as event.”

In 1970, Charles L. Rice claimed that preaching involves an encounter with God:

The intention of preaching is to bring men to a meeting into an encounter with God. In the event of preaching men face the ultimate question, and facing them are, …brought to ultimate demand and final succour. Bringing men to the meeting is the specific task of preaching. That we are failing at the task is apparent in that where preaching is not altogether ignored it too often elicits yes from those who should say no and no from those who should say yes. The question which presses upon us is: How do we preach so that men meet God?

While Randolph understood that preaching evokes the word of God, Rice pointed out that the nucleus of the preaching event is an encounter between God and the listener. For both, preaching brings about an experiential event in which we meet God through the Word of God. Fred Craddock most clearly reveals this connection between language and event. In order to recover preaching the midst of a crisis of language, he suggested that preachers should convert their language usage from propositional, logical and authoritative style to evocative, participative and visuals. For him, “preaching is by its nature an acoustical event, having its home in orality not textuality.”

Therefore, Craddock wanted to encourage the use of more effective language in order to bring about an experiential event in preaching. He argued that preachers should

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418 Ibid., 24.
419 Charles L. Rice, Interpretation and Imagination: The Preacher and Contemporary Literature (PA: Fortress Press, 1970), 15. In Preaching the Story, Rice continually emphasizes the encounter in preaching and explains the encounter as God’s self-giving activity; “Certainly preaching can ultimately be understood only within a theological frame of reference, that is, as an essential aspect of God’s ongoing encounter with and address to his people and a pledge of his presence with them. The necessity of preaching in the Christian community is ultimately rooted in God’s own self-giving activity, his own revelation of himself as witnessed to in Scripture, and in the response of faith to that revelation.” – Edmund A. Steimle, Morris J. Niedenthal, Charles L. Rice, Preaching the Story (PA, Fortress Press: 1980), 7. For more information about the event in preaching, see Paul Scott Wilson, The Practice of Preaching: Revised Edition (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007), 31-34.
420 Craddock, Preaching, 31.
construct new linguistic expressions and words which would effectively evoke the listener’s experience of faith. 421

Eugene Lowry more clearly emphasizes the event in preaching through a focus on imagination. For Lowry, preaching is an activity that intentionally seeks to evoke an event and to order experience: 422 “an event- in- time”—existing time, not a space—a process and not a collection of parts. The preaching comes from the interactive communication between the preacher and listener. 423 Lowry concretely suggests sequential stages 424 for leading the listener to the event. In the “Lowry loop,” the fourth stage, ‘Experiencing the Gospel’ is the most important, and all other stages should flow to the fourth stage. At that stage, listeners can experience the gospel beyond simply propositional knowledge. 425 In addition, “the experiencing of the word can occur as event,” through “the form of human speech.” 426

421 Richard Lischer, “Preaching as the Church’s Language,” Gail R. O’Day and Thomas G. Long ed., Listening to the Word: Studies in Honor of Fred B. Craddock (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 113-30. Eslinger also positively evaluates Craddock’s focusing about language; “Sensitive and insightful attention to the function of language also marks his research. While he is an honest reporter of the crisis in language, the linguistic analysis of Martin Heidegger and modern literary analysis are seen by Craddock as providing a valuable foundation for a new homiletic. At the level of praxis, though, the implications for the language of reaching are both positive and helpful.” Richard L. Eslinger, A New Hearing: Living Options in Homiletic Method, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987), 122-123.


424 Lowry indicates, “There are some possible variations of movement-particularly as related to stages 3 (aha-disclosing the clue to resolution) and 4 (whee-experiencing the good news).” Lowry, The Homiletical Plot, 118. See following the ‘loop’ changes; (1) Upsetting the Equilibrium(Oops), (2) Analyzing the Discrepancy(Ugh), (3) Disclosing the Clue to Resolution (Aha), (4) Experiencing the Gospel(Whee), (5) Anticipating the Consequences (Yeah) – Homiletical Plot (1980) / (1) Conflict (2) Complication (3) Sudden Shift (4) Unfolding – The Sermon (1997) / (1) Conflict (2) Complication (3) Sudden Shift (4) Good News (5) Unfolding – Homiletical Plot, expended edition. (2001) In Preaching, He suggests three preparations-steps before making the sequential loop; attending, imagining, shaping which are under by “the plotting mentality.” In the first step, he understands that “attending” to the text is openness for “experiencing” the text. – Lowry, The Sermon, 100-114.

425 Lowry, The Homiletical Plot, 33.

426 Ibid., 66.
This New Homiletic emphasis on event in preaching is not without its critics.\textsuperscript{427} For instance, Charles L. Campbell uses the postliberal theology of Hans Frei to argue that the New Homiletic emphasis on experience “brings with it the danger of theological `relationalism’- a relationalism that dares to make no claims for God apart from the experience of human beings.”\textsuperscript{428} However, from the perspective of contextual preaching, the emphasis on the experience of the New Homiletic by influences from the New Hermeneutic can be regarded as a reaction to the cognitive, propositional and universal preaching which had dominated the pulpit for so long.

d. Find Narrative!

\textsuperscript{427} Lucy A. Rose points out some limitations of language, “Most transformational scholars do not discuss the problem of the fallen nature of language in general. They reject scientific or descriptive language not because the bond by which words correspond to reality is unreliable or nonexistent. …Performative language is valued because it is deemed capable of creating evoking the reality to which it refers….Language is powerful. It can create new worlds in consciousness. But it is also limited and participates in the sins and distortions of the generations and cultures that use and reshape it.” – Lucy A. Rose, Sharing the Words, 81-83. And also, Thomas Long claims a danger of excessive emphasis on experience in preaching. He said, “There is a deep theological danger in measuring preaching by its capacity to generate religious experience….God does not always move us when we desire to be moved, and everything moves us deeply is not God.” Thomas Long, The Witness of Preaching, 40-41. David J. Lose also warns about possibility of losing the characters of the gospel as follows; “In such heightened attentiveness to experience or event \textit{per se} rests a danger of losing the distinctiveness of Christian gospel and the particular experience it generates.” “Whither Hence, New Homiletic?,” 262.

\textsuperscript{428} Charles L. Campbell, Preaching Jesus, 141. Interestingly, Both the New Homileticians and so-called postliberal homileticians such as Willimon and Campbell emphasize the language use in preaching. However, they have foundational differences. McClure points out, “The fundamental difference, however, between the New Homiletics and Postliberal homiletics lies in views of human language. For the New Homileticians, language expresses depth experience. It is appropriate, therefore, to assume some correlation between what is expressed (language or secondary experience) and what one encounters in life (primary experience). New Homileticians assume that the language they are speaking on Sunday morning is deeply interconnected with reality in all of its aspects. Postliberals, on the other hand, view language as nonfoundational in nature. It is not rooted or grounded in some form of primary experience external to language itself. For the Postliberal preacher, language actually precedes “reality” and in fact gives reality to us. This means that the language of faith, for instance, can give to us \textit{experiences for which there is no common reference point in experience at all}”. \textsuperscript{428} – John S. McClure, Preaching Words, 68.
In addition to an emphasis on language, a focus on narrative (story) is an important characteristic of the New Homiletic. Such a focus springs from a deep valuing of the Bible, and is also related to the growing awareness for the cultural changes that were affecting congregational life. It needs to be recognized that narrative preaching was already practiced before the advent of the New Homiletic. For example, as described earlier, the African American church has a strong tradition of valuing the importance of narrative in preaching. With the New Homiletic, however, narrative preaching “arose to meet the changing needs of re-forming congregations, many of whom were in search of narratives that would bind them together.”

It is clear that narrative preaching emerged as a result of the complex and diverse contexts of the period during which New Homiletic was developed. Charles L. Rice, as early as

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429 Most people regard ‘narrative’ and ‘story’ as synonyms, but some homileticians, including Lowry, differentiate between these terms. Lowry describes his plot style as narrative preaching. He explains, “Often the terms story and narrative are perceived as synonyms. Sometimes that is correct…. Often biblical narrative criticism concerns the exploration of specific biblical stories. But not always. One might speak of the canon as one overarching narrative in shape without meaning the story of the canon. Technically, the term narrative means a ‘story’ and a ‘teller’. Which is quite appropriate – sometimes. …The difference is that in a story sermon, you have characters, setting, action, tone, and plot….What identifies the usual narrative sermon readily is its plot form,…Such a sermon may involve a story told (in which case it would be better called a story sermon). Then again – and more likely- it may not involve any kind of story at all.” – Eugene L. Lowry, *The Sermon: Dancing the Edge of Mystery*, 22-23. See also his recent book, *The Homiletical Beat: Why All Sermons are Narrative*, 11-18. Although I generally treat the terms narrative and story as synonyms in this section, the section on narrative preaching is divided into storytelling style narrative preaching and plot style narrative preaching.

430 Paul S. Wilson summarizes the context, “North American listening to jazz, blues, gospel, and Motown music became interested in its roots in the rhetorically sensitive, story-based, oral traditions of many American churches. Authority that was so long under suspicion in race relations became socially widespread in the post – Watergate, post – Vietnam War era, after the president was seen to have lied to the American people. In scholarly circles, the parables were finally appreciated as centre to Jesus’ own preaching, and the Bible was recognized to be largely story. Language was no longer understood to be just information; it was expressive and based in metaphor. Perhaps as compelling as any of these changes, however, was the effect of television: its medium is mainly narrative in small bites, and it shapes the way viewers think when they go church.” - Paul Scott Wilson, *The Practice of Preaching: Revised Edition*, 143. Eugene Lowry also mentions “a significant trend toward biblical narrative preaching:” “Many see this trend as a result of the revolution of mass media. Certainly anyone who has read the work of Marshall McLuhan would expect such to be the case. Some attribute it to the move toward ‘theology as autobiography’ – as illustrated by the writing of Sam Keen and Harvey Cox. Others see in it a move to greater biblical authority. It may be a case of topical preaching growing thin and tired. Whatever the causes, I welcome the trend.” – Eugene L. Lowry, *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form*, 88-89.

1970 in *Imagination and Interpretation*, identified the importance of narrative preaching and the use of imagination. For Rice, story is an important medium for making the connection between God’s revelation and peoples’ lives. He argues that a preacher is a person “who tells a story, not only that resounding in the Gospels but that of man’s [sic] daily life in a given community.” Although preachers may possess the ability to tell a story, many have “lost the art of storytelling,” since they “have lost confidence in the power of story.” Rice notes:

> Israel lived by story….Word and event were one in Israel’s faith. History and everyday things, the stuff of story, were the vehicle of revelation as they were life itself….Story as a form assumes the involvement of man in the world of things and persons and speaks of the meaning of life in that milieu….the preacher becomes a story. Like the artist, he no longer finds storytelling embarrassing but as essential to preaching as to the faith he has inherited and the life he lives.

Thus, Rice values not only the biblical story, but also the life story of the people. He claims that “people actually do live in stories,” therefore preachers should recognize the importance of those stories, and tell stories trusting in their potential power in diverse situations. Thus, “the preacher who trusts the story will allow the literature (story) itself to get in the sermon.”

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434 Ibid., 86.

435 Ibid., 66-68.

436 Ibid., 88.

437 Ibid., 89.
One year after Rice’s *Imagination and Interpretation*, Craddock published *As one without Authority*, in which an emphasis on inductive preaching incorporated narrative “as a way to promote identification between preacher and listener.” Clearly, inductive preaching and narrative preaching share features such as delaying the conclusion in sermon structure, and an emphasis on story, leading some to regard them as identical methods. Despite their shared emphasis on narrative there are identifiable differences between inductive and narrative preaching. In terms of contextual preaching, the differences between inductive and narrative preaching allow for various applications suited to the diversity and adaptability required by contextual methods. Lowry claims:

Closely related and sometimes nearly identical to narrative preaching is what is known as inductive preaching, which takes its name from the movement of ideas beginning with the particular and moving toward the general (in contrast to deductive movement from the general to the particular). Whether inductive preaching and narrative preaching are similar or identical in shape will depend upon the preacher and the particular sermon. For example, inductive reasoning is one way to complicate a narrative sermon plot, but not the only way. Likewise, the result of inductive logic often is complication of the plot but not always. In either case, the conclusion is delayed until close to the end of the preached sermon. One may observe also that a narrative sermon may sometimes shift briefly into deductive movement once the decisive homiletical turn occurs.

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438 Later, Craddock writes, “…. To be narrativelike means to have the scope that ties it to the life of a larger community; it means the message has memory and hope; it means to be life-size in the sense of touching all the keys on the board rather than only intellectual or emotional or volitional; it means conveying the sense of movement from one place to another; it means having this movement on its own, as though the presence of the listeners were not essential to its process; it means thinking alongside the hearers.” – Fred Craddock, *Overhearing the Gospel*, 137. Elsewhere, he declares, “The gospel itself is a story,” and “Stories are not decorative embroidery on the gospel. - Fred B. Craddock, *Craddock on the Craft of Preaching*, Lee Sparkes & Kathryn Hayes Sparks, ed. ( St. Louis, MI: Chalice Press, 2011), 24.

439 John S. McClure, *Preaching Words: 144 Key terms in Homiletics*, 90.

440 Eugene L. Lowry, “Narrative Preaching”, *Encyclopedia of Preaching*, 343. In addition, Lucy A Rose points out, “Lowry’s narrative form is both like and unlike Craddock’s inductive form. Like Craddock, Lowry proposes a form that charts a process of discovery. Unlike Craddock’s preacher, however, Lowry’s preacher sometimes begins shaping the sermon by clarifying the opening tension long before the sermon’s end is evident.” – Lucy Atkinson Rose, *Sharing the Word: Preaching in the Roundtable Church*, 115.
The revelations about the value of narrative triggered by Rice and Craddock in early 1970’s became a massive movement in the 1980’s, spearheaded by three remarkable publications: Robert A. Jensen’s *Telling the Story: Variety and Imagination in Preaching*, Eugene L. Lowry’s *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form*, and Edmund Steimle, Morris Niedenthal, and Charles Rice’s *Preaching the Story*.

Jensen suggests three types of preaching methods: didactic preaching, proclamatory preaching and story preaching. For him, story means narration, thus he identifies his story preaching as “preaching as fairy tale.” He claims the essential characteristics of story preaching are as follows:

1. The biblical text is treated as a particular configuration of literary form (how the message is communicated) and content (what the message is) which has serious implications for our contemporary recasting of the text.
2. The Story is the preaching itself.
3. The aim of the sermon is the participation and involvement of the listener in the gospel story.
4. Stories function in the indirect mode of communication.
5. Story preaching is open-ended.
6. Faith is evoked by the eucatastrophic experience.

With story as a “human mode of communication,” then “the Bible is essentially a story book.” Therefore, Jensen argues that “communicating the gospel via the medium of storytelling” is a critical tool for effective preaching.

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445 Ibid., 126-148.

446 Ibid., 126.
Edmund A. Steimle, together with two former graduate students, Morris J. Niedenthal and Charles L. Rice, suggests a similar concept of story preaching. With them he argues that preaching is a shared story, involving preacher, listeners, the congregation and the message. Thus preaching becomes an event – “a moment, a meeting, a sudden seeing,” in which the four elements come together. In other words, they argue for an “organic relation” among the stories of preacher, listener, congregation in which the biblical story is “best understood as an unfolding, overarching story comprising many diverse stories.”

In *Preaching the Story*, Charles L. Rice and Thomas J. Herin argue that for listeners, “a part of the biblical story has indeed become my story, they are invited to make connections with their own stories.” Thus while Jensen’s notions about story (narrative) are mainly limited to the Bible story, Steimle, Niedenthal and Rice expand the notion of story to include a four-fold partnership, as well as valuing the organic collaboration among those stories in light of the Bible narrative.

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448 They identify the drawbacks of four “partial approaches” which contrast with their “holistic approach” to story sharing. Each of the four partial approaches “has its disadvantages and liabilities: the content-centered view tens toward incomprehensible jargon and toward a mechanization of the grace of God; the preacher-centered view toward egotism and subjectivism; the institutional view toward the promotion of something other than the gospel; and the need-centered view toward superficiality. Yet each approach has its strengths: the preacher-centered view acknowledges the power of example, the importance of personal investment in interpretation, and requires honestly of the preacher. The need-centered view keeps the message ‘relevant.’ The community-oriented view takes seriously the family of God in ways that is possible for other approach, in its very insistence on the truth, honors implicitly the God who is the truth.” – Ibid., 8-9.

