

CHAPTER 4 INTEGRATION: INTEGRATION OF INTERPRETATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIES

4.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a reflection that aims to integrate the questions implicit in contemporary practices of preaching in the Korean church, which were set out in Chapter 2, and the themes implied in the practices of preaching in the normative Christian sources, which were described in Chapter 3 (Browning 1991:51). In other words, this is where the inconsistency between what is and what ought is openly discussed, and where the continuity and discontinuity between the descriptive and the normative can be debated and judged (Polling & Miller 1985:88-89). It is necessary to reflect on what we have got in terms of new understanding before discussing the development of strategies (4.3) and concluding (Chapter 5).

4.2 Integrative interpretation

4.2.1 Claims implicit in contemporary practices

The critical and holistic historical survey of the Korean church in Chapter 2 revealed that the Korean church had since 1945 begun to lose her cultural initiative in Korean society and history. From the beginning of Korean Christianity (1884-1910), the Korean church had been vigorously participative in Korean people and society through various works of inculturation such as educational, medical, and evangelical ministries that became tradition of the Korean church and provided the background for the later development of the indigenous church of Korea. Especially during the Japanese oppression (1910-

45), the Korean church had been actively involved in political, economical, and socio-cultural issues and leading Korean people with the prominent Christian leaders who worked through the organized societies such as the YMCA, Independence Society, and the All People's Cooperative Association.

After 1945, however, the Korean church began to lose her cultural initiative due to two main reasons. 1) Her close relationship with political culture and regime that emerged from multi-factors such as the free and different atmosphere created by the Christian president and leaders in the democratic government, the influence of the American churches and missionaries, and anti-communism. 2) Her business with inner issues such as church growth and schism that resulted in negligence of social responsibility and service, and serious division of churches.

This situation worsened over time. There were ongoing rapid and various changes in every area of Korean society from the 1970's up to the present time. The followings are examples: (1) The dictatorship and political struggle for democracy (on political level); (2) The prominent development of industrialization (on economical level); (3) The rapid change of lifestyle through the use of all kinds of high technology and electronic media (on socio-cultural level); and (4) The increasing interest in Korean traditional culture and subsequent criticism on Western culture, that resulted in the multi-religion phenomena and Christianity's marginalization (in religious level).

The massive and holistic waves of change contributed to the Korean church losing her cultural initiative and influence in Korean society and making her float around worldly trends and culture. For example, there were the polarization between the conservatives and the liberals in relation to political culture and change; the emergence of Korean theology in relation to socio-cultural trends, and the rapid church growth movement and mass evangelical meetings closely related to economical and materialistic trends in Korean society.

As a result, the famous numerical growth of the Korean church began to slow down since the mid of 1980's and finally showed its decline since 1993. Many today consider this church decline as a crisis of the Korean church and are trying to find the reason behind the stagnation. Nevertheless, as declared in Chapter 2, it forecasted tragedy because no church can continuously grow if it ignores its context. No church can even survive if it loses contact with people. Although the Korean church kept growing especially in the 1970's and 1980's, however, at the same time she kept creating and accumulating the many problems we can see now both in Korean society and the Korean church. Moreover, church growth has been only in numerical growth. All the above can be concluded in the point that while there is inevitable interaction between church and culture in Korea in terms of ecclesiology, the present ecclesiology of the Korean church still lacks it.

Claim #1: How do we then rethink and reestablish the ecclesiology of the Korean church? Since it was argued that the Korean church has a weak setup of the relationship towards her culture and since both church and culture are the most significant contexts of preaching, I also here raise claim #2: How do we reset the context of preaching in the Korean church?

Chapter 2 argues that when the church loses her initiative to her culture, likewise preaching fails to understand and respond to the change of age and the culture of congregation. Once more, the reason for this is that the church and culture are the most important contexts of preaching. It is therefore very natural that there is today a rising need for preaching as a re-engagement between the Korean church and Korean culture. In relation to this, I strongly feel the need for the formation of Christian culture as a way of regaining the cultural initiative of the Korean church. This is in contrast with the fact that traditional religions such as Confucianism and American theology have influenced the formation of the theological tradition of the Korean church. It is therefore time for us as Christians to influence again Korean society.

However, we have to remember what the Western Church had experienced in the Christian culture called Christendom. For example, as D R Kim (1999:21-30) rightly explains, we see in Christian history that the honeymoon relation between the church and culture (originating from the existence of a state church) produced numerous nominal Christians. If we do not want to repeat this same problem committed by the Western Church, a holistic conversion should be emphasized. Since preaching is widely considered as the usual medium of conversion in Christian church and history (see S C Hong 1994:348; Willimon & Lischer 1995:214-5; G Johnston 2001:35), conversion preaching is to be addressed in this matter. In fact conversion preaching is one of the missing parts in the practices of the Korean church based on the discussion (2.3.1) in the second half of Chapter 2.

Chapter 2 seems to raise a few more claims. Claim #3 asks: How do we then formulate the Christian culture against or in the rage of worldly thoughts and cultures in Korea? Claim #4 asks: How do we define and defend conversion preaching that is seemingly exclusive in contemporary pluralistic Korean society? Claim #5, which should be considered inclusive to #4, asks: How do we revise the present preaching theory of the Korean church. In sum, the five claims inquires as follows:

1. How do we rethink and reestablish the ecclesiology of the Korean church?
2. How do we reset the context of preaching in the Korean church?
3. How do we formulate the Christian culture against or in the rage of worldly thoughts and cultures in Korea?
4. How do we define and defend conversion preaching that is seemingly exclusive in contemporary pluralistic Korean society?
5. How do we revise the present preaching theory of the Korean church?

These five claims are the general questions that characterize the situation of the contemporary Korean church. They will be responded to through general themes derived from the biblical, historical, and theological interpretation of the

normative Christian sources in Chapter 3.

4.2.2 Themes implied in normative practices and their fusion

Chapter 3 seeks to interpret the Christian classic sources in order to get the general themes implied in normative practices. These are the basic role of preaching, some criteria for its practice, and its dynamic interaction between church and culture. The result from such an effort may or may not cover all the general questions claimed in Chapter 2. There may be a need for further discussion with other relative sources for the fusion of the horizons. In this section, therefore, I will attempt to clarify what general themes would be implied in Chapter 3. This is in response to the general questions found in the previous section (regardless of whether they cover all claims and without limiting possible influences apart from the work in Chapter 3).