449 Ibid., 9.


451 Ibid., 22.

Lowry’s approach to story is slightly different in that he proposes a narrative preaching method that moves by *plot*. Rather than seeking to affirm the importance of story and narrative, he concentrates on *plotted preaching*, which is composed of five stages within a narrative framework. For Lowry, “the term *narrative* itself means a description of events, real or fictional.” The *narrative* has a deep relation to the *time*, and thus preaching as an “*event-in-time*.” Lowry argues that plot occupies the core position for an effective “*event-in-time*” as follows:

A sermon has a plot, predetermined by the preacher, which has as its key ingredient a sensed discrepancy, a homiletical bind: something is “up in the air”- an issued not resolved. Like any good storyteller, the preacher’s task is to “bring the folks home,” that is, resolve matters in the light of the gospel and in the presence of the people. Plot is the key term for a reshaped image of the sermon. Preaching is storytelling. A sermon is a narrative art form.

These three examples, while differing in emphasis, commonly valued the importance of narrative and resituated the position of story in preaching. They have contributed to the development of the New Homiletic by rediscovering the value of narrative. As noted, this rediscovery arose within the context of that time and place. This emphasis on narrative, then, is evidence that the New Homiletic is contextual preaching located in the North American Church.

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453 Lowry separates the story sermon and the narrative sermon. In the story sermon category, he put Jensen (*Telling the Story: Thinking in Story*), Rice (*The Embodied Word*), Steimle & Morris Niedenthal (*Preaching the Story*). In the narrative sermon category, he put plotted preaching including his own narrative preaching. Lowry has tried to separate the story telling sermon from his narrative (plot) preaching, seemingly to differentiate his particular understanding of narrative preaching from that of others. – Eugene L. Lowry, *The Sermon: Dancing the Edge of Mystery*, 22-24.


456 Ibid., 6.

457 Ibid., 15.
Of these three examples, a model of Korean contextual preaching coincides most with Charles Rice’s understanding of narrative. Rice provided an essential insight for understanding narrative insofar as he valued both biblical narrative and the life story of ordinary people. Thus, his claim that “people actually do live in stories” is an important one for developing a Korean model of preaching. Interestingly, a very similar understanding of the relationship between biblical narratives and narratives of people’s present lives is seen among the Korean contextual theologians discussed in the following chapter.

IV. Conclusion: The New Homiletic as Contextual Preaching.

I have examined the contexts which affected the birth of the New Homiletic, particularly, how the New Homiletic is a response to those contextual shifts. I have argued that the New Homiletic is a form contextual preaching which is a reflection of the cultural context of North America at the time of its genesis.

I have treated war and protest, authority, postmodernism, the New Hermeneutic and church decline as external contexts, which led to the birth of the New Homiletic. If the New Homiletics is a flower in a pot, these external contexts are all external stimulations such as rain, wind and sun, and internal contexts are all inherent features of the seed and soil in the pot. In order to bring the flower to full bloom, all circumstances should fit properly, and all contexts should interconnect organically in the germination of the New Homiletic. Thus, I researched “Turn to the Listener”, “Turn to the Bible”, “Thinking about Language” and “Find Narrative” as the soil and seed.

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459 As mentioned above, I use the term “Internal context,” to indicate essential features of the New Homiletic. My analysis has been based on the premise that the essential features of the New Homiletic resulted from
Through my analysis of the context of the New Homiletic, I have confirmed that the New Homiletic is a product of its time, and has been affected and reflected by various contexts. Therefore, the New Homiletic is contextual preaching. The movement, especially as it reflects its own context, has been a meaningful and valuable process in homiletic history. If we regard the New Homiletic as contextual for North America, some might argue that it will be difficult to transfer to other contexts. However, all contextual preaching shares common values, including an emphasis on its own narrative and use of language. Therefore, the positive features of the New Homiletic can aid other contextual preaching in other contexts.

In following chapter, I will explore the heritage of Korean contextual theology and traditional narrative in order to lay a contextually sound foundation for a model of Korean contextual preaching.
Chapter Four
Korean Contextual Theology and Traditional Narrative

Many Korean theologians and ministers have asserted the need for a Korean theology for the Korean church. While some attempts have been made to identify such a theology, nothing has emerged that is generally accepted by the Korean church. Rim Gol argues that the Korean Church has excessively followed the North American Church:

Where is our Korean theology at present and where it is going? At least, Korean Christianity is the imitator of the American church, rather than a church of Reformed spirit. This tendency arises for the following reasons. First, most early missionaries were American, thus this is an avoidable result in Korean mission history and activity. Second, after Korea’s independence in 1945, every aspect of South Korea’s politics, culture, military, and society, even the culture of the church, were influenced by America. In addition, the most important problems of the Korean church are that the church has been too closed and passive to accept traditional and diverse Christian cultures other than American.

In the history of Korean protestant Christianity, there have been some attempts to contextualize. However, these attempts remained localized, and did not begin to develop into a Korean contextual theology until the 1960’s. At that time, a somewhat systematized contextual theology movement emerged. These efforts include Tochakhwa theology and Minjung theology. Because of the Korean church’s fundamentalism which had been received from western missionaries 130 years earlier, such contextual theology was not widely accepted. In addition, even though, Tochakhwa and Minjung theologies have certain limitations and cannot fully represent the Korean Church, they remain significant examples of theologies which arose from

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461 For example, Yong Do Lee asserted an experience of God through and Eastern method of meditation, and Se Jong Lee, called ‘the barefoot saint,’ claimed that living a simple and poor life is following the way of Jesus. However, Yong Do Lee was treated as a heretic by his denomination (Methodist) at the period, and Se Jong Lee’s proposal could not develop into a more coherent theology because he did not study theology.
Korean’s unique context. In this chapter, I will introduce these Korean contextual theologies, *Tochakhwa* theology and Minjung Theology, and link them to Korean contextual preaching. Important at the outset is the fact that Korean contextual theologies value Korean traditional narratives. Thus, Korean traditional narratives and story-telling performances are central to my work as it seeks collaborate with Korean contextual theologies toward developing a model of a Korean contextual preaching.

**I. Tochakhwa Theology and Minjung theology as contextual theology of Korea**

*Tochakhwa* Theology was initiated by Sungbum Yoon (1961) and Dongsik Yoo in 1962. Yoon presented a thesis entitled: “Introduction of Korea theology method; *Hankuk Shinhak Babgbyub Seoron*”\(^{462}\) in 1961 in the seminary magazine of the Methodist Theological University (*Gamsin*) of Korea. In 1962, Dong Sik Yoo’s thesis: “Indigenization of the gospel and mission task in Korea (*Bokemeui Tochakhwawa Hankukeseui Sunkyojeok Kwajae*\(^{463}\)) was introduced in the same magazine.”\(^{464}\) The publication of these two theses is regarded as the official initiation of *Tochakhwa* theology.

**a. Sung(誠) Theology of Sungbum Yoon**

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\(^{462}\) Sungbum Yoon, “*Hankuk Shinhak Babgbyub Seoron*” [Introduction of Korea theology method], (Seoul: Gamsin Press, 1961)

\(^{463}\) Dongsik Yoo, “*Bokemeui Tochakhwawa Hankukeseui Sunkyojeok Kwajae*” [Indigenization of the gospel and mission task in Korea] (Seoul: Gamsin Press, 1962)

\(^{464}\) The fact that these two theses appeared in the Methodist seminary magazine made them an important part of the academic tradition of the seminary regarding *Tochakhwa* theology.
Sungbum Yoon, who studied for his doctoral degree under Karl Barth’s supervision at Basel University, Switzerland, tried to indigenize Christianity in Korea in combination with Neo-Confucianism. He speaks of this necessity as follows:

It is maybe appropriate to see that an attempt to set up a better theology is a task of Korean Theology. Our Theology should escape from colonial subordination, and become independent escaping from its theological Babylon. This came from our misunderstanding that Western theology is ours, and then unconditional following based on slavish submission to Western theology.

Yoon goes on to suggest that Korean theology should revive Korean theological traditions which combine both the character and context of Korea with the tradition of Western theology. According to Yoon, the Neo-Confucian concept of Sung (誠) has the same meaning as “the inspired Word” in Western theology. He explains the relation between the Gospel and context as follows:

It is undeniable that the core of the gospel in theology is Christ. Therefore, the uniqueness of Christ is emphasized. When we understand the gospel as a seed, this seed needs a good soil to produce a good crop. This soil might be the ‘context’ of Paul

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465 “Neo-Confucianism (simplified Chinese: 宋明理学; traditional Chinese: 宋明理學; pinyin: Sòng-Míng Lǐxué often shortened to 理學) is a moral, ethical, and metaphysical Chinese philosophy influenced by Confucianism, and originated with Han Yu and Li Ao (772-841) in the Tang Dynasty, and became prominent during the Song and Ming dynasties. Neo-Confucianism was an attempt to create a more rationalist and secular form of Confucianism by rejecting superstitious and mystical elements of Daoism and Buddhism that had influenced Confucianism during and after the Han Dynasty. Although the Neo-Confucianists were critical of Daoism and Buddhism, the two did have an influence on the philosophy, and the Neo-Confucianists borrowed terms and concepts from both. However, unlike the Buddhists and Daoists, who saw metaphysics as a catalyst for spiritual development, religious enlightenment, and immortality, the Neo-Confucianists used metaphysics as a guide for developing a rationalist ethical philosophy…. In Joseon Korea, neo-Confucianism was established as the state ideology. Neo-Confucianism was introduced to Korea by An Hyang during Goryeo dynasty (Buddhism was the dominant religion and affected most ideologies of that era). At the time that An Hyang introduced neo-Confucianism, the Goryeo dynasty was in the last century of its existence and influenced by the Mongol Yuan dynasty…In the early 16th century, Jo Gwang-jo attempted to transform Joseon into the ideal neo-Confucian society with a series of radical reforms until he was executed in 1519. Despite the failure of his attempted reforms, neo-Confucianism soon assumed an even greater role in the Joseon Dynasty. Soon Korean neo-Confucian scholars, no longer content to only to read and remember the Chinese original precepts, began to develop new neo-Confucian theories. Yi Hwang and Yi I were the most prominent of these new theorists.” - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neo-Confucianism (Accessed on Sept 20, 2013)


467 Ibid., 134-136.
Tillich, a more complex foundation of the human mind, or it could be general culture such as ethics, religions, and academics. The gospel as a seed which interacts with the human world is relative because it needs context (soil) as a basis. In other words, though excellent seed exists, if the soil is bad, at last the seed itself may metamorphose.\footnote{Ibid., 136.}

Yoon intuitively acknowledges that the Western theological concept of the \textit{inspired word} does not relate to Korean’s unique emotional context. Thus, he adopts the concept $\text{sung}$ (誠) from the Neo-Confucianism of Korean Confucians Yulgok (栗谷) and uses it as the basis of theology. He analyzes the meaning of $\text{sung}$ (誠) as \textit{completion of word}. According to Yoon, it can be translated as \textit{true word}. In his analysis, Jesus’ “It is finished” on the cross is the same as \textit{completion of word} ($\text{sung}$:誠).\footnote{Ibid., 138.} Furthermore, he asserts that this $\text{sung}$ concept explains incarnation of the logos. Some Korean theologians have criticized\footnote{To these critics, Heupyoung Kim evaluates that these criticisms came from differences of theological methodologies and these are outside the core of the problems. And also he points out the essential weakness of Yoon’s theology: “There is somewhat elegant hermeneutics of retrieval to romantically rebuild Korean tradition. However, though he criticized Western theology, (in his theology), there is no hermeneutics of suspicion to disassemble and clarify in symbols of Korean traditional religions. (For example), Basic elements of Korean Neo-Confucianism such as loyalty(忠), filial piety(孝), $\text{sung}$ (誠), $\text{ri}$ (理) are not pure and perfect; rather, these concepts have a history of hermeneutical errors which were misused as a ruling ideology. An excessive nationalism which accepts old traditions without necessary critiques to avoid being governed by governing of Western theology is the weakness of Yoon’s theology.”(my translation) – Heupyoung Kim, “Hankuk Jojiksinhak 50nyun: Gan munhwajeok Gochal” [Korean Theology 50 years: intercultural research] , (Seoul: Haean Press, 2003), 167.} his $\text{sung}$ theology variously as “syncretism” (Jongsung Lee),\footnote{Jongsung Lee, \textit{Bokdeon Malsem} [Blessed word]( Seoul:Bokdeom Malsem sa, 1972), 12.} “Neo-Gnosticism” (Euihwan Kim),\footnote{Euihwan Kim, I have to tell something about Sung Thelogy; \textit{Sung sinhak e halmal itda}, (Seoul: Kidokgyo Sasang, 1973 March), 108-114.} and “Nationalism” (Aaron Park).\footnote{Aaron Park, \textit{Hankukjuk sinhak e daehan iron} [Theory about Korean Theology] (Seoul:Kidokgyo Sasang, 1973 August), 87.} However, I affirm that Yoon’s $\text{sung}$ theology is to be valued as the first systematized Korean contextual theology which emphasizes tradition and context.
b. PungRyu (風流) Theology of Dongsik Yoo

While Sungbum Yoon’s Sung theology adopts certain concepts from Neo-Confucianism, Dongsik Yoo’s theology borrows from broader Korean traditions. Prior to asserting a systemized indigenous theology, he identified unique relations between Korean traditional concepts and Christianity. For example, in 1959, he introduced The way (道, Do, Tao) to explain the concept of Logos.

‘Logos’ had an ultimate meaning to explain the gospel for the people who lived in the Hellenistic period. However, the Logos had already lost its meaning to Eastern people in this time. Therefore, we have to have a new horizon to understand our gospel. Then, what is our concept which can provide a new horizon for Eastern understanding of the gospel? That is ‘the Way (Tao:Do;道)’.\(^\text{474}\)

Unfortunately, Yoo did not further develop this theological concept as a substitute for the Logos of traditional Christianity. Rather, in the early 1960s, he was influenced by the Indigenization theory of D. T. Niles when it was introduced in Korean. When D.T. Niles visited Korea in 1962, he asserted the necessity of the indigenization of the gospel:

The gospel is seed, and the church is the flower from the seed. However, even if the same seeds are planted, the flowers can be different depending on soil….However, Western missionaries have brought to Korea a flower pot in which the flower is planted in Western soil and in the grown Western world. We should break the flower pot, and move the flower to our fertile soil to grow well.\(^\text{475}\)

This encounter with Niles’ Indigenous theology added a missiological perspective to Yoo’s theology, which resulted in 1965 in Yoo’s *Religions of Korea and Christianity*. His further study in the 1980’s and 1990’s concentrated on finding the nature of Korean spirituality and religious

\(^{474}\) Dongsik Yoo, “*Do wa Logos: Bokem eui Dongyangjuk ihae rel wuihan sogo* [Do and Logos: an article for Easternic understanding of the gospel], *Kidokyo Sasang* (Seoul: Korean Christianity Press, 1959 March), 56-57.

culture. As a result, in 1992, he published a book, *The Way of Pung Ryu* and *Korea Theology,* which began the development of a new indigenous theology that influenced Korean traditions. Yoo adopted the term *Pung Ryu* (風流:풍류) for his theology, a Korean term which is composed of two terms; wind and flowing of water. It does not simply mean flowing water or moving of wind, rather it has a more complicated meaning to indicate a certain lifestyle. Generally, *Pung Ryu* has indicated an aesthetic, peaceful and comfortable lifestyle such as loving nature and art. In this sense, Yoo’s theology is called *Pung Ryu* theology, which he explains as follows:

*Pung Ryu* theology aims for an understanding of the gospel in Korean culture and Christianity by *Pung Ryu* as Korean spirituality. *Pung Ryu* theology strongly wants Christianity to become the main religion of Koreans. For that, it needs the three works below. First, examine *Pung Ryu* as Korean spirituality. Second, check the history of Korean religions and culture based on and influenced by *Pung Ryu*. Third, suggest *Pung Ryu* theology’s composition and structure as a Korean theology.

*Pung Ryu* theology consists of the theology of *Han* (한), the theology of *Sarm* (삶), and the theology of *Mot* (멋).

At this point, I will explain the meaning of some Korean terms. *Han* is the Korean’s special emotion and “a deep feeling that rises out of the unjust experiences of the people. It is the suppressed, amassed, and condensed experience of oppression caused by mischief or misfortune so that it forms a kind of lump in one’s spirit.” Jae Hoon Lee understands that *Han* is a unique emotion of Koreans; even though other ethnic groups have similar emotions:

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476 The Way of Pung Ryu (*Pung Ryu Do*) first appeared in an old Korean history book, *Samkuk Sagi,* which was written in 1145. According to the book, Chiwon Choi of Shinra Dynasty wrote as an epitaph; “In our county, there has been a deep and profound way. That is *Pung Ryu*…Indeed, this includes Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism and a spirit which makes genuine people.”

477 Dongsik Yoo, “Pung Ryu Theology”, *Hankuk Sinhak igotida* [This is Korea Theology] (Seoul: Handel press, 2008), 257.

The uniqueness of the Korean Han lies in the richness of its meaning and in its relation to the everyday life of the people and their culture. Some elements of Han can be seen in many other cultures, but when these elements are condensed into one reality Han constitutes a unique Korean concept…Han is not a single feeling but many feelings condensed together, including resentment, regret, resignation, aggression, anxiety, loneliness, longing, sorrow, and emptiness.

To sum up, Han is not just private but also a communal emotion emanating from oppressed and wounded history and realities among the Korean people. Therefore, to proper deal with Han has been one of the essential tasks of Korean churches and seminaries. Yoo’s PungRyu theology also was an effort to provide a possible solution for Koreans regarding Han.

In Yoo’s theology of Sarm (삶), the Korean term Sarm can be translated as life, living, daily life, existence. Yoo also proposes the theology of Mot, which he claims as “The most accurate Korean word that communicates the meaning of PungRyu.” He explains,

Mot is a word that conveys the Korean concept of beauty. However, this is not used for natural beauty, as it is a word that refers to the beauty of human life….In sum, Mot is the consciousness that comes out of the beauty of the harmony between freedom in the world and the energy that is the root of all life.

According to Yoo, these three theologies (Han, Sarm, Mot) have an organic relationship with one another and should be viewed as one holistic theology. In addition, the theology of Han and the theology of Sarm are superintended by the theology of Mot as the nature of PungRyuDo. In other words, he understands that Mot is located at the highest position in relation to the other two theologies. Accordingly, Yoo proposes a direction for PungRyu theology, “Now, the further work of PungRyu theology is to build up art theology (as a theology

481 Dongsik Yoo, “PungRyu Sinhak [PungRyu Theology]”, Hankuk Sinhak igotida,[This is Korea Theology] (Seoul: Handel press, 2008), 263.
of *Mot* which reflects Minjung theology and Korean religious theology."\(^{482}\) While some critics of *PungRyu* theology such as Heup Young Kim, call it an “excessive emphasis of substantialism,”\(^{483}\) nevertheless, *PungRyu* theology has the widest perspectives on the traditions of Korea and is valuable as a new hermeneutic lens with which to view Korean traditions and Christianity in the Korean context.

c. Minjung Theology

During the same time period in which Sung theology and *PungRyu* theology arose, a new Korean contextual movement in theology called Minjung arose. Influenced by Latin American liberation theology, Minjung theology was developed in the early 1970s by Jae Jun Kim, Nam Doung Suh and Byung Moo Ahn. Unlike *Tochakhwa* theology which has focused on Korean’s traditions and culture, Minjung theology has been interested in the people’s economic situation and in politics.\(^{484}\) David Kwang-sun Suh explains Minjung theology as follows:

> Minjung theology is a Korean theology. “Minjung” is a term which grew out of the Christian experiences in the political struggle for just over the last ten or more years. Theology of Minjung or Minjung theology is an accumulation and articulation of theological reflections on the political experiences of Christian students, laborers, the press, professors, farmers, writers and intellectuals as well as theologians in Korea in the 1970s. It is a theology of the oppressed in the Korean political situation, a theological

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\(^{482}\) Ibid.

\(^{483}\) Heupyoung Kim, *Hankuk Jojiksinhak 50nyun: Gan munhwajeok Gochal* [Korean Theology 50 years: intercultural study], *Hankuk Jojiksinhak 50 nyun*, 168.

\(^{484}\) This highlights a misconception regarding Minjung theology: for example, “Minjung is the Korean theology or the Korean contextual theology.” For that, David Kwang-sun Suh points out: “….we cannot in fact claim that Minjung theology is the Korean theology, if by Korean theology we mean what is acceptable to the majority of Korean churchgoers and theologians. Although it is rapidly making inroads into the Christian community, beginning with the marginal elements, it is still a Korean theology in the making. It is a Korean theology for the future and of the future which is emerging out of the reflections on experience of the Korean reality at this particular time in history.” - David Kwang-sun Suh, “Minjung and Theology in Korea: A Biographical Sketch of an Asian Theological Consultation.” *Minjung Theology: People As the Subject of History*. Kim Yong Bock,ed. (Singapore: A CTC-CCA Publication, 1981), 19.
response to the oppressors, and it is the response of the oppressed to the Christian church and its mission.\footnote{Ibid., 18.}

Both Minjung and liberation theology focus on the liberation of economically poor and politically oppressed people. Both are concerned with human rights and justice.

II. Narrative in Korean Contextual Theologies.

Most Korean contextual theologians emphasize the current culture of Korea used narratives for the development of their theologies. Although Tochakhwa (Sung, PungRyu) Theology does not directly use of narrative, the Tochakhwa theologians, Yoon and Yoo, valued Korean traditional narrative as a tool to connect Christianity to the Korean context. For example, Sung Bum Yoon’s Sung theology presents an essential theory of the Trinity through Korean traditional narratives, particularly in his use of an old narrative about the story of the founding of ancient Korea. According to Yoon, “Korea has narratives of the Trinity. We can find this in the narrative of Dangun\footnote{The legendary founder of ancient Korea, “Dangun Wanggeom, or Tangun, was the legendary founder of Gojoseon, the first Korean kingdom, around present-day Liaoning, Manchuria, and the Korean Peninsula. He is said to be the "grandson of heaven", and to have founded the kingdom in 2333 BC. The earliest recorded version of the Dangun legend appears in the 13th century Samguk Yusa, which cites China's Book of Wei and Korea’s lost historical record Gogi (고기), Dangun's ancestry legend begins with his grandfather Hwanin (환인; 禮因), the "Lord of Heaven". Hwanin had a son, Hwanung, who yearned to live on the earth among the valleys and the mountains. Hwanin permitted Hwanung and 3,000 followers to descend onto Baekdu Mountain, where Hwanung founded Sinsi (신시; "City of God"). Along with his ministers of clouds, rain, and wind, he instituted laws and moral codes and taught humans various arts, medicine, and agriculture. Legend attributes the development of acupuncture and moxibustion to Dangun”. - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dangun (Accessed on Sept 26, 2013)}\footnote{Sung Bum Yoon, “Kidokyo juk Yookyo [Christianitic Confucianism]” Sung Bum Yoon Collection Vol II (Seoul:Gamsin, 1998), 453.}, but remain surprised that the format of the three gods of the narratives is very similar to the Trinity of Christianity.”\footnote{Sung Bum Yoon, “Kidokyo juk Yookyo [Christianitic Confucianism]” Sung Bum Yoon Collection Vol II (Seoul:Gamsin, 1998), 453.} Yoon’s analysis of the Dangun narrative was one of the most important pieces of work in the development of Sung theology. For Yoon, this
narrative helps Koreans understand the real meaning of the Trinity. He asserts a similarity as follows:

On the contrary, the Dangun narrative of Korea excludes a Yin Yang’s relationship; rather, it morally treats the principal of BujaYuChin (父子有親: There should be affection between father and son)…. Both the three gods of Dangun narrative, Hwanin, Hwanung, Hwangum and the Holy Trinity of Christianity exist to reveal a human-God.  

In Yoon’s understanding, a concept from the narrative of Dangun serves as an important point of contact among Western theology, Neo-Confucianism and Korean tradition. Thus, I argue that Yoon’s Sung theology is based upon a Korean traditional narrative. I also perceive that Yoon’s approach through Korean traditional narrative inspired other Minjung theologians to develop a theological discussion regarding narrative.

In addition, Yoo asserts that Pung Ryu theology leads to art theology. He argues that Old Testament (especially the stories of creation) and New Testament (the gospel) have an artful structure. Thus, he argues that people can see the nature of art in the Bible and accordingly see the structure of the gospel in art. Yoo presents the narratives of God’s creation and the life of Jesus as the perfect work of art. He selects Genesis 1:28, 2:7, and 2:31, and says, “these three verses have basic elements of art. Those are the aesthetic idea of the artist, creative work, and art.”

He writes:

First, God is the first artist who realizes his own aesthetic idea….Second, God is both creator from nothing and artful creator who completes own idea by materials….soil does not exist by itself, but is re-created through the ideas of the artist and creation work…. People are beautiful….because they are God’s image.

On the life of Jesus, he affirms:

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488 Ibid., 456.
489 Dong Sik Yoo, Pung Ryu Do wa Yaesul Sinhak [PungRyuDo and Art Theology], DongSik Yoo Collection Vol 9 (Seoul: Handel Press, 2009), 235.
490 Ibid., 235-236.
First, the birth of Jesus is an event in which the logos of the eternal God became the human Jesus. It was a creative event that logos, the creator of heaven and earth, and the source of life came to this world. The historical Jesus is the front view who we feel with our senses, and the eternal logos is the background that we feel with our religious spiritual eyes. Eternity and time joined in Christ. This is God’s artful work of creation to re-create people as new beings through Christ. Second, Jesus’ cross… and resurrection…[reveal God’s] principle of creation and principle of life. Third, the gospel is God’s work of re-creation and people who are transformed by the gospel are a new art work of God. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

For Yoo, this Art theology as Korean theology has to be interpreted in *PungRyuDo*.

Yoo’s approach is broader and more insightful in terms of its use of narrative when compared to Yoon’s work. In other words, while *Sung* theology used only an ancient Korean narrative, *Dangun* narrative, *PungRyu* theology used the macro narrative of the Bible from the stories of God’s creation to the Jesus narratives.

It is clear that their use of narrative has affected the development of Minjung theology, and that as a result, Minjung theologians have affirmed a more systematized use of narratives.

### a. Narratives of Minjung theology

Since Minjung theologians understand narrative to be one of most effective methods to communicate Minjung theology, their theology is more focused on narrative than those

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491 Dong Sik Yoo, *Pung Ryu Do wa Yaesul Sinhak* [PungRyuDo and Art Theology], 236.

492 Minjung theologians understand that The term “Minjung(民衆)” has same meaning of *ochlos* in Gospel of the Mark. Byung-Mu Ahn categorizes of Minjung as follows: “First, everywhere Jesus went, the minjung(ochlos) followed. It would be impossible to envision Jesus of Galilee without the Minjung and likewise it would be difficult to think about the Minjung of the Gospel without Jesus….Second, Jesus shared the same table with Minjung….Third, by placing the *ochlos* at odds with the rulers in Jerusalem of that period, the author alludes to a relationship of solidarity between Jesus and the *ochlos* against the Jerusalem citizen….Fourth: the *ochlos* were a threat to the powerful ruling classes….Fifth, Jesus perceived of the *ochlos* as “sheep without a shepherd.”….Sixth, Jesus declared that the *ochlos* were ‘my brother, and sister and mother’….Seventh, and most important, is the fact that Jesus did not make any ethical or religious judgments against the *ochlos*….The narratives of the gospel do not state one way or the other what motivated the work of Jesus. Jesus was simply with the Minjung everywhere he went.” – Byung-Mu Ahn, “Jesus and *Ochlos* in the Context of His Galilean Ministry.” *Asian Contextual Theology for the Third Millennium: Theology of Minjung in Fourth-Eye Formation*, Paul S. Chung, ed. (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publication, 2007), 45-47.
who work particularly in *Tochakhwa* Theology. This section identifies and investigates representative Minjung theologians’ appropriation of narrative.

David Kwang Sun Suh emphasizes the value of narratives in the Gospel. He says, “The stories of Jesus are absorbed in the stories of Minjung; the stories of Minjung are also absorbed in the stories of Jesus in the Gospel.” He also identifies the importance of the biblical story to Korean Christians, and suggests that this arises from Korea’s history of oppression. For Koreans, the narratives of the Bible are not only the story of the Israelites in their oppressed and suppressed history, but also the story of Koreans themselves. Suh explains:

> The historical experiences in the Bible were identified with Korean Christian experiences, and transformed immediately into the religious language of Korean people. The historical language of the Bible therefore became the historical language of the Korean people. For the preacher and Sunday teachers, the story of Moses and Israel’s exodus from Egypt were favourite political stories which were told and retold to raise the national and political consciousness of the hearers for liberation. Inevitably they mixed this story with the story of the Korean people who were suffering under the bondage of a foreign power.

According to this perspective, Koreans accepted “the story of Moses not only as a literal event in the history of Israel but also as a literal event in the history of the oppressed people of Korea.” In this regard, most Minjung theologians agree that Korean Christians started to

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493 Jürgen Moltmann comments on Minjung Theology: “The Korean Minjung theology links Jesus’ gospel of the poor (ochlos) with these native popular and resistance traditions in the same original way as the Minjung congregations do in the poor districts of Seoul. Minjung theology is not a theology that has been made culturally indigenous, like ‘yellow theology’ before it. It is a contextual theology of the suffering people in Korea, and is therefore open for people all over the world, the people of God’s kingdom whom Jesus called blessed. Minjung theology is also the first political theology to exist in Korea, inasmuch as it is bound up with the struggle for human and civil rights, and turns Christians from being a ‘people of the church’ into ‘the congregation of the people.’ – Jürgen Moltmann, “Minjung theology for the Ruling Classes”, *Asian Contextual Theology for the Third Millennium: Theology of Minjung in Fourth-Eye Formation*, Paul S. Chung, ed. (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publication, 2007), 71-72.

494 Nam Dong Suh, “Mindam’s Sinhak-Ban Sinhank [Theology of Mindam-Counter theology]” 297.


understand the biblical stories as their own story when under Japanese rule from 1910 to 1945. Also during this time of persecution, they began to identify with the remarkable patience of the early Christians in the face of persecution.

Moreover, under the dictatorship of the 1970’s, Korean Christians identified themselves as oppressed people recognizing that the narratives of Jesus which included ordinary people (ochlos) could provide strength helping them to persevere in severe trouble. In this context, Minjung theologians have focused on biblical and local narratives, and tried to draw parallels between the narratives of Jesus and the oppressed people of Galilee (ochlos), with the ordinary and oppressed people of Korea (Minjung). Compared to the deductive nature of traditional (Western) theology: the examples of Nam Dong Suh's use of Korean narrative theology creates a more inductive theology:

The genuine medium of God’s revelation is narratives from substantive, concrete experiences in an inductive way. It does not seek abstract transcendence, but concrete incarnation. If traditional theology is transcendental and deductive, narrative theology is inductive and counter-theological. In addition, traditional theology is ruling theology. Traditional theology ideologically justifies and blesses the ruling order.

In addition, Suh affirms the importance of story in the Bible:

The first medium of God’s self-disclosure was God’s salvific act and actual events. And the authentic medium to express these events was stories, more specifically oral stories first and then literary stories. Therefore the Bible is full of literary stories. God’s language is stories; the communication method of Jesus was also storytelling.

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497 Nam Dong Suh’s assertion is very notable from a homiletic perspective. He recognized the importance of inductiveness of narrative without reliance on Fred Craddock.