Throughout human history, religion and culture have been inextricably connected. There has never yet been a great religion that did not find its expression in a great culture. Likewise, there has never yet been a great culture that did not have deep roots in a religion (S Neill 1980:1). This is as true of Christianity as of any other religious faith. Today we see and hear a great deal about the importance of culture in the preaching of the gospel. Certainly much damage can be done to the mission of the church if cultural factors are ignored.

Accordingly, one of the main themes that come to the fore throughout Chapter 3 is to present preaching in the interaction between church and culture. This theme originated from the way God revealed Himself: God's self-disclosure did not take place in a cultural vacuum. This fact has been true from the implicit evidence of the Bible through the contemporary practices. Although culture is not an explicit subject of the Bible, biblical interpretation in Chapter 3 makes it clear that human cultures have played a far more significant role in biblical history. The historical interpretation in Chapter 3 also reveals that preaching,

especially in its form and style, has tended to move like the swing of the pendulum between the two extremes of experience, passion, and emotion on the one side (context) and reason, knowledge and dogma on the other side (text) in Christian church history. The reason for this is that it has been influenced by the historical and cultural trends. In the same manner, theological work in the chapter clearly shows that there are times when Christian faith moves into culture. Christian faith and culture go together, or the cultural syntheses go tumbling down. With this, the patterns and language of preaching are affected.

This theme is highly significant and gives much insight on the related general questions claimed in Chapter 2:

4.2.2.1 Context of preaching: How do we reset the context of preaching in the Korean church?

In the sense that preaching is placed in the interaction between church and culture, we can think of its relation in the context of preaching (Claim #2). Chapter 3 realistically emphasizes that these two factors, church and culture, are the significant contexts of preaching. It is reasoned in Chapter 2 that the Korean church lacks such understanding. U Y Kim (1999:243) is quite right to analyze the Korean church in this very matter. "There has been a tendency, he says, in the Korean church to separate the church and culture in preaching." Therefore, placing preaching in the interaction between the church and culture is a good starting point of discussing here the fusion between the practice and the normative for the Korean church.

Accordingly, R Schreiter (1985:20) also considers church and culture as the community and the broader context in which the gospel becomes incarnate. R Allen (1998:19-61) declares that there are three contexts for preaching, such as church, *world*, and the life of the preacher. Although he did not choose the term *culture*, what he uses can mean *culture* because his consistent argument is on

the cultural transition from modernity to the postmodern (see R Allen 1998:44-53). Likewise, when H Robinson (2001:73-4) refers to the three worlds of preaching: the world of the Bible, the world we live in, and the particular world in which we are called to preach, the first two worlds can be replaced by *culture* because in his terminology, world means *culture* and *language* and the last obviously represents *church*.

Within the context of preaching, R Osmer (1990:183) emphasizes the role of theology: *theology as a critical interpretation on the sermon* reflects critically on the content of Christian faith and thought, and helps the congregation get to grips with their existential experiences such as justice, moral issues, suffering, death, and peace. Along with what he stresses I have to highlight another point, too: There is another role of *theology as a critical interpretation on the culture of congregation that we often ignore*. In this sense, H Robinson (1991 in Mattingly 1998:82) explains that preachers therefore need to exegete their culture as well as exegete the Word of God. In addition to that, I want to add another need to exegete: that is the culture of preacher. In saying this, I am in debt to L Tisdale (1992:9-12) and R Allen (1998:54-61) because they recognize the preacher and the congregation as subcultures without just generalizing them as the contexts. I do not think H Robinson refers exclusively to the pastors' culture when mentioning "their culture", but rather generalizes it inclusively. I think this can be a good starting point to discuss the additional claim on Korean Christian identity.

So far, various factors that construct the context of preaching were discussed, such as text, church, culture, the culture of the pastor, and of the congregation. One researcher may add something to this list, e.g. theology, tradition, the Holy Spirit, and worldview. Another one may very well omit something from it. For example, R Schreiter (1985:20, 95) values theology and tradition beside gospel, church, and culture. J G Van der Watt (2002:1) gives his attention to tradition, the Holy Spirit, worldview as well as the Bible and church. D C S Lee (2003:iii) constructs his context of preaching with the text, context, congregation, and the

context of congregation. Since Chapter 2 defines that the Korean church lacks the adequate understanding of culture as an important context of preaching and tends to separate the church from its culture in preaching, a proposal for such will be addressed in the next section. The significant fact will be discussed that *the context of preaching changes instead of being a context that is “once fixed and stands forever”*. This assertion is in accordance to the observation that the new homiletic movement emerged out of a realization of the changing preaching context due to cultural breakdown.

4.2.2.2 Preaching theory: How do we revise the present preaching theory of the Korean church?

From the argument that preaching’s form and language have been influenced by the historical and cultural trends, I feel it necessary then to revise the present preaching theory of the Korean church for the culturally appropriate communication of the gospel (Claim #5). At the same time, however, I feel the limit that the revised preaching theory to be proposed cannot be the absolute alternative.

Chapter 2 found that the Korean pulpit has been ignoring cultural changes and trends because preachers have not been taught and properly guided how to respond to them. As a result, preaching in the Korean church experiences the lack of diverse delivery method, the lack of hermeneutical balance between the text and context, the lack of congregational studies, the lack of the evangelistic (conversion) preaching, the lack of communal conversion, and the lack of valuing preaching itself.

In relation to this, Chapter 3 argues from a biblical perspective that even God’s self-disclosure in his revelatory action, known as preaching to us, did not take place in a cultural vacuum. Human cultures have played a very significant role in biblical history and writing. Besides, the basic structure of His revelation in the Bible was dialogic in care of listeners. And it was very true both in the Old

and New Testament. Furthermore, there was no distinction between evangelistic (conversion) preaching and congregational (teaching) preaching in New Testament preaching.

With regard to historical interpretation, Chapter 3 also declares that preaching in its form and style tends to move like the swing of the pendulum between the two extremes of experience, passion, and emotion on the one side (context) and reason, knowledge, and dogma on the other side (text). This is because it has been affected by historical and cultural trends. From this, we understand that the lacking hermeneutical balance between the text and context is not the problem of the contemporary Korean pulpit only. The Korean church has kept the traditional form of preaching in most of her history. Since the 1980's, however, she began to shift her attention to expository preaching. As U Y Kim (1999:36) rightly indicates, she seems to believe that expository preaching is the only biblical and true sermon. No preaching form or theory can be the absolute alternative. It is not easy therefore to revise the present preaching theory and propose a new one. What is essential is to continue and to never stop linking human sin with God's forgiveness and human need with God's provision, and human search with God's truth in a given time and given culture as the wise of Canterbury illuminates (cf D Coggan 1958:18).