499 Nam Dong Suh, “Mindam’s Sinhak-Ban Sinhank [ Theology of Mindam-Counter theology]” 305.
Even as they recognize the essential value of narratives, Minjung theologians also concentrate on the narratives of ordinary people (Minjung) to resolve Minjung’s Han⁵⁰⁰. Byung Moo Ahn claims that narrative, which reveals the entire experience of one’s own life in the language of Minjung and resembles the breath of the people. Moreover, he asserts, “Minjung tells narratives. Jesus just told easy stories which are easily recognizable to Minjung. He did not intend to use a lower language level. That was his language itself.”⁵⁰¹ In Minjung theology, narrative means telling life experiences. It does not mean observing someone’s life experience, but rather telling about one’s life honestly. Ahn declares the importance of narrative in the Bible as follows:

In a macro view, the descriptive style of the Bible is composed of narratives. Narratives are experienced in real life, and these were delivered mouth to mouth by ordinary people (Minjung) for a long time in the oral period. [These narratives] create a flow, like people’s walking creates new roads between mountain villages finally joining in one stream. While certain people who knew how to use letters wrote the narratives in various ‘literary styles’, the original foundation is narrative.⁵⁰²

For Ahn, the language of Minjung from the time of Jesus to the present is narrative, something characteristic of the oral tradition. The use of narrative emphasizes Minjung’s real life and experiences, and thus it loses its vitality when analyzed logically in search of contradictions or inconsistencies. The narrative of Minjung is not afraid of contradiction.⁵⁰³

I have explored the perspectives of three representative Minjung theologians’ regarding narrative indicating how they have recognized the importance of narrative in both the Bible and

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⁵⁰⁰ Han is Koreans’ “a deep feeling that out of unjust experiences of the people. It is the suppressed, amassed, and condensed experience of oppression caused by mischief or misfortune so that it forms a kind of lump in one’s spirit.” – Nam Dong Suh, “Towards a Theology of Han,” Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History, 68.
⁵⁰¹ Byung Moo Ahn, Yesui iyangi [Narratives of Jesus], Collection IV (Seoul:Hangil press, 1992), 3-4
⁵⁰² Ibid.,16.
⁵⁰³ Ibid., 346.
the life of the people. Among biblical narratives, they have focused on the Exodus story and the Jesus story, because those narratives have provided Korean Christians in an oppressed context with an image of ordinary people, as well as a sustaining hope for a better life. In addition, Minjung theologians have asserted that storytelling is an effective way of doing Minjung theology.

Their work is a valuable resource for developing a model of Korean contextual preaching. Above all, Minjung theologians have highlighted the importance of biblical narratives and people’s real life story, and they have argued that telling these narratives leads to a dramatic encounter which can resolve Minjung’s Han. Storytelling, then, can be an effective model of Korean contextual preaching.

Young-Sun Kang claims, “When the Minjung hear a sermon made up of sacred, religious, philosophical, and rhetorical words, they would feel as if they were in another world. They would experience a linguistic alienation.” Furthermore, he suggests, “Storytelling is more appropriate to Minjung preaching than to Western preaching which has developed a proclamatory style of preaching.” Yet Korean preaching today is dominated by a western-influenced reality of deductive style-topical sermons. Thus, Kang’s assertion is of considerable importance for a contemporary model for Korean contextual preaching.

b. Mindam in Minjung Theology

While narrative is valued in Minjung theology, Byung Moo Ahn specifically mentions the importance of ordinary people’s stories, Mindam (民譚). As noted previously, he

\footnote{Young-Sun Kang, “A Study of Preaching in the Context of Minjung Theology.” D.Min. Thesis (San Anselmo, CA: SFTS, 1990), 93.}

\footnote{Ibid, 2.}
understands that biblical narratives (especially Jesus’ story) have developed from oral tradition among ordinary people of the period. According to his theory, the ordinary people’s real lives and spirits indwell in the narratives of the Bible.

Byung Moo Ahn explains the meanings of Mindam as follows:

The language of Minjung has a characteristic of oral tradition. The main feature of oral language (of Minjung) has a narrative style; that is Mindam. Mindam does not need a logical process or certain theory. It is language of life, and from life. It presents matter which occurred in people’s life or describes people’s feeling from the matter and does not belonging to the frame of logic. Mindam is experiential things, not speculative things. While some peoples try to analyze a narrative as introduction, body and conclusion, people who want to tell narrative just hand down the whole story, and do not concentrate on certain parts….Like this, narrative is an organic thing and has a meaning entirely….The language which is located shortest distance from Minjung’s life; i.e. oral condition of narrative (Mindam) is the language.

In this regard, Ahn understands that the Gospels are a Mindam collection containing Jesus’ narratives forged among Minjung of that period. In addition, the parables of Jesus can be evidence regarding the use of Mindam in Jesus’ sayings. Ahn’s theory regarding Mindam and narrative is another feature applicable to Korean contextual preaching.

Although there is a time gap of two thousand years, there are common elements among the narratives of ordinary people (Minjung) in the present, and the narratives of Jesus in the biblical period. In the biblical narrative Jesus is seen as a friend, counsellor, doctor and saviour. Today through these stories Minjung receive hope and vitality to sustain their lives just as much as those oppressed people who lived two thousand years ago.

Other representative Minjung theologians, David Kwang-sun Suh and Nam Dong Suh, claim a link between the Korean traditional mask dance and Jesus as a liberator to resolve

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506 Byung Moo Ahn, Reoksa wa Minjuni [History and Minjung], Collection VI (Seoul:Hangil press, 1992), 47-49

507 Suh describes the stage of the mask dance: “The time of performance is at night. The place of the mask dance is usually in the center of the village….Mask dance performances usually take place around the harvest time,
Minjung’s Han. Both scholars attend to the hero of the mask dance, Maltugi. Maltugi represents a servant-slave who generally works at Yangban’s house. In a Korean traditional Mask dance, Maltugi appears as “the embodiment of satire, jocularity and humor,” and usually Maltugi acts as a protester against the ruling class of the period such as Yangban and old Buddhist monks. Through Maltugi’s action in the mask dance, Minjung could experience an emotional catharsis to sustain them through their own troubles. Nam Dong Suh explains this moment in the mask dance, quoting Chi-Ha Kim, a Minjung-Catholic poet:

Being beaten by the yangban, Maltug (Maltugi) finally gets his revenge by beating the yangban with his quick wit and brave actions. This leads to an ecstasy and songs where real humanity, i.e. koinonia, is realized, which the author calls “God’s involvement in history.”

David Kwang Sun Suh argues that these mask dances “do not present any political alternatives to the authorities”, but are “critically transcendent over against ideologies which legitimate the existing political order.” In addition, he parallels Jesus with Maltugi in terms of the liberation of Minjung. He understands that the final scene of the mask dance is a climax, a peaceful and collaborative moment which gives a spiritual insight:

In the final act of Maltugi, he liberates a wanted criminal, the Chewbari. And at the end of Maltugi scene all five of them, Maltugi, Chewbari and the three yangban brothers, dance together. The dance is a lively one, a dance of liberation. There is no distinction between the Yangbans and the slave-servants. They are equal now, and all are liberated so there is enough food and lots to drink….The people begin to gather around the village center, where they from a big circle to the music and dancing of the actors and actress….Presently all the members of the mask dance team are dancing around the big circle of the people, to the loud music. The people are shouting, the dancers’ morale is very high, and the stage is set for a play. Well, it is time for a big play. One of the players announces the opening in a loud voice, and the people shout with joy, accompanied by the sound of gongs and cymbals.” - David Kwang Sun Suh, “Mask dance and liberation”, The Korean Minjung in Christ (Hong Kong: CCA, 1991), 160.

508 The ruling class
510 Nam Dong Suh, “Towards a Theology of Han”, 60.
511 David Kwang Sun Suh, Theology, Ideology and Culture (Hong Kong: WSCF Asia/Pacific, 1983), 69.
in dancing. Jesus Christ with our Maltugi mask liberates us and liberates the Minjung as the slave-servant with the cross on his forehead will free us, the suffering Minjung of the third world. We hear the clear voice of Maltugi with his cross on his forehead, shouting: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his path straight....( Luke 3:4-6 followed.) 512

I would argue that this understanding of the mask dance arises from a unique hermeneutic of Minjung theology, which locates all oppressed people (Minjung) in the same group, from past to present and from east to west. Thus far, I have examined the emphasis on narrative in Korean contextual theologies; arguing that both Indigenization theology and Minjung theology have equaled the biblical narrative with the narratives of people’s lives. Moreover, they value Korean traditional narrative and narrative performances to reflect Minjung’s lives, which can lead to an encounter with the narrative of the Bible providing hope . In effect, in its focus on the values of narrative to resolve Minjung’s Han, Minjung can be fruitfully applied to Korean contextual preaching.

III. Korean Traditional Narratives and Performances

In this section, given the importance of traditional narrative for a model of Korean contextual preaching as seen in Korean contextual theologies, I will explore further examples of the oral literature of Korea and Korean folktales (Mindam). Then I will explore particular examples of Korean traditional narrative methods of Mindam in order to seek their application for a model of Korean contextual preaching.

a. Oral Literature

Oral literature refers to literature which has been transmitted through the spoken word, in contrast to written literature. Duck Soon Jang, a Korean language and literature professor, explains that the term “oral literature” has three meanings: existing oral language type, delivering by oral language and transmitting through oral language.  

He asserts features of oral literature as follows:

Oral literature exists as verbal language, thus it is influenced by time and has a temporary feature. If it repeats continually, it will be a different story. It can communicate in only one way between teller and hearer, and it is basically impossible to tell many people in a moment since it is conveyed through verbal language. Transmitting through verbal language means that a certain story which he/she has already heard and memorized, appears as verbal language again. Therefore, in oral literature, preservation of the original story is impossible, but is still the only possible way to transmit a story. Transmitting is a preservation which contains change.

Oral literature must have an oral presentation. In other words in presenting oral literature, action, gesture, and change of voice tone are essential tools to vitalize the content of the story. Oral literature has many features in common with folklore:

Folklorists generally associate five qualities with true folklore: (1) its content is oral(usually verbal), or custom-related material; (2) it is traditional in form and transmission; (3) it exists in different versions; (4) it is usually anonymous; (5) it tends to become formularized. Each of these terms is used in a fairly broad sense, and the first three qualities are primary ones to be considered in arriving at a definition. Folklore is oral or custom-related in that it passes by word of mouth and informal demonstration or imitation from one person to another and from one generation to the next.

Although they share common characteristics, oral literature and folklore are not identical.

In Korea, oral literature has been the literature of ordinary people (Minjung) such as farmers. In other words, the oral literature of Minjung is not separable from their lives, rather it is life itself. Therefore, it represents their values, thought, experiences, and an emotional resistance to

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514 Ibid., 22.
certain ruling classes (such as the Yangban). Oral literature, on the other hand, includes myth, legend and folktale (*Mindam*). This thesis will focus on *Mindam*, which represents the storytelling form of ordinary people’s lives.

b. *Mindam*[^516] (Folktale)

Prior to this treatment of *Mindam*, it is important to establish that the English term “folktale” is not exactly synonymous with the Korean word “*Mindam*.”[^517] For example, Yol-Gyu Kim asserts, “The Korean word most akin to folk tale is *yennal yaegi* (iyagi; an old tale).”[^518] *Mindam* is an old tale, but not all old tales are *Mindam*. While not exactly the same, *Mindam* can be understood as a kind of folktale, because it shares many common features with folktale.

*Mindam* are “narrated stories that are passed down orally from generation to generation, transcending time and space.”[^519] As oral literature, a *Mindam* requires a long oral transmission process in which “omission or additions are often made to stories by the narrator in order to

[^516]: Brunvand states that if legends are folk history, then folktales are the prose fiction of oral history. He explains: “Folktales are traditional narratives that are strictly fictional and told primarily for entertainment, although they may also illustrate a truth or a moral. Folktales range in length and subject matter from some European stories about fantastic wonders and magical events that take hours—even days—of narration, to brief American topical jokes with concentrated plots and snappy punch lines that are told in minutes. The term ‘folktale’ usually connotes the complex, so-called fairy tale, familiar in children’s literature. But there is no valid justification for ignoring recent tales that may have more realistic plots.” - Jan Harold Brunvand, *The Study of American Folklore: An Introduction*, 3rd Ed., 186.

[^517]: The range of *Mindam* which is used in Korean contextual theology is more limited than the normal meaning of *Mindam*.

[^518]: He identifies *Mindam* as an old tale (*Yennal Iyagi*); thus his range of *Mindam* is very broad. His understanding regarding range of *Mindam* is a little wider than the understanding of Korean contextual theologians. “As it is generally used, however, this term *iyagi* is broad and complicated, signifying far more than merely the best-loved nursery tales. It also includes fables with animal heroes, myths, and what we call folk history or unofficial history. It even includes ancient anecdotes. Thus indifferent contexts, the word *iyagi* might be variously translated as narrative, story, or tale, etc.” Yol-gyu Kim, “Introduction” Shin-Yong Chun, ed. *Korean Culture Series 7: Korean Folk Tales* (Seoul: International Cultural Foundation, 1978), 9.

make them more interesting.\(^\text{520}\) There is no original *Mindam*, as it is constantly in development and process. Thus, it is impossible to seek the original narrative of certain *Mindam* since it is only available through inference. Duk Soon Jang asserts, “The folk tale is, by nature, fluid. In their constant travel through space and time, folktales never cease to undergo changes both in form and content.”\(^\text{521}\)

*Mindam* differs from myth or legend. The first crucial feature which defines *Mindam* is its realistic characterization of the lives of ordinary people (Minjung). In other words, *Mindam* as a narrative is a kind of folk tale which reflects the actual life of a particular people and society. Another defining feature is an ambiguity about all settings including character, time and place. Unspecific characters, as well as an unspecified time and place are the basic features of *Mindam*. Thus, every hearer of *Mindam* can play a character of the *Mindam* allowing it to image their life stories including happiness, sorrow and tears.

*Mindam* are shared where Minjung live and meet daily. In other words, they have been told wherever the Minjung ate, worked, or relaxed. For example, children through such recitation might learn narratives of their ancestors, or about social values and the heritage of their society. Yol-gyu Kim describes:

The recitation of these tales in the ordinary course of life provided the children with encyclopedic knowledge of the world in which they lived, of its history, as well as of life and of nature. They learned to distinguish between the things they should do and those they should not. They learned what should be kept near and what should be kept away. In short, they understood the traditional society and they inherited its values….of course, it was not only knowledge that was communicated through the recitation of tales. The tales naturally provided teaching and morals. The recitation sites were centers for the development of the aesthetic sense and the cultivation of the children’s emotions.\(^\text{522}\)

\(^{520}\) Ibid.


Two other aspects of Mindam are important. First, Mindam has been divided into several classifications about which there is a lack of agreement among scholars. Hak Choi classifies Mindam according to six categories and twenty topics,\textsuperscript{523} Hee-woong Cho identifies five categories and twenty-six topics.\textsuperscript{524} Interestingly, though there are numerous Mindam, most Mindam contain messages of Kwansunjingak (勸善懲惡) in interconnection with several plots in a narrative. The term Kwansunjingak can be translated as promoting virtue and reproving vice, or encouraging good and punishing evil.

Second, some examples transform Mindam into source stories such as the Mask Dance and Pansori, meaning that Mindam are not only recited in private places, but also in public performances. The most important aspect of Mindam for Korean contextual preaching is that it can be a public performance and it contains the lives and voices of ordinary people.

c. Mask Dance (Masked Dancing Drama)

David Kwang-sun Suh and Nam Dong Suh have identified theological meanings of the Minjung within the Korean traditional mask dance. The mask dance is firmly based on the life of Minjung. The ruling classes such as Yangban could not be performers of the drama;


moreover, they could barely participate as audience. It attacks the ruling class (*Yangban*) emphatically revealing a commoners' thinking. All mask dances have stereotypical, troublemaking characters who present complications and crises, which are deepened by humour and satire. The topic of the mask dance is social, political and economic criticism.

The mask dance does not have a specific stage setting. It only requires an open space in which the audience gathers. The ground is normally flat rather than a stage, meaning that there is no physical gulf between performer and audience,\footnote{Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, *Preaching as Local Theology and Folk Art*, 2.} thus facilitating a sharing of all in the drama. With this open setting, the process also has a free style. Duk Soon Jang explains as follows with examples from several mask dances:

1. A monk (*Mokjung*): I heard a drum, thus I am here to watch. – (A performer says that he wants to see something of the drama as well as audience.)
2. Actor (*Chubari*): (to audience) Hey, you audience! If you want to live, run away!! There will be a murder. – (An actor speaks to the audience and reveals his thoughts.)
3. Old monk (*Nojang*): (turns an actor (*Chubari*) out of the door by hitting him with his sleeve)
   Actor (*Chubari*): Oops (And then, steps backward)
   Some Audience: A terrible monk is hitting a person! – (The Audience can attack or interrupt the actor.)
4. Old Monk (*Nojnag*): How do you lose a gaffer?
   Musician: We ran away to save our lives since the disturbance…- (Actor and musician can talk each other.)\footnote{Duk Soon Jang, *Gubi MoonHak Gaesael*, [Introduction to Oral Literature], 242.}

This free style removes superfluous items from the content and helps to create an easy process for the drama. Actor and audience can communicate with each other, and the audience can even intervene in the drama at any time.