Chapter 2, more specifically determines that preaching (in relation to its purpose) in the Korean church mostly functions to persuade and advise with biblical teachings and ethical guides. With reference to the form of preaching, preachers have (regardless of the diversity of form) been using a single style of preaching that is mainly logical, propositional, and topical with three ideas. Regarding the content of preaching, preaching is more concerned about individual than communal aspects, earthly success than heavenly glory, and literal and allegorical interpretation than theological and biblical. In the theology of preaching, there is no correlation or axis of unity between worship, preaching, teaching, and sacrament. Furthermore, there is the problem of theological

assumption (many preachers in the Korean church today assume their congregations are Christians) that resulted in preaching without conversion.

The contemporary preaching theory practicing in the Korean church for theologically accurate and culturally appropriate communication of the gospel, can be revised at this point. Chapter 3 asks when and why the new homiletic movement emerged. The new homiletic movement emerged out of a realization of the changing preaching context due to cultural breakdown. It was a new effort to increase the effectiveness of preaching in a changing culture. To achieve the aim, it made a homiletical paradigm shift from deductive preaching, that begins with a general principle and moves toward particular examples, to inductive preaching, that begins with specific experience and moves toward extensive principles. Moving beyond the old traditional paradigm, the story or narrative emerged as an effective medium for the communication of biblical truth in the contemporary homiletics.

Accordingly, D Buttrick (1994:71-5), one of the main figures of this camp, argues that contemporary preaching is shorter and less demanding of listeners. Preachers today seem to be busy producing little Bible homilies. Their preaching offers easy insight, but seems incapable of invoking any real presence of God. It contains little metaphor, and the subtle evocative precisions of the poet are largely absent. Preachers may communicate, but they no longer seem to reveal. Their language no longer relates to how people actually hear and understand meaning. U Y Kim (1999) proposes homiletical ideas and suggestions of this movement as an alternative for contemporary Korean preaching.

Many suggest that we have to look carefully at the New Testament because as K Runia (1983:19) rightly defines, the New Testament itself is both the result of Christian preaching and a form of Christian preaching. For example, from the theological interpretation in Chapter 3, it can be figured out that there are no less than thirty words for preaching in the New Testament. It means there is a rich variety of preaching in the early church. It means at the same time that our

almost exclusive use of preaching for all of them, such as preaching and teaching, is a sign of the loss of something that was a living reality in primitive Christianity. There is thus a need to recover some of them in the preaching habit of the Korean church today. Furthermore, it is also essential that one looks closer at the Reformation preaching since this was one of the major shifts in Christian preaching history that emerged from an awareness of the changing preaching context and practices in the medieval time and culture. A proposal for such will be developed in the next section.

4.2.2.3 Conversion preaching: How do we define and defend conversion preaching that is seemingly exclusive in contemporary pluralistic Korean society?

Indeed, the practice of preaching as the medium of conversion was not only the tradition of the early Christian church, but also the heritage of the evangelistic movement from the 17th through to the 19th century. This seems to be lost in most of the preaching practices in our churches today. According to D W Lee (1994:348-9), this may be due to the spirit of age that concerns itself more with context than text. In other words, it is because of the demand of the pragmatistic era that trespassed on the church. Chapter 2 therefore defines and defends conversion preaching that is seemingly exclusive in contemporary pluralistic and pragmatistic Korean society.

Chapter 2 sets out the lack of *communal* conversion in the Korean church preaching. Ironically, this happens most often in churches that emphasize sin and conversion in preaching. Conversions take place in the individuals, but not much in the *communal* sense, as a local church. This could answer the common critical question often asked, namely, considering such a great membership and world growth record, why does the Korean church not have an influence on her society or nation?

The essence of the church's credible witness is her own *ongoing process* of conversion. As the love of God in Jesus Christ is incarnated in the faith community, that love is demonstrated to the world. Witness happens in all that the church is, does, and says, but always in and through its forgiveness and its dependence upon God's grace. Unfortunately the reality in our churches, including the Korean church, is not like that, because there are the lack of the *communal* character of faith and the reduction of conversion to the experience of the individual (cf Guder 2000:148).

It was discussed in the previous section (4.2.1) that in Christian history the honeymoon relation between the church and culture produced numerous nominal Christians. If that same problem has to be avoided; a *holistic* conversion should be emphasized. My arguments are as follows: Preaching calls the church, not only the individuals, to repentance. Preaching does not only shape the character of individuals, but also the character of the church. Preaching aims to change certain aspects, such as belief, behavior, and belonging for the church, as well as for individuals. In addition, preaching aims for a *holistic* conversion: not only to change a person's belief, but also his or her whole person. A proposal for such communal, holistic, and ongoing conversion will be developed in the next section.

4.2.2.4 Ecclesiology: How do we rethink and reestablish the ecclesiology of the Korean church?

In highlighting church and culture, and in connecting the two, our attention is challenged again to rethink and re-establish the present ecclesiology of the Korean church already discussed as Claim #1. A Dulles' study of the five ecclesiological types for examining the present ecclesiology of the Korean church (see Chapter 2) reveals that all five types exist in a mixed form. This means that the Korean church has not been taking serious theological reflection for constructing a sound and healthy ecclesiology. Since the Korean church has been very hierarchical and mystical, the most Korean type of ecclesiology is

The Church as Herald, which places preaching the Word and preacher at the center of the church practices. This model can be observed in almost every church in Korea today. It tends to pursue a one-way communication towards the congregation and neglects the importance of community and the laity ministry. It became a tradition in the Korea Church that reduces the laity to passivity and makes them a mere appendage to the apostolate.

Accordingly, the conversation partners for qualitative interviewing (Chapter 2: 2.2.5) have all agreed that the Korean church does not participate much in her surrounding culture and does not exercise a positive role over the society. One of the conversation partners said it was the problem of ecclesiology. I think he is right. In discussing the communal conversion above, it was argued that conversions do take place in individuals, but not much in the communal sense as a local church and that this could be a possible answer to the common critical question, of why the Korean church lacks positive influence over her society. This is in essence the very problem of ecclesiology. The Korean church has been handling this ecclesiological problem improperly (her wrong attitude to see the problem on the individual level on the surface, and not on the church level as a whole). This is why many criticize today that the Korean church produced individualism in faith (see T Y Cho 1994:60-2; I S Choi 1994:105-7; Y K Park 1998:204; U Y Kim 2002:95-6). T Y Cho (:62) in particular, argues that the Korean church has weakened the communal and social function of baptism. U Y Kim (ibid) declares there are even individual characteristics in preaching and worship in the Korean church. I cannot deny that all these are closely and essentially related to the problem of the validity of ecclesiology that has never been seriously and theologically reflected on by the Korean church.