Moreover, most narrations use somewhat exaggerated language which reveals the rebellious attitude of Minjung. In some forms of the Korean mask dance, commonly an old monk (*Nojang*, 老丈) appears. When the old monk first appears, he looks like a solemn master,
however, as time goes by, he becomes ridiculous in his luring of two female shamans (So-mu)\textsuperscript{527}, and in the end he becomes an apostate monk. Through this satire, Minjung reveals opposition to the privileged class such as the Buddhist monks of the period. While an old monk (Nojang) represents the Establishment, there are two characters, young monks (Mokjung) and Chubari, who represent the ordinary classes in the mask dance. As monks the Mokjung are different from the old monk (Nojang), in that their curiosity and interest in everything are contrasted with the hollow spirituality and indifference of Nojang. Chubari, who likes to fight to get what he wants, is a symbol of the resistance of Minjung in the context of oppression. Usually Chubari attacks Nojang through sarcastic speeches, and in the final scene of a masked dancing drama Nojang is defeated.

Mask dance employ many types of satire. The most representative shows conflict between a member of the ruling class (Yangban) and a servant (Maltugi). A Yangban acts like a smart person, however, the audience can see that he is an idiot. For effective satire, Maltugi mimics the accent of the Yangban parodying him through his own poems. Through the mask dance ordinary people (Minjung) justify their emotional resistance against the privileges of the ruling class, a resistance they may be unable to experience in their daily lives. One of the most unique features of the mask dance is a group dance occurring at the end in which all performers, even the audience, participate. Dongil Jo explains this group dance as follows:

Both Yangban (a ruling class) and Maltugi (a servant) understand that they do not need to fight, and they agree to dance together for reconciliation…. (it) does not mean there must be a winner and a loser, rather it reconfirms that all are equal and the same. Thus,

\textsuperscript{527} Chon-Hung Kim describes their appearing in the mask dance, “At that time, two young shamans, or sorceresses (Somu), appear from opposite sides of the stage dancing the Charachum(Turtle Dance), while Nojang dances at stage-center. Nojang, charmed by two Somu, dances back and forth between them in a style known as Kalijachum (A zigzag step, executed with the feet pointing outward). Even though the Somu, one after another, tempt him, they refuse his advances….so that it finally encircles all three, whereupon they dance around the stage together joyfully as one body with Nojang wedged in between. - Chon-Hung Kim, “Mask Dance”, Survey of Korean Arts: Folk Arts, 346.
they prove that fighting brings reconciliation, and subjugation brings creation…..Though both the mask dance of Korea and the drama of Greece which values catharsis treat victory and defeat among enemies, Korean mask dance has special feature that the result (Victory or defeat) has positive effect for all and there is no pain for the defeated.\footnote{Dongil Jo, \textit{Hankuk Talchum eui wnori}, [Principals of Korean Mask Dance:Sinmyung Puri, Talchumui Walri, Simyung Puri ] (Seoul:Jisik Sanupsa, 2005), 319-320.}

In other words, in Korean mask dance, conflict is intended to give way to dramatic unification and reconciliation for all people.

d. Pansori\footnote{“The term Pansori is a compound word, and can be divided into two parts: the prefix ‘pan’ literally means a ‘place’ or ‘spot’ in which various folk plays are performed; and the suffix ‘sori’ literally means ‘sound’ or ‘song’ which was presented at an entertainment area called noripan. When the two words are combined, Pansori can be etymologically explained as a ‘song given at the place for entertainment.’” – Hanyong Kang, “Pansori”, \textit{Survey of Korean Arts: Folk Arts} (Seoul: National Academy of art, 1974), 217-218. On Nov 7, 2003, UNESCO designated the Pansori epic chant as an important cultural heritage. \url{http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/RL/00070} (Accessed on May, 21, 2013).}

\textit{Pansori}, a more systematized traditional narrative performance, has an application for Korean contextual preaching. This performance consists of a theatrical play in which a storyteller (singer), accompanied by a drummer, presents a long story with songs (sori), narration (aniri), and gestures (norumsae). Somewhat similar to western opera in its reliance on music, it includes unique melody, rhythm, and story. However, unlike western opera, \textit{Pansori} requires only one performer who sings songs in relation to the story and tells a story, standing at the front stage with one musician who plays the traditional Korean hand drum (Buk). Although \textit{Pansori} has often been understood as a narrative performance for ruling classes, it has been performed for various social classes including Minjung. Kang argues:

The most frequent occasions when the various performing arts were presented were the village market days, traditional festival days, and marriage ceremonies. The playing ground was usually the gathering place of a village, the market place of a town or a fishing village, or the garden of a wealthy man. The play grounds of the more highly
developed Pansori ranged from the village noripan (playing ground) to the gardens of aristocrats in government office or the royal court.  

Therefore, while the masked dance drama demonstrates a Minjung critique of the ruling class Yangban, Pansori demonstrates various aspects of social change through the voices of diverse social groups. Pansori, a performance art which has developed through the interactions among social classes has frequently been recorded in writing for ruling classes, and Pansori novels have been produced.  

In performance, a male Pansori teller (singer) wears traditional Korean dress and the hat of the Yangban, and holds a traditional folding fan in his right hand. A gosu (drummer) sits at the left front of the teller and plays Buk (a Korean traditional hand drum) to make a rhythm in accordance with the narrative or the song. The teller mimics, sings songs, and uses gestures to communicate with the audience. In his gestures, the teller “makes very versatile use of the fan and handkerchief as props.” Moreover, “with his gestures and mime, the singer (teller) mimics the way that a hero or a heroine cries, saws through a gourd etc.”

Similar to the drama of the masked dance, the audience can participate in a unique way called Chuimsae. Hanyong Kang describes Chuimsae as follows:

When the singer says to the drummer, “He made such a nice thing.” The drummer responds by exchanging at the phrase ending: Kurochi (right), Chochi (good), Chota (nice) and so forth. The responses are known in Korean as Chuimsae. The Chuimsae are sometimes exclaimed by the audience as encouragement to the singer. The audience participation contributes to making Pansori one of the most significant folk performing arts.

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530 Ibid., 218.
531 Though 12 Pansori novels exist, at present, only five of them are continued as performance. (Song of Chunhung, Song of Simchung, Song of Hengboo, Song of Su gung, Song of Jeak buk) - Duk Soon Jang, Gubi MoonHak Gaesael[,] Introduction to Oral Literature, 210-211.
533 Ibid., 226.
534 Ibid.
The *Chuimsae* roles in *Pansori* are the same as an orchestra playing in western opera. When the audience says “*Chuimsae*”, *gosu* (the drummer) shouts “*Chuimsae*” more frequently than the audience. The *gosu* has the features of both a performer and an audience, thus, the *Chuimsae* of the *gosu* can be interpreted as the reactions of the audience. The *Chuimsae* reveals an interaction between the teller and the audience and allows group improvisation on the part of the audience. According to the process of narratives, *Chuimsae* roles indicate impression, agreement, resistance, reconciliation, and/or emotional ecstasy. Therefore, the *Chuimsae* of both the *gosu* and audience are essential aspects of a successful *Pansori* performance.

To understand the fate and actions of people, *Pansori* makes use of ideological causationism. This concept implies that the fate of people is decided by a supernatural order which people cannot recognize. They believe that good people ultimately receive blessing and bad people are cursed.\(^5\) Other inner topics of Pansori are set out by Duk Soon Jang:

However, Pansori does not only reveal ideological causationism. Ideological causationism composes superficial topic and is expressed by explanations. There are somewhat different inner topics which are realized in actual conflicts and scenes of Pansori; the social notion of Pansori can be evaluated through the inner topic. The social notion in the inner topic is realistic rationalism. Ideological causationism does not have deep interest about people as social beings and a thinking method by pioneering and ethical appropriateness. However, realistic rationalism recognizes the actual lives of people as social beings by experiences, and seeks a more rational value. Minjung always have done experiential thinking which is based on real life and it works as the foundation of value judgement; it is confirmed by folk songs, folk dramas, and folk sayings.\(^6\)

This coexistence of ideological causationism and realistic rationalism is a result of negotiation between the idea and the reality of Minjung. In other words, while the masked dance drama reveals only the idea of Minjung through satires and resistance, the *Pansori*, which has a

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\(^6\) Ibid., 242.
more diverse following that includes the ruling class (*Yangban*), had to negotiate between inner and outer reality.

**e. ChangGek and Madang Nori**

In present day Korea, the most popular narrative performances are *ChangGek* and *Madang Nori*. These are not traditional performances, but rather fusion-style performances which began in the twentieth-century.

*ChangGek*, based on *Pansori*, is more of a musical performance with greater variety in dances and music. Young Dae Yoo points out: “*ChangGek* is both a traditional performance since it was based on *Pansori* and a modern performance since it was influenced by a soap opera (*Sinpa Gek*) of Japan.”

While *Pansori* are performed by a singer and a drummer (*gosu*), *ChangGek* has as many performers such as is found in western opera. It is comprised not only of traditional stories such as those used in *Pansori*, but also of creative stories, including even some Western stories such as Romeo and Juliet.

Before describing *Madang Nori*, I will explain the Korean term *Madang* at this point. Originally, the *Madang* is a Korean traditional term meaning a small front yard or garden in a traditional home. This *Madang* is somewhat similar to the backyard in a western house. Typically in a *Madang*, there was a big low bamboo wooden bench, *PungSang* (平床), which accommodated the whole family and their friends for a sharing of their life stories. In a corner of the *Madang*, there was a tiny field for growing green vegetables such as lettuce, hot pepper and sesame; and also a cage to house a dog. When most Koreans imagine the *Madang*, they think of

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537 Young Dae Yoo, “, *ChangGek eui Juntong kwa Kukrip ChangGek dan eui yeoksa* [Tradition of ChangGek and history of National ChangGek team]”, Korean Studies vol 33, (Seoul: Korea University, 2010), 143.

538 Ibid., 201.
peaceful memories with their family and friends. It is not just a memorable meeting space, but also a space in which to interact with nature. As a result of the influence of rapid industrialization, most Koreans have lost the traditional Madang. In summary, the Korean term Madang has a special meaning for Koreans. In the present, the Korean church, as it hosts the 2013 World Council of Churches’ Assembly in Busan, Korea, is using the term to indicate the meaning of ecumenism as churches gather from around the world.  

Another performance, Madang Nori, or Madang Gek, has been mistakenly identified as a traditional Korean performance. However, it actually began in the 1970’s as a satire about Korean society under dictatorship. This performance, influenced by the masked dance drama, contains both traditional Korean aspects, and contemporary features, which includes westernized content. Developed by a major broadcast company (MBC) in 1981, Madang Nori has been one of the most popular performances in Korea. It has included Pansori songs, Pansori novels, representative folk tales and stories of historical characters. Like masked dancing drama, Madang Nori uses a circular stage which enables easy interactions between the performers and the audience. According to Jin Tae Park’s analysis, Madang Nori has incorporated most features of the masked dance drama, but has added various features including narrative literature.

539 “Madang is a Korean term that describes a courtyard in a traditional Korean home. The madang serves as a space for encounter and sharing, celebration and fellowship, greeting a visitor and welcoming a stranger. The Korean churches proposed madang as a concept to help root the assembly in the host context and also to give shape and meaning to the assembly. At the 1998 Harare and the 2006 Porto Alegre assemblies, the respective concepts of padare and mutirao referred to a limited shared space for workshops, exhibitions and side events, involving different groups and ecumenical partners. The vision for the Busan Assembly is more holistic. Madang offers possibilities to prepare the entire assembly as a shared space for encounter and discussion of what it means to be the church together in the world today for justice and peace.” – WCC 10th Assembly Programme book, (World Council of Churches Publication, Geneva, Swaziland: 2013), x.

composite art, extemporaneousness and the participation of audiences. Typically, *Madang Nori* is composed of three major sections: *GilNori* or *Appuri* (Inviting audiences to the Main Play), *Madang* (Main Play) and *Duitpuri* (Final communal celebration).

**VI. Conclusion**

This chapter has set out a description of Korean contextual theology and Korean traditional narrative in order to identify possible applications for Korean contextual preaching. Section 1 described Korean contextual theologies such as *Tochakhwa* theology (*Sung* theology and *PungRyu* theology) and *Minjung* theology. Though these Korean contextual theologies were not widely accepted in the Korean protestant Church, their development was a meaningful step toward a Korean contextual theology. Section 2 built on Korean contextual theologies in order to emphasize narrative in Korean contextual theologies, and to confirm that Korean contextual theologians have been interested in the narratives contained in *Mindam* and Korean mask dance. These insights provide a bridge between Korean contextual theology and Korean traditional narratives. Therefore, Section 3 surveyed Korean traditional narrative performances such as *Mindam*, masked dancing drama, *Pansori*, and Madang Nori which have been emphasized by Korean contextual theologians. From this study, I identified some potentially applicable aspects of Korean traditional narratives and telling performances for Korean contextual preaching. In following chapter, insights from this chapter’s study will be collated with insights from other examples of contextual preaching.

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541 Ibid, 54.
Chapter Five
A Korean Model of Contextual Preaching for Korean Protestant Church

This chapter will set out insights from the findings in the previous chapters in order to develop a model for Korean contextual preaching. This section is not a comprehensive exploration of all the insights identified thus far, but will focus on several implications of the research, which I would judge to be particularly significant in the development of a twenty-first century model for Korean contextual preaching.

I. Insights from Contextual Preaching and Korean Narrative Performances.

a. Pauline Preaching

Six contextual characteristics of Pauline preaching were identified in Chapter 1. These include the following: understanding the culture of the congregation; using insider language; developing a common narrative; a non-fixed form or style of the sermon; a claim to minimal authority by the preacher; a flexible conclusion and a purpose aimed at keeping the congregation’s unity. Understanding the culture of the congregation is perhaps the most significant characteristic for informing a Korean model of contextual preaching. Beyond a simple interest in the superficial situation of a congregation, Paul’s sermons indicate how fully he understood the deep conflict among church members, which arose out of both their internal and external contexts. They were a community in formation, a community in which beliefs and practices had not yet been set. They existed within an external context that had certain cultural values and practices that needed to be negotiated in terms of the different understandings within the community as to how their life of faith would be lived. For contemporary Korean preachers who seek to preach contextually, it is necessary to gain in-depth knowledge of a congregation’s
context. In a contextual model of preaching, a little knowledge can be a dangerous thing. Thus, to preach contextually requires a life-long commitment to the study and discernment of congregation culture. In Paul's case not only was he the congregation's founder, but he had written a previous letter to them, and possessed the letter they had written to him. Also, he had heard about the divisions from Chloe's people and likely from Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus who had delivered the letter to him. In other words, prior to preparing his sermon, Paul had a well-developed understanding of the congregational context.

A second feature of contextual preaching can be seen in Paul's tendency to use “their” rhetoric and language. That is to say he chose expressions that were direct quotes from their letter, words such as “knowledge”, “right”, “conscience,” “strong,” and “weak.” Such attention to their means of expressing their differences would have increased emotional empathy between himself and the congregation. Using vocabulary common to both factions reveals Paul’s intention to bridge the gap among the factions. Those who seek a model for Korean contextual preaching can learn from Paul’s use of language in his sermon. In the process of delivering and sharing the word of God, such language will enhance intimacy between preacher and listener, and between the word of God and the listener. This will enable the gospel to be heard and adopted more effectively in a given context.