The conversation partners also argued that the response of the Korean church to the problem expressed is not proper and not good enough, and that many churches attempt to respond in many ways but with wrong motivation: they do it because of church growth as a management strategy. Again, the ecclesiology in the Korean church has been influenced by historical and socio-cultural trends,

not by theological consideration. This is the time where we need to rethink and reconstruct a sound and healthy ecclesiastic model for the Korean church.

Although R Niebuhr's demonstration offers a classic model of the relationship of culture and church, I used in Chapter 3 a model based on the findings of James M Gustafson (1974:73-96) in holistic perspective. This model categorizes the role of theologians in society into three roles: preserver, prophet, and participant. The preserver attempts to maintain the existing social value and system, while the prophet questions the moral and spiritual health of the society. The participant criticizes the society, but at the same time influences it to change and construct it (:73). Culturally speaking, we are living in the era of cultural relativity, that is the idea that there are no absolute criteria for making value judgments, or especially ethical judgments. According to Taber (1991:170), each human culture, on the one hand, is a collective expression of the creatively inherent in the image of God in human beings, and as such is not only good, but also indispensable. It is not possible to conceive of a true human being without placing him or her in a particular cultural matrix. This view is very similar to Gustafson's first model (preserver) and to Niebuhr's first type (of culture).

Taber (1991:170-1) on the other hand, agrees with Gustafson's second model (prophet) and Niebuhr's second (against culture), that the fall has fatally infected every aspect and detail of culture, regardless of how much good it expresses. Therefore, nothing fully escapes the perversion of sin and all culture must be seen to be under the judgment of God. Gustafson's participant model goes beyond this limit: this participant stands between two models, preserver and prophet, but instead of criticizing society passively from the outside, it rather actively participates in the process of social construction. I strongly sense that the Korean church too needs to go beyond this point. In the next section, I will propose a sound ecclesiastic model for the Korean church in a comparative and cooperative discussion between the model of A Dulles, which was used to examine the present Korean ecclesiology in Chapter 2, and that of J Gustafson, which I adopted to develop the strategy.

4.2.2.5 Christian culture: How do we formulate the Christian culture against or in the rage of worldly thoughts and cultures in Korea?

Chapter 2 sets out how the Korean church has, since 1945, lost the cultural initiative of her society. As a result, deficiencies were revealed in the Korean church's relationship towards her culture (deficiencies of setup, theological reflection, knowledge, responsibility and contextuality). It was argued that such trends have become a socio-cultural tradition and that they have influenced continuously on the formation of the theological tradition of the Korean church. Besides, the Christian culture is marginalized among cultures in Korean society. In contrast with this reality check, I zealously feel and claim the need of the formation of Christian culture and ultimately the necessity of regaining the cultural initiative of the Korean church.

Concerning the issue that the Christian culture is marginalized among cultures in Korean society, Chapter 3 from its biblical and historical interpretation turns our attention to the way two or multicultures exist. For example, the two media of oral tradition and literary culture coexisted and interacted. In other words, there was a period during which some Christian traditions were orally transmitted. During that same period Christians were deeply and continuously engaged with literature (H Y Gamble 1995:23-4, 28-32). Hauerwas & Willimon (1989:12) interestingly define that the church is an island of one culture (that of God's Kingdom) in the middle of another (that of the world). In baptism our citizenship is transferred from one to another. According to L Tisdale (1992:1-22) we can understand that our church and society exist not in one culture, but in various another subcultures. G Marsden (R Mouw 2000:86-90) declares that the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century was much like an immigration experience from a culture that had been quite friendly to evangelical Christianity to a new context dominated by an open hostility to our deepest convictions.

It becomes clear from the above discussion that no culture entirely replaces another, but that they rather co-exist with each other, although we do not know whether each exists in opposition to or in favor of the other. We can be challenged by the fact that we are in the religious and cultural pluralistic context where we have to answer to how to deal with the others in order to formulate the Christian culture.

The discussion on the Reformation in Chapter 3 asserts the very crucial point that the laity turned to the Reformation because it flattered them and placed their spiritual destinies in their own hands. If we once again want to turn the rage of worldly thoughts and cultures to the way God wants (as the Reformation did in Christian history), we have to look closer at the relationship between the Reformation and the laity movement.

Uniform preaching and teaching in the Reformation were indeed effective to spread the same conviction Luther conveyed from town to town. Although we tend to keep away from the term “uniform” these days (due to post modernistic thoughts and the objection that traditional preaching was too uniform), we should consider it as a possible medium of formulating and spreading the Christian culture effectively.

Gustafson’s participant model can be applied to this very matter because of its nature and stand. I strongly assert that from a Christian point of view, the world needs the church. God wants our churches to care for the world, not in order to help the world run more smoothly or make the world a better and safer place for Christians to live in, but in order to help them pay attention to the genuine desire of God for the world and for the nature of God’s kingdom. That is what Christian culture is all about. A proposal for such will be addressed in the next section.

4.3 Development of strategies

Chapter 4 consists of two parts, namely *integration* and *insight*. *Integration* as fusion between the descriptive and the normative was reflected on in the previous section (4.2). With *insight*, as a strategic practical theology (Browning 1991:58; Ballard & Pritchard 1996:142), reflection is turned into action in order to develop strategies such as educational activity, new attitudes, refinement of skills, corrective action, new action, and prayer and celebration. I therefore attempt to develop here the strategies of concrete practices in light of the analysis and the reflection of the concrete situation and the normative texts. I will propose a return to contextual experience so that the strategies that will be developed here can be tested for their relevance in real life.

4.3.1 Context of preaching

How do we reset the context of preaching in the Korean church?

The first strategy is *to place preaching in the interaction between church and culture*.

This should be the first step. Without it the following efforts are meaningless. This strategy comes from the analysis of concrete practices in the concrete situation where the Korean church lacks the clear understanding of culture being an important context of preaching and tends to separate the church from its culture in preaching. Such a tendency comes from a cultural identity and belief that Koreans are homogenous. For them, therefore, cultural issue is not for internal matters that they have to deal with in the Korean church, but for external matters that they will finally face when they do mission work in other cultures in other countries.

However, this is not quite true. The Korean church followed the Korean society, that began to value and study both the traditional cultures and the new trends since the 1980s, and gave her attention to cultural issues. Nevertheless, the Korean church began to decline from that very period, the mid of 1980's. What irony! Some may argue it just happened because the velocity of cultural change was too fast for the Korean church to catch up with. To some extent, this is true. In fact, it is not ironic but evident that her efforts and interest were and still are limited to the media of church growth and the social phenomena outside church. The Korean church had a chance to prevent the tragedy of church decline but had failed to do so because of the lack of the serious theological reflection on her culture and of the absence of adequate response based on such theological considerations.

Besides, the Korean church has not the sense to see that there can be many subcultures inside a single congregation. In other words, the context of preaching in the Korean church lacks cultural qualities both inside and outside church. The Korean church, therefore, needs to place preaching to where it was or where it ought to be: that is not just in the center of church practices, but also in the interaction between church and culture. Ultimately, preaching should be understood as an interaction between church and culture. Preacher, who was a mainly actor in the old setting that placed him or her in the center of church practices, is an inter-actor in this new setting. As an inter-actor, preacher should be a servant standing between and serving God and His people. As an inter-actor, preacher should be an intercultural missionary working between the cultures.

The second strategy is *to see the congregation as a culture, which implies both that the congregation has a culture (subcultures) and that it is a culture (subcultures).*

Without having a sense of cultural aspect, the Korean church seems to follow the classical communication theory that focused on speaker (preacher), message (the gospel), and receiver (listeners). The balance between preacher and listeners obviously leans towards the preacher because of the Korean preaching style that has been discussed in Chapter 2: Because of its aim to persuade and advise with the biblical truth, preaching is mainly a one-way communication with the preacher's authority. The preacher is a herald and his/her relationship with the listeners is vertical and hierarchical. The problem with this, according to F Craddock (1971:54-5), is that there is no democracy, no dialogue, no listening by the preacher, and no contributing by the listeners.

In reality, the paradigm shift from being speaker-oriented to listener-oriented has taken place not long ago. Synagogue preaching was however open to the laity (see S K Jung 1993:69; Norrington 1996:4) and the Reformation moved them from the margin to the heart of the spiritual domain (see Cameron 1991:312; Dixon 2002:72-3). About thirty years ago, some leading homileticians in America such as F Craddock, E Lowry, and D Buttrick began to ask the primary question with a different emphasis: "To whom does the preacher speak?" and "How does the congregation listen?" rather than "How should the preacher speak?" (E J Kim 1999:1-2).

In my view, this listener-oriented paradigm should expand to include an awareness of the active and communal characteristics of the congregation. This means that the congregation is seen as a culture, which indicates all together that the congregation has a culture (subcultures) and that it is a culture (subcultures). The congregation is not only the hearers or listeners of the preaching as traditionally understood, but also active participants in and co-creators of the sermon's movement who could arrive at a conclusion by themselves, not only through the preacher (F Craddock 1971:62; T Long 1989:131; E J Kim 1999:11-3). Pope-Levison & Levison (2000:3-8) even compare them with actors who prepare the message and make it visible. I thus prefer the term *the congregation* than either the listeners or the hearers.

The meaning of the word *congregation* links more closely with community than with individual listeners. Preaching presupposes a group of listeners. The group of listeners is the congregation, the people of faith, the church, and the community of faith. Just as individual Christians are unknown in the Bible apart from a community of faith, so individual listeners in preaching cannot be considered separate from the congregation (cf T Long 1989:22-3; see Pope-Levison & Levison 2000:4-5; C Gelder 2000:38).

The old term *dialogical preaching* declared two partners of preaching, i.e. the preacher, representing interpretation, and the congregation, representing the world. The individuals in congregations, however, are not indeed representatives of the world because their culture is different from that of the world around them and each is unique as a subculture (cf D Mosser 1991:9-10; M Marty 1991:15-18; see J Hopewell 1987; L Tisdale 1992:5-9; S C Moon 2001:133). Preachers thus need to consider basically three contexts of preaching: the text, the world, and the congregation. In other words, preachers need to exegete the text, the world, and the culture of congregation or the congregation as a culture (subcultures).

The Korean church is clearly in need of a reset of the context of preaching. By saying this I do not mean that she needs a completely different and new component to set it. What I rather want to point out is that it should have a different quality or characteristic, one that was ignored by previous models; a different accent that was previously depreciated by the Korean church. This different characteristic is the cultural feature that sees all the components of the contexts of preaching from the viewpoint of culture. In fact, preaching takes place in multiple overlapping and interacting contexts (R Allen 1998:19). Each component that consists of preaching, therefore, stands for one of the multiple overlapping and interacting cultural contexts. In addition, each context, except the text, is not static, but ever changing. With this understanding I suggest as the contexts of preaching for the Korean church, the following: the text (gospel,

Bible), culture (context, world), church (congregation, the community of faith), the culture of congregation, and the culture of preacher.

Of course there are many other important contexts of preaching such as the preacher's personal life, the preacher's household, the denominations, the global Christian community, tradition, worldview, theology, and the Holy Spirit. The first two can be included in the culture of preacher, the third and fourth belong to the church in a broader sense, the fifth and sixth can fit into culture, and the last two can be placed anywhere and everywhere. I cannot deal with them all here due to the limitation of this study except theological features that affect all the contexts of preaching. However, it should not be forgotten that each identified context is to be understood from the viewpoint of culture. Denominations, for example, should be viewed as subcultures because it is the social behavior of religious groups, their actions, customs, and cultures, and not just their words and stated beliefs that distinguish them from one another (cf H Nieburh 1929; M Marty 1976:76; W Roof & W McKinney 1987:106-47; L Tisdale 1992:4-5). If the Korean church can consider this point of view seriously and positively when dealing with each other denominationally, a totally different and new phase of positive, constructive, and mutually respectful relationship will be created among the denominations and will end or at least diminish the hostile environment that emerged from the painful denominational schism in Korean church history.

4.3.2 Preaching theory

How do we revise the present preaching theory of the Korean church?

The first strategy is *to seek preaching as multiple purposes, multiple forms, and multiple aspects for culturally appropriate communication of the gospel.*

We determined that preaching in the Korean church mainly aims to convince the congregation of biblical teaching and ethical guides and has been delivering preaching in a single traditional form. Korean preaching tends to lean more towards the individual than the communal aspect, earthly success than heavenly glory, and literal and allegorical interpretation rather than theological and biblical. In other words, the Korean church's preaching has been ignoring multiplicity in its purpose, form and content, and remaining in uniformity.