The final insight from Pauline preaching for a Korean model of contextual preaching is his use of biblical narrative. For Paul, the Old Testament is a useful catalyst which leads God’s people to a common understanding of how to live the gospel.\footnote{Paul’s understanding of the relation between Law and Gospel is associated with his position regarding the Old Testament.} Paul uses Old Testament
narratives as channels to encourage what anthropologists call fictive kinship\textsuperscript{543}, which is a strong argument for the divided members to understand themselves as part of a new household, the household of God. Moreover, a story cross-culturally has been a resource to say things that cannot be said directly. Thus, sharing God’s story has a natural dynamic-power to invite people into the faith community and so into the world of a God who has the power to heal the wounded reality of suffering people. From the viewpoint of contemporary narrative preaching, some might argue that Paul’s use of narrative is unpolished, lacking elegant descriptions and plots. However, in the Korean context Paul’s direct use of the Exodus narrative could be more effective than the New Homiletic's somewhat complex approaches to narrative preaching. This thesis argues that these three characteristics are particularly foundational for a Korean model of contextual preaching. The next section identifies adaptable insights from two highly indigenized kinds of preaching: Liberation preaching and Black preaching.

b. Indigenized Preaching (Liberation Preaching, Black Preaching)

Liberation preaching is a model of contextual preaching which has been like a parent to other types of socially motivated preaching including Black preaching, feminist preaching and other types that are categorized as justice preaching. One of the essential insights from liberation preaching for a Korean model of contextual preaching is the way in which it seeks to speak for the underprivileged. Before the emergence of liberation preaching, preaching had been influenced by the mission movement, and was dominated by a white, Eurocentric perspective. Thus, preaching has at times been misused to justify imperialist exploitation. Liberation

\textsuperscript{543}In a society where kinship is a strong cultural value, fictive kinship requires that members relate to one another as family. This would mean they would relate as actual brothers and sisters would in a Greco-Roman family unit.
preaching, as a reaction to this trend within Eurocentric preaching, has sought to increase the voices from the marginalized who have been oppressed and hurt by dominant groups. While liberation preaching cannot fully overcome the suffering and trouble faced by listeners, it at least addresses suffering and trouble in a direct and meaningful way.

In the 1970’s and 80’s economic growth in Korea led to a corresponding growth in the Korean protestant church. During that period, in most churches, a popular sermon theme was that of ‘private blessing,’ a theme related to prosperity theology. Such preaching ignored the lives of oppressed and suffering people. They were simply dismissed as unblessed and unworthy people. While it is natural for people to pursue blessing, the reality is that many people throughout the world, including Korea, face suffering and oppression. Liberation preaching reminds preachers that they are to preach in a way that values the whole people of God, and that many need things other than a promise of prosperity in order to build their sense of self-esteem and confidence in the gospel. Through the model of liberation preaching not only can the oppressed receive good news specific to their context but also the other members of the congregation who do not suffer oppression can act toward creating a more equal world. Therefore, valuing and thinking about the life of ordinary people is an important insight for developing a Korean model of contextual preaching.

A second applicable insight from liberation preaching is its rediscovery of the value of biblical narrative. Liberation preachers seek “to recognize the political dimensions present in the Bible.” For them, the Bible is “the record of God’s liberative activity” for people, and is a “call to join God in that activity.” According to this understanding, the Bible is a book of narratives which link God’s salvation and liberation in both the past and the present. For Korean Christians

it might be a struggle to accept liberation preaching’s perspective on scripture given their tendency to read the text doctrinally. Nevertheless this particular way of focusing on biblical narrative provides meaningful insight for a model of Korean contextual preaching.

Biblical narrative has a dynamic power to connect with the life story of contemporary listeners. This interconnection between the biblical narrative and the people’s own narrative can bring about a fuller understanding of God’s present intervention and participation in the life of God's people. Liberation preaching’s biblical perspective does not remain at the level of typological interpretation, but invites the Holy Spirit to interpret the people’s context through the biblical text. Both of these characteristics will be helpful in developing a contextually based Korean sermon.

Black preaching also provides certain insights for a Korean model of contextual preaching. For example, Black preaching uses what is called “Black English” in order to enhance the hearer’s intimacy with both the word of God and to connect with the preacher. This essential aspect of Black preaching recognizes that language represents the spirit, the culture and the history of a group. Therefore, proper use of a group’s unique language is vital, especially for contextual preaching. For example, there are Korean terms which reflect unique emotions and cannot be adequately translated, such as “Mot ( isc)” or “Han (恨).” Most English translations substitute words such as “zest” or “anger,” yet these terms are insufficient as they are unable to reflect the culturally complex meaning of these words. This phenomenon can be seen in every cultural group. For effective contextual preaching, a careful selection of language, reflective of the identity of a particular group is key.

Another insight from Black preaching is the expression of celebration in the preaching process. An unpracticed, voluntary response from the hearer is a traditional feature of Black Preaching. This is a phenomenon that has emerged naturally and not as a result of a theory or
technique. Mitchell describes this unique participation of African American people in preaching as follows:

> The Black style, which includes the call and response, is part of a larger dialogical pattern traceable to West African culture. The response requires a participating audience, and Black preaching has had such an audience from its beginning. Black preaching has been shaped by interaction with the listeners. If the Black preaching tradition is unique at all, then that uniqueness depends significantly upon the uniqueness of the Black congregation, which talks back to the preacher as a normal part of the pattern of worship.⁵⁴⁵

I do not mean to suggest that Korean preachers should concoct such a response from their listeners as some Korean revival preachers have done. The result is a formulated, meaningless and habitual response such as “A-men.” Instead, I want to adopt from Black preaching the free interactions between preacher and hearer in an open atmosphere. Such as seen in traditional Korean performances, unfortunately, some Korean conservative churches have strictly prohibited any response from the hearer. In those churches in which the sermon is the solo activity of the preacher, it is believed that restricting the listener’s response reveals the authority and holiness of the preacher as the mouthpiece of God.

I would argue that this perspective does not reflect the complex and unique nature of Korean life as understood by Han (恨) and Heng⁵⁴⁶ (興). For Koreans, the somewhat negative emotion “Han” has been controlled by another unique and somewhat positive emotion “Heng.” When the negative emotion “Han” was dominant, Koreans’ lives were full of sorrow, misfortune,

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⁵⁴⁵ Henry H. Mitchell, Black Preaching: The Recovery of a Powerful Art, 100. “Black dialogue between congregation and preacher consists of the well-known cries ‘Amen!’ ‘Praise the Lord!’ ‘Well!’ ‘Have mercy!’ ‘Sho’nough!’ and a hundred other spontaneous audible responses. It also includes facial expressions, swaying bodies, nodding heads, raised hands, foot patting, shouting, tears, and (in recent years) hand clapping. Whatever the form, the communication is real. It may even include coaching. When some folks feel it’s time to celebrate they may without hesitation cry, ‘Come on up!’ If it appears that a preacher’s strength is waning, one may cry ‘Help him, Lord.’…The congregants are able to respond because they are at ease. They are interested in what the preacher is saying, because they are crucially involved in the issue considered, and deeply interested in the Bible, from which the sermon comes.” – Ibid., 101-102.

⁵⁴⁶ An unique innate joy of Korean people.
and anger. However, no matter how much their lives were surrounded by “Han”, Koreans never lost the positive feeling of “Heng.” What this means is that like the spontaneous response in Black preaching, the Korean unique emotion “Heng” has to deal with “Han” in thinking through what contextual preaching is like. “Heng” is an expression of special-indigenized joy and hope which has been represented in Chuimsae of Pansori and other traditional story-telling performances, as well as in voluntary communal dancing after the performances that breaks down social class. In Korean contextual preaching, preachers need to encourage the hearers’ expressions of “Heng” in interactions between the Word of God and the hearers. A voluntary response of hearers and the use of a specialized language in Black Preaching provide valuable insights for Korean contextual preaching.

c. The New Homiletic.

The New Homiletic was introduced into the Korean church during the mid-1990’s, approximately twenty-five years after the publishing of As One without Authority. Some Korean seminaries began to teach the methodologies of the New Homiletic as a new preaching possibility for the Korean church. However, the theory and background to the New Homiletic was not introduced sufficiently, and most preachers have been remained merely “fascinated” by its methodology. Thus, there has been trial and error in applying the New Homiletic to actual practice of preaching in the Korean church. For example, preachers impatient to try inductive preaching without helping their listeners attain a full awareness of its methodology failed to communicate the ‘point’ of the sermon to the congregation. Moreover, open-ended sermons, such as those brought to a sudden end without a specific conclusion, have led congregations to be confused and critical of the new method. As listeners, they were not able to achieve an ‘experience’ in preaching, nor could they grasp the intention of the preacher. Some older,
conservative hearers disliked what they perceive to be excessive descriptions, images, and metaphors, arguing that these images go beyond what is scripturally accurate and make the sermon shallow.

Despite the challenge of practicing the New Homiletic methodology, it still has valuable insights for the development of a Korean model of contextual preaching. First of all, the importance of the listener within the New Homiletic is applicable in the Korean context. The “turn to the listener” is automatically related to the issue of the “authority” of the preacher in the Korean church. Historically, a one-way flow of authority from preacher to listener has been dominant in the Korean church. In postmodern Korea, hearers, even in a Confucian culture, have begun to question this flow of authority. A contextual understanding would argue the need to acknowledge that Korean listeners are not passive recipients of one-way preaching. In Korea a greater focus on the listener would enable a more positive interaction between preacher and listener and in turn, the Word of God. Turning to the listener will open opportunities to try new ways of preaching that can be more effectively heard by the listener.

Second, the “Find narrative!” of the New Homiletic will reconnect the narrative of the Bible to the actual lives of Korean people. On the whole, the New Homiletic can be regarded as narrative preaching, in that, beyond merely valuing narrative, a whole methodology of narrative preaching has resulted. Therefore, in understanding the New Homiletic as contextual preaching, it can be seen that one of its most important strengths is to systematize the value of narrative for preaching in a particular context. In applying this to Korean contextual preaching, it can be seen that it is important to value both the narrative of the Bible and the narrative of the people both past and present. The biblical narrative reveals the working of God among the people of the biblical period, offering in a similar way both hope and correction to the people of today. In addition, sharing the narrative of a particular group provides an opportunity to name particular
life situations, including their history, concerns, joy and current problems. Contextual preachers seek to build a bridge to connect these two essential narratives, offering an opportunity for listeners to find themselves and their situation described in the word of God. Although D. Stephen Bond’s work concerns the sharing of private stories, he offers an important insight for contextual preaching:

Shared storytelling is probably the most interactive form of preaching. By shared storytelling, I mean a sermon in which the proclaimer asks the congregation to share stories around a particular life context suggested by the scripture. The sermon is stories. Such context might include: birth, religious experiences, weddings—and the list goes on as far as one’s imagination….My experience has been that shared storytelling is a celebrative event. Even when the stories are stories of struggle and pain, in the telling the experience becomes a celebration of having lived to tell the story.

Korea’s history, including a dynamic modern history, spans over five thousand years. Thus, Koreans have an abundance of stories which can be twinned with the biblical narrative, making narrative a rich tool for a model of Korean contextual preaching.

d. Korean Traditional Narratives and Performances

Korean traditional narratives and story-telling performances such as masked dance and *Pansori* which are based on *Mindam* will provide and reconfirm essential foundations for the development of a Korean model of contextual preaching. If contextual preaching requires the understanding of “sociocultural contexts” as Tisdale asserts, a starting point for Korean contextual preaching should be the lives of Koreans, and it must be concerned with the common narratives of the Korean congregation. Korean contextual theologians should value Korean traditional folk tales (*Mindam*) since *Mindam* contains the world-view of Minjung, which in turn represents the central value of the Korean people to life itself.

An essential reason why *Mindam* has continued across the centuries and is so popular in Minjung is in its power to reveal the importance of common narratives. When such a form becomes part of a model for Korean contextual it has the potential to reach Korean listeners in a powerful way. Therefore, a Korean model for contextual preaching must connect the Word of God in the Bible and present lives of Korean congregations through a sharing of common narratives from their particular context. This enables active interaction between the preacher and the congregation in the light of the word of God.

Second, *Mindam’s* plot sends the message of *Kwansunjingak*, encouraging good and punishing evil, and the flow of the plot naturally invites Minjung into the story by peaking their interest. Such a plot flow allows Minjung to identify themselves with characters in the narrative, allowing an opportunity to resolve their Han through a catharsis in the plot of the story. This natural identification of Minjung with the characters confirms the power and dynamics of narrative, and also the necessity of employing narrative from both the Bible and their life context, for more effective preaching.

Third, the use of language by the performers in the Korean traditional mask dance and *Madang Nori* produces insight for contextual preaching. For instance, in mask dance and *Madang Nori*, there is no special stage-setting representing any particular time or space; it is the speech of the performers that creates an imaginative stage setting for the minds of the audience. The performers’ messages are not lengthy or tedious; rather they use innuendo and summarized words to encourage the concentration and interest of audiences. In addition, the performers choose familiar vocabulary commonly used to speak of actual lives in Minjung in order to aid the understanding of various age groups. In other words, Korean contextual preachers should choose

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548 The present lives of congregations include their unique tradition, culture, history even inner conflicts and concerns.
to select language and vocabulary which suits the age, experience, and educational level of his/her own congregation. As the performers of the mask dance demonstrate, contextual preachers can use imaginative words, because imagination motivates multiple intelligences and can touch a congregation’s own roots and hearts, not only the heads and minds.

Fourth, in Korean mask dance, *Pansori* and *Madang Nori*, there are voluntary responses required of the audiences. The purpose of these is to bring out the innate joy (*Heng*,興) of Koreans and invites the audience's participation in the performances. Here is another powerful possibility for a Korean model of contextual preaching. Normally, the Korean laity is silent during preaching. Moreover, some even understand that to keep silence is an immutable tradition of the church. For Korean contextual preaching to be contextual this would change. Koreans love to participate in the story-telling performances and through that participation they are able to experience emotional joy, a sense of accomplishment, and a sense of kinship among all people, including the performers.

Therefore, a more flexible atmosphere during preaching which allows for audience participation through voluntary responses would be one requirement for preaching which adequately considers the Korean context. To respond vocally is not totally unknown in Korean worship. A response is encouraged in Korean public prayer, where laity are accustomed to responding with “A-men” and “O- Lord,” including at traditional *TongSung Kido* (Public out loud prayer). Thus, a voluntary response as in Korean masked dancing drama and Korean public prayer shows a potential to move beyond the current silent and passive attitude of Korean congregations in preaching, to create a lively and intimate interaction with the Word of God. In addition, this can be a way to invite laity as partners in the practice of preaching.

Fifth, the Korean masked dance identifies a communal celebration which transcends class distinctions. After the masked drama in song, all actors and even the audience begin to
participate in a communal dance to celebrate the success of the performance and to bring forth their innate joy (興, Heng). In the dance, there are no distinctions between classes such as *Yangban* (a ruling high class) or *Sangnom* (a ruled low class). In the dance, it does not matter who is the object of satire, or who is satirizing. This kind of communal dance contrasts with a strict class society based on Confucianism. Such a communal celebration shares something in common with other forms of contextual preaching, in that, most contextual preaching started as a reaction against Eurocentric preaching, and is premised on the belief that all are equal before the word of God. In a hierarchical society, communal celebration that rejects class distinctions allows the people to think about what it means to have an *equal* society and to act to make it a reality. And this also provides a clue for communal celebration, in which both preacher and listeners will participate, in a model of Korean contextual preaching. Thus, Korean traditional masked dance and contextual preaching share a common valuing of equality.

A Korean model of contextual preaching for the 21st century finds another insight in the communal celebration from the ancestral masked dance, that is, insight into the content of preaching. In a period of rapid growth in the 1970’s and 1980’s, the most popular preaching in the Korean church related to private blessing as a source of money and health. This economic boom supported an incorrect worldview for all of Korean society, a worldview which impacted the pulpits of the Korean church. Private blessing was regarded as the best reward from God, while poverty and sickness were regarded as a mark of the unblessed. This biased perspective remains popular in Korean preaching today, and most congregations want to hear such preaching. The traditional masked dance serves as a reminder that Korean Christians must pursue a communal blessing which is based on equality for all before the word of God. Therefore, any Korean model of contextual preaching has to focus on creating a communal “experience” in the form of preaching and in its message. This sense of communal experience should help to avoid
an emphasis on private blessing, and instead focus on seeking a communal blessing for the glory of the God.