I cannot criticize uniformity in itself or say it is wrong because it may very well function correctly and better in a particular time and particular place. For example, in the Reformation, the preaching in the towns was marked by a fairly consistent corpus of "uniform preaching, uniform condemnation and uniform recommendation" derived from the teaching of Martin Luther. The preachers shared the same sense and conviction just as Luther had written and Reformation ideas were spread that way by preaching (B Moeller 1999:52). Likewise, the Korean church has experienced the glorious period of preaching and great church growth for the last hundred years even though her preaching has been determined as uniformity.

My claim, however, is on her continuing ignorance not only of multiplicity in the purpose, form, and content of preaching, but also of the rapid and various socio-cultural changes and the possible congregational changes that followed in that changing society. Preaching in Korea today is required to be culturally appropriate as well as theologically accurate. My suggestion as a strategy for Korean preachers, therefore, is to seek multiple purposes, multiple forms, and multiple aspects for culturally appropriate preaching.

Practically speaking, the Korean church needs to get some practical insights and theological guidelines. These should come from the homiletical ideas and suggestions claimed by the new homiletic movement that emerged out of a realization of the changing preaching context due to cultural changes. It was a new effort moving beyond the old traditional rhetorical paradigm to increase the

effectiveness of preaching in changing culture. It moved the homiletical concern from the preacher to the congregation and the homiletical language from logical, prepositional, and stimulating to the ear, to metaphorical, poetic, and visual (cf W Wiersbe 1994:17-43; U Y Kim 1999:256-61). Furthermore, it values and stresses story and narrative as the effective media for communicating biblical truth (see T Long 1994:90-100). Although it is a generation old now, we can assume that it is still quite new to Korean preachers on a practical level in local churches. This is because U Y Kim proposed such homiletical ideas and suggestions as an alternative for contemporary Korean preaching not very long ago in his PhD thesis in 1999.

However, no preaching form or theory can be *the* absolute alternative. Since the 1980's, for example, the Korean church began to give her attention to expository preaching. As U Y Kim (1999:36; 2000:171) indicates, she seems to believe that the expository preaching is *the* only biblical and true sermon. As a result, contemporary preachers who like to use the expository preaching tend to be excessively addicted to expository preaching only. Likewise, the new homiletic form should not be considered as *the* alternative or used excessively and exclusively among Korean preachers. It rather has to be used as but *one* of multiple options.

In addition, criticism is emerging against the new homiletic movement. The most common and strong criticism is of the lack of a teaching aspect. Although much have been learned from advocates of its views, and preaching in America has been changed for the better because of it, however, a homiletic that solved the problems of preaching in the final days of a Christian culture is not likely to be the solution to the problems of preaching in a post Christian culture. Preachers are becoming increasingly aware that they are now speaking to the children of those congregations whom they were attempting to address with the new homiletic a generation ago and who have lost the substance of the Christian faith. They do not know the fundamentals of biblical and theological knowledge to enter into active participation in the sermon. Congregations do not know, they

know they do not know, and they want to know (T Long 1994:99-100; J Thompson 2001:1-2).

On the contrary, with the same concern, M Abbott (1999:5) rightly argues that an intelligent Christian, with a well developed right brain, deeply committed to a mainline congregation, would feel that what he or she heard is amorphous, vague, and unfocused when the preacher had finished “a new homiletic” sermon. I do not think that there is an exception to any case above in the Korean church. The reason for this is that it has been almost twenty years that the Korean church had started to decline since the mid-eighties. Another reason is that there certainly are many intelligent Christians among the various congregations in the Korean church. Again my suggestion as a strategy for Korean preachers, therefore, is to seek multiple purposes, multiple forms, and multiple aspects for culturally appropriate preaching. Although I definitely encourage them to learn much from the new homiletic and to change their preaching habit and paradigm through it, however, at the same time I urge them to do so critically and consider it as *an* option.

The second strategy is *to understand preaching as a theological interpretation of the contexts as well as the text in partnership with the congregation for theologically accurate communication of the gospel.*

If the first strategy was related to revising the aim, form, and content of preaching for culturally appropriate communication, the second strategy concerns rethinking the theology of preaching for theologically accurate communication. As I mentioned at the end of previous section, theology preachers hold affects not only the text, but also all the contexts of preaching when dealing with them. R Allen (1998: 63-81), to whom I am in debt for this insight, clearly defines that preaching is the theological interpretation of the text, God’s Word. I argue, however, that it is more than that: Preaching should also be a theological interpretation of each context such as culture (or world), church, the culture of congregation, and the culture of preacher. Otherwise,

preaching cannot be “a sharp two-edged sword” (Rev 1:16) for culturally appropriate and theologically accurate communication of the gospel because it would have no close look in and contribution to establishing contextual understanding. In fact, interpreting the contexts is the first task to be done prior to the interpreting the text. Interpreting the contexts is a more significant assignment than revising preaching theory or method. However, it cannot be done by one chance in one place: rather it should be done as an ongoing establishing of understanding.

The role of the preacher is the very central to this theological work because it should be performed by him or her. Through this theological interpretation of the contexts as well as the text, his or her preaching will not only be theologically accurate and true but also culturally appropriate and fitting for the particular congregation in a particular context. Accordingly, L Tisdale (1992:247-8) states that the preacher grows homiletically through an ongoing deepening of biblical and theological understanding. Likewise, the preacher also grows homiletically through the ongoing establishment of contextual understanding.

However, the role of the congregation is also very crucial in this new understanding. It is indeed a partnership between the preacher and the congregation. In this partnership, the preacher has to help the congregation interpret the contexts as well as the text in the same way the preacher had initially interpreted it for him/herself. In other words, the preacher guides the congregation through preaching or through conversation (R Allen’s term) to interpret the biblical truth such as the divine character (who God was/is), divine purpose (what God originally intended/intends), and divine action (what God has done/is doing) both in the biblical time and in the present. At the same time, through preaching or conversation, the preacher needs to lead the congregation to interpret the situation or the culture of the world that surrounds them and the divine relationship to it so that they may better understand their preacher’s life, as well as their own life and world.

From this, preaching can be understood as the theological interpretation of the contexts as well as the text in partnership with the congregation as a community for theological interpretation. In this regard, however, I have to suggest some important points that have to be considered seriously: First of all, although R Allen (1998:63) is quite right to define all Christians as theologians in this very sense, we should however not overlook the preacher because he or she has the initiative to and is responsible for the partnership of theological interpretation. Second, although I am in debt to R Allen in this regard and for his term (:13) *interpretation* that invites humility on the part of the preacher, I cannot fully agree with his idea (:70) to reduce preaching to mere interpretation. This is because I understand preaching as God's Word to the extent that it is inspired by the Holy Spirit and a faithful interpretation of the Bible. Third, although this understanding values the contexts as well as the text, yet it does not mean that I value them both equally as R Allen does from his revisionary theological perspective. The reason for this is that I am also an evangelical theologian who is criticized by him (:80). Finally, although preaching can begin with general theological themes in relation to the context (since this new understanding of preaching emphasizes context), I argue that such topical preaching can also be biblical because the preaching is just one step away from a direct encounter with the Bible. The source to which the preaching appeals itself, is the result, to some degree, of biblical interpretation. Accordingly, T Long (1989:49) explains it better: "To the extent that this kind of preaching can be called gospel sermon, then it presupposes an encounter with the Bible having taken place somewhere, sometimes. All gospel preaching, then, is in some sense biblical preaching, since biblical interpretation stands in the background even when it is absent from the foreground."

The third strategy is *to integrate preaching and teaching, conversion preaching and congregational preaching, and preaching and other Christian practices for holistically balanced communication of the gospel.*

This strategy was initiated by the integrative interpretation between contemporary Korean practices and New Testament practices of preaching. In the New Testament a variety of words is used for today's word *preaching*, as discussed in Chapter 3 (3.4.2.2.2). This means that the present practices lost some that were vital in the early Christianity. This is the result of such effort to recover some of the missing dimensions in Korean church today.

First of all, this is not the recent homiletic issue in general, yet it needs to be addressed for the Korean church due to her dichotomization of preaching and teaching. One of the major criticisms that we can hear with reference to the Korean pulpit is that preaching is like a lecture. The claim is simply that *preaching is preaching* and *teaching is teaching* and that they cannot be the same.

The New Testament, however, does not separate preaching from teaching. There are clear evidences in many biblical passages (Mt 4:23; 9:35; 11:1; Lk 4:15, 44; Act 28:31) that in one and the same place both kinds of activity went on as was declared in Chapter 3. Haddon Robinson (2001:74) also clearly affirms that the Bible speaks of the gift of the pastor-teacher (Eph 4:11) and this implies that the two functions should be joined. Although there are other voices against this point (cf C Dodd 1936:7; J Adams 1982:5; M Lloyd-Jones 1998:62), there is much wider and obvious consensus among the scholars that preaching and teaching were never sharply separated by the first Christians and should not to be separated by us today (cf H Davis 1958: 123-25; R Worley 1967; T Hall 1971: 105-7; J McDonald 1980; S Greidanus 1988:7; M Abbott 1999:4-6; D Lee 2003). The Korean church, therefore, needs to integrate preaching and teaching as an organic whole.

Second, as explained in Chapter 2, the Korean church has obviously lost the conversion feature that is one of the two major aims of preaching. Although it can still be found exceptionally in the revival movement, most Korean pulpits in local churches tend to preach on another aspect (equipping established church

members). Comparing this to the discussion above, it seems to be contradictory to each other. But it is not. Ironically, the two things happen at the same time in the Korean church. How does it happen? Theoretically it should not happen because, as noted above, most Korean preachers think preaching and teaching cannot be the same. Practically, however, it just happens: They preach like a teaching in rational, logical and three point form (as explained in Chapter 2) without realizing what they do and how they do in terms of preaching theory. This happens because they have been taking it for granted. Besides, this is obviously congregational preaching in terms of its purpose that aims to equip the established church members, not to convert the new. As a result, conversion preaching is lost or at least seriously weakened in the Korean church. The evidence is in fact clear that there are not many converted new members. However, the established members move from one to another church at large in the Korean church today. D W Lee (1994:348) is thus very right to criticize that we cannot hear and see any slogan of conversion growth or evangelistic preaching in any church growth seminar or preaching seminar today in the Korean church.

The New Testament does not distinguish in principle between conversion preaching and congregational preaching. The purpose of preaching is to evoke and to strengthen faith for one's whole life for the kingdom of God. In other words, preaching aims not only to change certain things, such as belief, behavior and belonging, but also to equip the congregation in meeting with the triune God, Father, Son, and Spirit (cf J C Müller 1984:79 in H J C Pieterse 1987:11; D Buttrick 1994:33-36). Conversion preaching is the missing part in the preaching practice of the Korean church. To integrate it with congregational preaching is therefore the urgent and ultimate assignment for a holistically balanced communication of the gospel in the Korean church.

Third, further investigation is needed on how preaching collaborates with other practices of the church because there is no correlation or axis of unity between worship, preaching, teaching, and sacrament in the Korean church. In the early

church of Christian history, they existed as an organic whole in praising (worship), proclaiming (preaching), experiencing (sacrament and fellowship), and edifying (teaching) (J K Un 1999c:497). There were some significant efforts regarding this issue among practical theologians such as W Willimon (1979; 1980), W Skudlarek (1981), and C Rice (1990) who attempted to integrate preaching with worship, and preaching with sacrament. These efforts are crucial for the Korean church because she has a preacher-centered and preaching-centered structure and as a result, other forms of structure are omitted. The ministers who monopolize worship and preaching exclusively control it, regardless of the laity. Teaching has been reduced to children's ministry led by laity (J K Un 1999c:496). There is no partnership between the ministers and the laity and no balanced structure to integrate one practice with another in the Korean church.

Preaching is not a distinctive practice, but a part of Christian practice. It is argued in this study that the problem of preaching is at the core of the problems that Korean churches face. Yet, the Korean church cannot solve these questions by preaching only, but rather in cooperation with other practices, because the problems came out of all her practices holistically. Preaching, therefore, should be part of the practice of worship. Preaching is indeed part of worship because in preaching and worship we experience the same and in praising and proclaiming the same, that is to say God's presence and God's kingdom. In addition, preaching should be part of the practice of sacrament. It certainly is, because we understand that the Lord's Supper should constitute Christian worship. Preaching has always, from the early Christian practices, helped the community make its way to the table. In view of that, R Allen (1998:29) summarizes the early practices very precisely as follows: Preaching is the gospel spoken. Sacraments are the gospel represented in loaf and cup. Preaching is then spoken sacrament.

Preaching as a front leader can help the Korean church to reconstruct the integrative structure that was part of the early church's property and which the

Korean church has lost among essential Christian practices. A reconstructed structure would facilitate preaching to become the holistically balanced communication of the gospel.

4.3.3 Conversion preaching

How do we define and defend conversion preaching that is seemingly exclusive in the contemporary pluralistic Korean society?