Sixth, stages of *Madang Nori* and Masked dance provide essential insights for a model of Korean contextual preaching. All equipment and spatial dynamics used in a ritual carry meaning. For example, in preaching, the location and type of pulpit reveals the authority of preacher and the scripture, as well as the relationship between preacher and hearer. Conversely, *Madang Nori* and masked dance do not require specially divided stages, only a space in which the performers can play and interact with audiences. This setting enables active interaction between performers and audiences, and their communal participation. In some way, this setting reveals the hope of ordinary people (Minjung) for horizontal equity in a class society. The spirit of this setting recalls the importance of hearers and communal participation in Korean contextual preaching.

So far, I have recounted useful insights from Pauline preaching, Liberation preaching, Black Preaching, the New Homiletic and Korean traditional narrative and story-telling performances. The following section suggests a framework for Korean contextual preaching based the research I have presented. The section concludes with a sample sermon.

**II. A model of preaching for the Korean Protestant Church**

Before suggesting a framework for a Korean model of contextual preaching, I want to argue that Koreans and the Korean churches need to recognize and honour the excellence of their cultures. Some Koreans have a tendency to look down on their traditions and cultural heritages, simultaneously overvaluing and pursuing western cultures and styles. For example, despite many traditional Korean musical instruments, most Korean Christians prefer not to play these in
worship because they associate them with lower class people such as *JaeIn* (才人, a musician or performer) or *GiSang* (妓生, talented prostitute). Similar issues can be seen in every aspect of Korean society including in every academic field including in seminaries. Many Korean scholars, including homileticians, have concentrated on introducing new and seemingly useful Western theory, theology and methods to the Korean church. At this point, the Korean church needs to rethink and review its own context and heritage, seeking a hermeneutical filter which will still allow for an appropriate adaptation from other contexts. As a first step the Korean churches have some challenging work to do as they begin to rely less on Western ecclesiology and value more their own culture and tradition, with the goal of connecting the Gospel to their own cultural heritage. My work toward a Korean model of contextual preaching is one small, but meaningful step for the Korean church.

What framework will support Korean contextual preaching and its practice in the Korean protestant church? Can the full format of Korean traditional performances be brought to bear on preaching? It is not easy to use the full framework of certain performances in actual preaching. Therefore, at this point, the goal is to find balance between Korean actual practice of preaching and useful insights from Korean traditional narrative performances and contextual preaching.

As a matter of fact, most Korean preachers would not easily accept this model of Korean contextual preaching for current worship services. In other words, this model would be a radical challenge for Korean preachers. There are several reasons for this.

First, although Korean preachers are thirsting for a fresh model of preaching, the dominant form of Korean preaching is still propositional and deductive, which is westernized and missionized. Therefore, some Korean preachers may view a model of Korean contextual preaching as performance rather than as preaching. Second, some Koreans have an unfortunate
tendency to look down upon their own heritages and traditions, and to view Western culture as superior to their own. This tendency exists within the Korean protestant church, and might lead some preachers to feel that Korean contextual preaching overvalues Korean heritage and traditional narratives. Third, in this regard, some Korean preachers might dismiss or undervalue insights from Korean contextual theologies such as Tochakhwa theology and Minjung theology.

However, these challenges can be overcome, and I am convinced that my work will encourage Korean preachers to open their eyes and minds to rediscover the values of their own cultural heritage and tradition, and ultimately lead to more effective ministry, including preaching. I hope that they will gradually attempt a model of Korean contextual preaching on some occasions and might expand this approach to other services.

In designing this model of contextual preaching for present-day Korean churches some obstacles must be overcome in order to make this approach usable. Therefore, I propose that a starting place for a model of Korean contextual preaching would be on special occasions such as Easter, Thanksgiving Day, the Korean War anniversary and Christmas.

One of the main issues in developing a model of Korean contextual preaching is the challenge to think through the changing authority and role of both preacher and laity in preaching. What does it mean for both clergy and laity if the laity is given authority to participate in the practice of preaching? What preparation do both clergy and laity need to embark on this journey as co-partners?

The time has come to challenge the extensive authority given to the preacher in the Korean protestant churches, yet at the same time there is a need to think through theologically what it means to have the authority to preach and then to share this authority. It cannot mean that the laity simply assume the role of sole preacher in practice, nor can this change simply eradicate a reformed theology of ministry, a theology in which the minister is ordained to preach
- called by God and trained for this calling. In other words, in a model of Korean contextual preaching, there is much work to be done to address the issue of authority to preach before a model of contextual preaching can be fully implemented. To practice this model of Korean contextual preaching, I would suggest forming an interconnection with the worship service.

As Korean traditional masked dance and modern Madang Nori did, a model of Korean contextual preaching is composed of three sections; Gilnori (Introduction) - Madang (Body) - Duitpuri (Wrap-up). In these three sections, the Madang could be the sermon with shared narrative and insights. Gilnori and Duitpuri as the introduction and wrap-up part of the model of Korean contextual preaching could be interrelated into the worship.

a. Gilnori Section

Basically, Gilnori (or Appuri, Road Play) was a parade led by the Kwangdae (Janitor) group and some performers from the main performance both to raise the audience’s innate joy(Heng) and collect it before the Masked dance. Traditionally, a skilled janitor's and performer’s group, Namsadang Pae, travelled from town to town to perform. The atmosphere would have been circus-like. At that time, when they moved into a new village to promote their performance or their team’s arrival to the town, they started with a fun-filled parade that included boisterous and noisy instruments. A traditional Gilnori aimed to draw people’s interest and attention, creating excitement for the main performance. In a modern Madang Nori performance, Gilnori is typically led by a main performer. The performer tells a brief humorous story to reduce awkwardness and stress in the audience, which is seated in a circle. Also, during this
introduction, other performers can reduce their tension before the main performance. This
Gilnori section is ended by a sound of Jing and the start of the main performance, Madang.

From insights of Gilnori, in Korean contextual preaching, the introductory section, or
Gilnori includes an invitation to enter the word of God, and should create anticipation and
expectation for the main performance, the body of the preached word. This expectation is not
merely interest, but a spiritual excitement, a sense of romance that anticipates the word of God.
During a Sunday worship service, it would seem impossible to perform a parade as did the
Korean traditional performance groups, Namsadang Pae and Madang Nori Pae. However, it is
possible to mirror the spirit of the Gilnori stage which was intended to raise innate joy (Heng),
and thus, capture the attention of the audience and move to the main performance.

A model of Korean contextual preaching should have an organic flow in the preaching
process itself, not outside it. In other words, as traditional Gilnori represents a welcome and an
invitation to the main performance, in the Gilnori section, the insights of Gilnori to invite hearers
to the Word of the God. Thus, the Gilnori section in a model of Korean contextual preaching
symbolizes a parade into the world of the word of God. Preachers, choir, music team, and the
whole congregation participate in the Gilnori with excitement for the coming celebration of the
Word of God. Hymns are played by the music team with traditional instruments to draw people’s
interest and to invite people to the celebration. As people gather around the music team, the
preachers move into the congregational group. Preachers do not need to wear special costumes
or clothes since it is not known who will be the preachers for that day. At this point, one of the

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549 A loud Korean traditional gong: “The Jing is also made of brass, its diameter is 36cm, and its height is
10cm, and the thickness is 3mm. This instrument provides beats and supports other instruments. It makes a
roaring sound, and such that it embraces the atmosphere of performance.”
2013).
music team members hits the Jing three times. These three loud sounds of the Korean traditional gong, Jing, represent an invitation from the Triune God to hear His word. The music and choir start to play a traditional hymn, and the congregation naturally joins the song and all sing together. If possible, they move to a different space, which reflect a traditional Gilnori and they sit in a big circle.

The focus of the Gilnori section is symbolizing the acceptance of the invitation from the Triune God, and joining together to celebrate the Word of God with excitement and expectation.

b. Madang section

In the traditional masked dance, after the Gilnori, the performers begin their performance with the audience gathered in a circle. The inner part of the circle is a stage for the performance. This setting promotes a natural interaction between the actors and the audience. Each stage of the main performance is referred to as a Madang, such as the first Madang and second Madang. Therefore, I have adopted the term Madang to indicate the body of a model of a Korean contextual preaching.

For the Madang section of a model of Korean contextual preaching, the preaching is led by a group composed of a main preacher and others. Other preachers who will join in may be pastors or lay persons. Before the sermon, the preaching group would share the topic of the preaching, and decide their role in the process. Given the traditional forms, Korean contextual preaching should have features of narrative preaching; however, we do not need to limit the exact type of preaching. In light of the traditional Madang, the sermon can be modeled a performance or a talk show. Whatever the form, the preaching group should share enough insights about the text during the preparation, and decide the best way to proceed. In the preparation stage, the responsible for group preaching has to be reminded that the purpose of
preaching is to help God’s people encounter the Word of God. In addition, if there is a suitable Mindam⁵⁵⁰ which is related to the message of preaching, it can be used as a connection point between the uniqueness of the spirit and the insights of the Bible narrative.

In the Madang section of the sermon, the preachers would provide a spiritual Madang (field) in which to encounter the word of the God and to unite the gathered community in the word. The role of the preachers is to issue an invitation to the spiritual Madang. There, the people are able to witness God’s dynamic works among the hearers.

One of the important aspects of this Madang stage is to emphasize in preaching a “divine-natural” flow in which God speaks to the gathered community. In other words, the preachers do not need to have specific expectations of the hearers, and should not force certain responses from the hearers.

In the traditional masked dance and modern Madang Nori, it is common to tell a number of related small stories within a theme. Relating this Madang section to the sermon suggests that the sermon can be composed of one biblical narrative or several interwoven biblical narratives, alongside narrative(s) from the context of the congregation. When choosing a biblical text, it is better to begin by using narratives from throughout the entire bible until the preaching team has the ability to handle all genres of biblical literature.

In the traditional masked dance and modern Madang Nori, performers do not use many implements or props during the performances; rather they lead the performances with imaginative language to stimulate the audience’s curiosity and imagination. The use of imaginative language in Korean performances makes necessary the use of imaginative language in the practice of preaching. However, Korean contextual preachers should be aware that when

⁵⁵⁰ Korean traditional folktale.
they use their imagination to add more detail to the text, they must attempt to balance biblical fact with intuitive imagination. Although, Korean congregations prefer to hear texts and narratives from the Bible in every sermon, interestingly some are uncomfortable about excessive imaginative interpretations.

In this Madang section, the preachers have to provide an atmosphere allowing for the free and natural reaction of the hearer. Preachers should expect to receive diverse reactions, which have the potential to lead to dynamic interactions between the preacher and the hearer. For this dynamic interaction to occur, both Korean preachers and hearers need not only to practice, as both are unfamiliar with this kind of interaction in preaching, but also to accept this as the in-breaking of the Spirit of God. Thus this interaction may be awkward, and interrupt the smooth flow of preaching unless preachers and hearers develop an acceptance for the process. For example, if Korean conservative Christians were to participate in an African American worship service, they might leave early, because their understanding and knowledge about worship and preaching is very different from that of African Americans. In their minds, preaching should be holy, silent and formal, and the various interactions in African American preaching would be perceived as flippant and crude. In most Korean traditional performances, dynamic interactions between performers and audiences occupy a central position. It is through unplanned reactions that Koreans can feel communal innate joy (Heng), and temporarily forget their Han. If these interactions had not been part of the performance, Korean traditional performances would have lost their power and disappeared. However, a dynamic interaction that transcended class has been its unique feature and heritage through Korean history. Such interactions are central to all forms of traditional performance both within masked dance and
*Madang Nori.* In *Pansori,* which was more popular in the ruling (*YangBan*) class, *Gosu’s* 551 *Chuimsae* 552 played a similar if vicarious role.

Dynamic interactions through an unrehearsed reaction have been innate characteristics of Korean culture even though they have been prohibited in preaching and the worship space. From the perspective of Korean traditional narrative and performance, it is clear that for preaching to be contextually sound, such dynamic interactions are necessary. These interactions lead not to chaos but rather to a deeply spiritual encounter in which the Holy Sprits reveals the work of God. Alongside the preachers’ careful preparations, involuntary and unrehearsed responses from the hearers can create a dynamic model of preaching that provides spiritual energy to both preachers and hearers.

At the *Madang* stage of traditional performances, the audiences watching the performance would draw their own conclusions. In most cases, performers do not need to explain the ethics or conclusions from narratives and performances. However, when an audience participates in the performance voluntarily and with excitement, they are able to draw appropriate conclusions. In this sense, in the *Madang* section, preachers do not need to focus on certain conclusions to the sermon. Preachers should trust the Holy Spirit to lead the entire process of the preaching, and their hearers to reach appropriate conclusions in the light of the Word of God. In other words, a model of Korean contextual preaching leads to “open-

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551 “A *gosu* (literally "drummer") is a drummer in performances of *pansori,* a form of traditional Korean narrative/theater that is usually performed by just two musicians: a solo singer and a drummer. The *gosu* supports the *sorikkun,* or singer, by providing rhythms with a *soribuk* (*pansori* drum), a shallow barrel drum with a pine body and two cowhide heads. Impromptu short verbal sounds made by the *gosu,* called *chu-imsae,* also play an important role.” – [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pansori_gosu](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pansori_gosu) (Accessed on Oct 11, 2013)

552 Reaction sounds to the performances: “in traditional *Pansori,* it is supplied by the drummer to give rhythm to the song in addition to the beat. *Chuimsae* consists of meaningless vowel sounds or short words of encouragement. *Chuimsae* is analogous to scat singing in *jazz* nonsense syllables such as "La, la, la," or "Shoop, shoop ba doop" in English-language popular songs.” – [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dae_Jang_Geum](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dae_Jang_Geum) (Accessed on Oct 11, 2013)
endedness” in the practice of preaching. However, this does not mean that this model only pursues “open-endedness” for the ending of the sermon. In terms of authority sharing, the preaching group could share their opinions about the ending format and they could select the most effective message for their hearers.

My proposal to open a place for laity in the Madang section will be a big challenge to the Korean protestant church, which was influenced by Confucianism. However, I do not mean that a lay preacher is the sole conductor of preaching. Rather, my suggestion to involve laity in Madang means revaluing and rediscovering the hearers’ position and inviting them as partners. Through sharing narratives and insights in Madang section, the preachers and the hearers join together in a holy spiritual Madang to encounter the Word of God. Through the spiritual encounter between the hearer and the word of God on the Madang, Korean Christians can heal their Han and feel God’s holy touch through the preaching of the Word. Therefore, after the holy encounter, the preachers and the hearers are ready to move to the next stage (Duitpuri) where they release their innate joy (Heng) under the dynamics of the Holy Spirit.

c. Duitpuri section

In the Masked dance and Madang Nori, after a main performance, all performers and audiences dance and celebrate together to reveal their joy. This communal celebration is Duitpuri. Duitpuri is not the end of the performance but a climactic moment facilitating an experience of shared joy, allowing a diversity of meanings for those involved in the performance. A first would be to share their Heng with others. As usual, the main performer or performers lead the celebration; however, there is no typical dance. Everyone dances according to the Korean traditional percussion’s rhythm. Even though each does his/her own dance, the Duitpuri appears to be a well-organized group dance, and the celebration flows naturally without any
choreographing. Second, *Duitpuri* has a meaning of self-celebration in which the performers commemorate the success of the performance. Third, a celebration in *Duitpuri* provides a hiatus in which the performance continues now joining both performers and audience. It is a sharing of time and space for everyone involved in the performance to prepare themselves to return to their daily lives and the performers to turn to the next performance.

In terms of a Korean contextual preaching, the *Duitpuri* stage would be a time of celebration between the word of the God and both preachers and hearers. The flow of this dynamic interaction between the preacher and the hearer becomes a party during which the Holy Spirit’s dynamic is working within both the preacher and the hearer. One of the most essential purposes of the *Duitpuri* stage for hearers is to gain enough spiritual energy and power through celebration to sustain their daily lives. For the actual practice of *Duitpuri* in a model of Korean contextual preaching, I suggest a group dance routine with traditional hymns or rhythm by *Samulnori*. The group dance routine does not need to be a complicated dance; rather it is enough to raise hands together or hold hands in a circle of hearers and preachers such as *Ganggangsullae*. Through this group dance routine, the hearers can recall the encounter with

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553 “Samul nori is a genre of traditional percussion music originating in Korea. The word *samul* means "four objects" and *nori* means "play"; samul nori is performed with four traditional Korean musical instruments: *Kkwaenggwari* (a small gong), *Jing* (a larger gong), *Janggu* (an hourglass-shaped drum), *Buk* (a barrel drum similar to the bass drum): The traditional Korean instruments are called *pungmul*. Samul nori has its roots in *nong-ak* (literally "farmers’ music"), a Korean folk genre comprising music, acrobatics, folk dance, and rituals, which was traditionally performed in rice farming villages in order to ensure and to celebrate good harvests… Each of the four instruments represents a different weather condition: the *janggu* represents rain, the *kkwaenggwari* thunder, the *jing* the sounds of the wind, and the *buk* clouds. The idea of yin and yang is also reflected in these instruments: the *buk* and *janggu* (leather) represent the sounds of the earth, while the *jing* and *kkwaenggwari* (metal) represent sounds of the heavens. Although generally performed indoors, as a staged genre, samul nori depicts the traditional Korean culture, an agricultural society rooted in the natural environment. Samul nori is characterized by strong, accented rhythms, vibrant body movements, and an energetic spirit. Samul nori has gained international popularity, with many samul nori bands and camps worldwide. Since the 1980s in South Korea, there has been a marked increase in the amount of fusion music, combining samul nori and Western instruments. Samul nori is also extensively used in the Korean musical Nanta.” - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samul_nori](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samul_nori) (Accessed on Oct 22, 2013)

554 A Korean group dance which was inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2009. “*Ganggangsullae* (Hangul: 강강술래) is a 5,000-year-old Korean dance
the Word of God at the spiritual Madang and be reminded of the own insights in what was preached. The emotion of Heng from the encounter can be sublimated to holy joy in Christ by the group dance routine. Through the group dance routine, the Word of God will be internalized in the minds of the preachers and hearers, and they will be filled with holy-spiritual energy to sustain their daily lives.

In summary, the group dance routine such as Ganggangsullae by traditional hymn in Duitpuri section in a Korean contextual preaching is a kind of ‘wrap-up’ moment of spiritual celebration, the dance itself sending forth the people of God to their daily lives.

A model of Korean contextual preaching is based on a frame of the Korean traditional masked dance and modern Madang Nori, influenced by insights from other forms of contextual preaching. The final step is to indicate how such model would work in practice.

III. Sample Sermon (for Thanksgiving Day worship service)

< A Lame Excuse>


that was first used to bring about a bountiful harvest and has developed into a cultural symbol for Korea. It incorporates singing, dancing, and playing and is exclusively performed by women. The dance is mostly performed in the southwestern coastal province of Jeollanam-do. It is often associated with the Chuseok holiday and Daeboreum. The dance is thought to have originated around 5,000 years ago when the Koreans believed that the Sun, Moon, and Earth controlled the universe. Participants would dance under the brightest full moon of the year in order to bring about a good harvest. In the 16th century, during the Japanese invasion of Korea, Admiral Yi Sun-sin ordered women to do this dance in military uniform to intimidate the Japanese. The women were said to have dressed in military uniform and danced on Mount Okmae (옥매산). The Japanese scouts thus overestimated the strength of the Korean troops. On February 15, 1966, ganggangsullae was designated as Important Intangible Cultural Properties of Korea #8. Traditionally, this dance is performed only by women at night without any instruments. Young and old women dance in a circle at night under the moonlight. They go outside in traditional Korean clothing, hold each other's hands, make a circle, and start rotating clockwise. The lead singer sings a line and everyone sings the refrain ‘ganggangsullae’. The song tempo progressively becomes faster. They sing about their personal hardships, relationships, and desires. During the dance, the women play a variety of games. The dance can last until dawn.” - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ganggangsullae (Accessed on Oct 21, 2013)
(GILNORI)

A. Warm-up stage

1. Traditional music team and choir start to play joyful traditional songs and hymns.
2. Preaching group is spread out among the congregation.
3. Eight lay people hold eight sheaves of rice from eight provinces of Korea.
4. People naturally gather around the music team and the Choir.

B. Parade Stage

1. One of the music team members hits Jing three times, which symbolizes an invitation from the Triune God.
2. After the Jing sound, Samulnori Pae, the Korean traditional percussion music team, starts to hit a small gong, Kkwaenggwari, to lead the parade.
3. Eight lay people holding sheaves of rice take the second position in the parade.
4. Preachers join the parade with the congregants.
5. When they move to Madang, the Choir starts to sing a traditional praise hymn and all participants in the parade sing together while walking.
6. The parade signals the beginning of a voyage into the world of the Word of God with expectation and excitement.

(MADANG)

555 “Kkwaenggwari is made of brass, and its diameter usually ranges around 20 ~ 25cm and 3.5~4cm in height. As a leading instrument among the four (instrument of Samulnori), it chooses and controls rhythm, speed, and movements.” - http://english.whatsonkorea.com/view_reports.php?rid=30&code=M&scod=M-10&pst=L
(Accessed on Oct 22, 2013)
1. Before the listeners’ arrive, a preacher prepares a wooden table in the Centre of the Madang.

2. After they arrive at the Madang, the listeners naturally sit in a big circle.

3. After the people form a big circle, a Jing sound is played by a member of the music team.

4. Eight lay people place their sheaves of rice on the table as an offering to God.

(First Madang)

1. The first preacher suddenly appears among the hearers’ group, and start to tell a Mindam.

Once there lived a young man who was kind to all creatures. As he was walking through the forest one day, he saw a black snake poised over a helpless baby magpie (sparrow), ready to devour it. Moved to pity, the man took a stick and killed the snake. A few days later, when the young man was walking near the spot where he had killed the snake, he saw a beautiful woman washing her hair in the river. Coiling her long black hair on top of her head, she shot him a glance from her emerald eyes. Her eyes cast a spell over the young man. He could scarcely tear himself away from her mesmerizing gaze. Even after he left, he could not forget the unusual beauty of the woman he had encountered.

The next day he returned to the same spot to see the woman again. From that day forth he went to the spot daily until he fell hopelessly in love with the woman. When he finally confessed his love to her, her green eyes glinted and her scarlet lips curved into a cold smile. In spite of his love, the young man felt chilled.

One day the woman invited him to her home. “I will cook you a meal, my love,” she told him. The young man was delighted. When he entered her house he had a strange feeling of foreboding but dismissed it. The woman had prepared many delicious dishes which she laid before him. After eating his fill, the young man felt very drowsy and kept nodding off. The woman smiled enigmatically, and even with his eyes closed, the young man could feel her green eyes burning into him.

“Sleep, dearest, in my bed,” she said softly. The young man, unable to overcome his drowsiness, complied. He slept for a while, then was awakened by a cold breath on his face.

“Comfortable, my love?” hissed a voice beside him. To his horror, he found himself staring into the glittering eyes of the snake he thought he had killed. “So you recognize me,” smiled the snake woman. “I am the snake that you almost killed. I am no ordinary snake. I can take any guise I wish. I have waited a long time for this change to revenge.”

The man now realized why the woman had looked familiar. As he lay helpless, she

556 In this part, the Madang means both a space for preaching and the body section of a model of Korean contextual preaching.
transfixed him with her gaze. “Please, please spare me,” begged the man, trembling with fear. “Why should I spare your life?” snarled the snake. Then she seemed to relent. “Perhaps I will give you once change. In the middle of the forest there is an old temple with a large cast-iron bell. The bell weighs several tons. If you can make this bell ring thrice in the next hour, without moving from this spot, I shall spare your life,” she said mockingly.

The man, who had lifted his head eagerly at the prospect of escape, hung it again in despair when he heard the impossible task. Even if the snake allowed him to go to the temple, it was not humanly possible to ring a bell so high and so heavy. Although the hour passed quickly, every moment was a prolonged torture for the young man as he awaited his end. Then, close to the end of the hour, the sound of a bell was heard. It rang clearly and loudly not just once, but twice and then a third time. The man could not believe his ears. The snake gave a shriek of anger and vanished. The young man leapt up with joy, “How can such a thing be?” he wondered.

He ran to the temple and to find his answer. There, under the heavy iron bell, lay the blood-spattered body of the magpie (sparrow) whose life he had saved.557

2. After the storytelling, the first preacher gives way to the second preacher.

(Second Madang)

1. The second preacher appears among the hearers and reads today’s passage aloud.

2. The first preacher stands alongside the second preacher.

3. The second preacher says: “I am a patient among the ten who suffered from leprosy!

Before we caught leprosy, we enjoyed a happy life with our family. Some of us married, and had kids, one of us was a civil servant, and one of us was an honored Rabbi who taught Torah at a temple. However, after we got leprosy, all our happiness disappeared. We lived terrible lives. The pain was killing us! Also, we had to leave our village, houses and even family. The only thing we could do was to wait for death day by day.

Then we heard about Jesus. We could have a tiny hope that once we met him, he might heal our disease as he did for others! We waited a long time. One day, as usual, we left our cave to get

some food. When we approached a village, there was a crowd of people! We were curious about what happened there. One of us ran to the crowd and heard that Jesus was there!!

Oh, God, Jesus was there! We shouted loudly, “Jesus! Master!! Have pity on us! Jesus! Master!! Have pity on us.”

4. At the moment, the third preacher suddenly appears: “Go! And let the priest examine you!!”

5. The first preacher: “How can he say that? Is it right to say that you are healed by God’s grace or I am healing you, so, son of Abraham, you are born again! Go to the priest for to be examined? No way!!”

6. The second preacher: “You can say that again, however, why not follow his demand?”

7. The first preacher: “If you say so, I will”

8. The second preacher: “We could not understand why Jesus asked us to meet the priest. Even, though we were somewhat uncomfortable, as you know, we did not reject His request. We followed his demand!!”

9. The first and second preacher stare in silence around the congregation for about 20-30 seconds. At the moment, there may be some voluntary responses from the hearers such as “No! You are wrong!”

10. The first preacher: “We exactly followed His way!”

11. The second preacher: “While we were on our way to the temple, we felt that something was being changed by an unknown power!”

12. The first preacher: “Now, I am clean! Now I am clean!!”

13. The second preacher: “Let’s go home! I want to see my wife and children!!”

14. The first preacher: “Sure, go, go! Hurry up!”

15. At the moment, voluntary reactions, Chuimsae, of the hearers can be such as “Oh, God!” “What are they doing?” “Poor guys”
16. The fourth preacher suddenly appears from the seated circle and bows down to the third preacher and says: “Jesus, I worship you! I am cleaned by your grace. Thank you so much! Thank you!! Thank you!!”

17. The third preacher: “There were ten who were healed. Where are the other nine? Why is this foreigner the only one who came back to give thanks to God? Get up and go, your faith has made you well!”

18. The third preacher stares around the hearers and slowly says but loudly: “Where are the other nine? Where are the other nine? Where are the other nine?

19. A minute silence for meditation!

20. The second preacher suddenly appears and says: “I am still cannot understand why Jesus asked us to express our appreciation to God. Was I wrong to think first of my family in that moment? Is loving family wrong? Huh?”

21. The first preacher: “I also cannot understand why you still blame us. How can you know our sorrow and suffering? Why are you blaming us?”

22. All the preachers slowly move to the front of the seated circle. At this moment, there may be hearers’ voluntary reactions.

23. All preachers leave.

(Third Madang)

1. Beautiful magpie’s sound plays for around 15 seconds.

2. And then, the big bell plays for round 15 seconds

3. The first and second preachers slowly appear with ashamed faces.

4. The fourth preacher appears with a happy face.
5. The third preacher’s voice follows: “Where are the other nine? Where are the other nine? Where are the other nine?”

**(DUITPURI)**

1. After a Jing sound, *Samulnori Pae* starts to play Korean traditional percussion instruments.
2. The circled hearers stand holding hands, and all the preachers join the circle.
3. The traditional music team and Samulnori Pae start to play a traditional hymn about thanksgiving and harvest, and then all start to sing together.
4. Holding hands, they start to move to the right as *Ganggangsullae*.
5. After 8-10 minutes *Duitpuri*, one of the preachers leads the closing prayer.

**IV. Conclusion**

In a model of Korean contextual preaching, the preacher group acts as companion, participating together with hearers in a spiritual *Madang* toward a holy encounter between the word of God and the people. In this sense, a model of Korean contextual preaching has three major stages: *Gilnori-Madang-Duitpuri*. The *Gilnori* section is introductory, and symbolizes a joyful parade toward the world of the Word of God. In this stage, traditional hymns by the music team and choir, and sound of *Jing* are an invitation to the spiritual party. Through the *Gilnori* section, hearers can have spiritual expectations to encounter the Word of God. The *Madang* section is the body of the Korean contextual preaching, and can be further divided if necessary. For the *Madang* section, the preacher group composed of pastor and laity shares narratives and insights with hearers. Through the sharing the Word, the hearer meets the word of the God in a spiritual field (*Madang*), and the encounter is gradually represented through unrehearsed reactions by the hearer. The preachers can respond carefully to the reactions, resulting in a
dynamic interaction between the preachers and the hearer. However, the preachers should not seek to elicit particular interactions which might block the natural work of the Holy Spirit. The interaction may or may not take place in the actual practice of preaching – whether it does or not depends on God’s action. Above all, the “divine-natural” flow is most important thing in the Madang stage. In this Madang section, the preaching is mostly narrative and reflection, however, the format can be selected by the preacher group when they meet to prepare the sermon.

Therefore, if they agree, various preaching styles can be used, and open-endedness is a possible option for ending. The Duitpuri section is a spiritual celebration stage in the word of the God, and a waiting stage to ready for sending the God’s people to their daily lives. In this section, traditional communal celebration of Duitpuri is transformed into group dance routine such as Ganggangsullae with traditional hymns. By communal celebration such as Ganggangsullae, the hearers can experience a sublimating moment in which their innate joy (Heng) is transformed to a holy joy under the dynamics of the Holy Spirit, and can internalize the Word of God in their minds. And then, they are ready to go back to their daily lives holding the power of the word of God.

The model for Korean contextual preaching which I have proposed is a first step in developing a preaching methodology for the Korean protestant church. I expect there will be some resistance because this model seems to challenge the current authority of the preacher, even though, my suggestion is rather to change the preacher’s authority from a sole conductor to coordinator or partner.

In light of potential resistance, at this point I want to suggest a few practical, rhetorical strategies to overcome such resistance should it arise. First, Korean preachers will need to implement this model of Korean contextual preaching one step at a time. For example, having multiple preachers might be a radical shift for both pastor and hearers. Thus, before trying to
fully implement this, the preacher might begin by discussing the value of such collaborative leadership for improving the quality of preaching. Once the hearers have been educated about the potential in having multiple preachers, they will be more likely to come with an open mind. Furthermore, before trying this model, it will be important to share with congregational members the value and purpose of engaging in a new kind of preaching. To sum up, to reduce expected resistance in certain congregations, the preacher has to hold and to share his or her vision of the possibilities of a model of Korean contextual preaching for the congregation.

Second, the preacher can simplify this model of Korean contextual preaching in actual practice. When a preacher does not have access to traditional music teams and other preachers, he or she can still engage in preaching that upholds the spirit of the model. For example, the Gilnori section which is a type of musical parade can be simplified by beginning the sermon with interactive greetings. The Madang section which occurs with multiple preachers can be simplified by inserting a pantomime type narrative. Duitpuri can be shortened to a communal celebration by singing a well-known hymn with joy. To sum up, a preacher can adapt this model of Korean contextual preaching while still maintaining the spirit and intent of the model.

Third, above all, Korean preachers and congregations can be given an opportunity to rethink and rediscover the value of their traditions and heritage which have existed for over five thousand years of history. As I have argued, Korean traditional narratives and performances have been effective tools to reflect and resolve collective Han as a controller in combination with Heng. Therefore, the value of Korean narratives and traditional performances should never be overlooked. These will result in more authentic preaching for the Korean Church, since the recovery of Koreanness in the power of the Holy Spirit is a core value in my model of Korean contextual preaching.
I am convinced that this contextual preaching is a meaningful step towards helping Korean Christians honor the depth and breadth of their own culture and heritage.
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