The first strategy is *to reconsider conversion preaching in relation to the congregation and cultural context.*

According to the critique of D W Lee (1994:348), as mentioned before, it is indeed difficult to see and hear terminology such as *conversion growth* or *evangelistic preaching* in any church growth seminar or preaching seminar today in the Korean church. We may have recently been alien in applying the term *conversion preaching*, to our particular ministries of preaching, and even more alien in focusing our energies on making this accessible to persons who have not been part of the Christian community. Why is that? What happened to our churches? Pope-Levison & Levison (2000:3) interestingly argue that the mere mention of the words conversion preaching either thrills or chills today's ministers. Some embrace the prospect with gusto, as they envisage church growth, conversion, and the challenge of reaching the unchurched, while others view conversion preaching as a garish manipulation of persons into faith through emotional appeals. I think this argument should shed light on why there is no voice of conversion preaching in the Korean church.

In the meantime, there are other terms equivalent to conversion preaching, such as *evangelistic preaching*, *revival preaching*, or *missional preaching*. *Evangelistic preaching* has often been identified with those of the Puritans and the evangelistic movement practiced mostly in England and America since the

seventeenth century (as discussed in Chapter 3). *Revival preaching* can be understood as preaching practice during limited occasions like revival meetings (although it means indeed beyond that) (cf I K Jung 1997:131-142). Although the term *missional preaching* considers the existential praxis and context in preaching, it nevertheless seems to lack the balance between the context and the work of conversion itself (cf C Cardoza-Orlandi 1999:3-8). I therefore prefer the term *conversion preaching* which is more inclusive and stresses the work of conversion as well as the context above all other things.

This strategy is based on the realization that most research done on conversion or evangelistic preaching considers it out of context (as if it occurred in a vacuum). The clearest examples of this approach are the books of collected conversion sermons, in which too little attention is given to audience or context.⁸⁵ An exception to such a trend is the work of D Salter (1996:282) who emphasizes that conversion preaching never happens in isolation from a real live congregation. What I suggest is, therefore, a view of conversion preaching that is centered on the congregation rather than on the preacher. Despite the fact that congregational participation and roles are welcome and continuously increasing in every area of ministry in the Korean church, however, in preaching ministry, the preacher is exclusively dominant. I am not saying the congregation is the only subject of conversion preaching. There are other parties such as the pastors and the Holy Spirit that the traditional view and Korean pulpit value most. The preacher-centered conversion preaching and the subjective role of the Holy Spirit in it will be discussed later under the second strategy. What I am trying to convince the reader is that conversion preaching should give priority to the characteristics and commitments of the congregation while fulfilling the commission to convert. In other words, we need to understand the congregation correctly and in a better way as the partner and subject for conversion preaching, not just as the object to convert.

⁸⁵ An example of this is V L Stanfield, *Effective evangelistic messages* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1967). Besides a four paragraph "Foreword" in which the author mentions that these sermons were preached in church revivals, all that is included in the book are ten evangelistic sermons.

From the early discussion in the second strategy in 4.3.1, it was argued that the congregation should not just be the hearer of preaching (the object of conversion preaching), but also the participant in preaching (the partner of conversion preaching). In addition, I strongly declare that the congregation is one of the subjects of conversion preaching. Although D Salter (1996:282) recognizes the importance of the congregation in conversion preaching, his central point yet concentrates on the role of preachers. The congregation is the essential but neglected element of conversion preaching.

Pope-Levison & Levison (2000:4-5), however, presents a great point from the early Christian conception of conversion preaching: “Peter’s sermon at Pentecost provides a paradigm of evangelistic preaching. According to this paradigm, evangelistic preaching arises out of and serves to explain the remarkable experience of an authentic Christian community devoting itself to prayer (Act 1:14) and testimony to the mighty acts of God (2:11).” The congregation lives a life of devotion and proclamation, provides the content and the cause of conversion preaching. These authors’ definition of the congregation or the community (their term), therefore, would be either a provider or a source of conversion preaching. Although they made an excellent observation of the early Christian conversion preaching and gained exceptional insight in the active role of the congregation, their definition reduces the congregation to *another object* that is passive and impersonal between the preacher and the object to convert.

My claim is, therefore, that the congregation is one of the *subjects* of conversion preaching. In fact, Peter does not stand up to speak alone (2:14), but with his congregation as the content and the cause of his preaching. There are, therefore, three components, i.e. the preacher, the Holy Spirit, and the congregation in this very act of conversion. The congregation is not only a vehicle or only the fruit of the gospel, but pre-exists conversion preaching and

Certainly there is no interest in where or when or to whom these were preached.

represents the gospel both in the church and in the world (Mt 5:13-4; 2 Cor 2:15; 3:3).

This congregation-oriented paradigm should however expand to include an awareness of the cultural context in which conversion preaching goes on. The reason for this is that there is a variety of people in various subcultures both within and outside the congregation we may be responding to as we undertake to preach for conversion. Some congregations will specialize in ministry to one particular culture. Thus, some of us may end up preaching to one particular group of people most of the time. This is the pattern that Korean preachers used to keep. It worked well for quite a while before both Korean society and the Korean church were challenged by rapid and various changes in every area since 1970. The problem is that most of the Korean preachers have kept using the same pattern of preaching regardless of massive changes in their cultural context and ended up to the serious crisis of pulpit in the declining church. Today this need of preaching (to be aware of the cultural context for conversion) is much required because a far greater number of congregations in Korea will inevitably draw together a greater variety of people and then be faced with the challenge of living and growing with that diversity. Reconsidering conversion preaching in relation to the congregation and cultural context should certainly challenge the task of preaching in the Korean church.

The second strategy is *to define conversion as a holistic hermeneutical communal divine process in Christian preaching.*

The discussion of the fusion between the descriptive and the normative in 4.2.2.3 clearly shows that there are essential but neglected elements of conversion preaching in the Korean pulpit such as holistic, communal, and ongoing process. My strategy here will be developed based on the above elements and a new element found later.

First, preaching aims a holistic conversion that suggests not a cognitive change,

but a change of the entire person. In fact, the Bible is full of conversion stories. The four Gospels are especially so. Jesus went around from town to town; gazed on people he met, and invited them to follow him. Those addressed then had a choice either to submit to the holistic change that his invitation would bring to their lives or to go away grieving. Jesus was demanding; he led to upheavals in people's belief, in their sense of belonging, and in their behavior. Conversion means change, a holistic change. According to A Kreider (1999:xv-2), the early church understood conversion as a process of multidimensional change and was serious enough to think about the cost of conversion. Conversion was costly indeed in the early church because we can observe that many who were converted to Christ were at risk and terminated by execution from the Bible and Christian history.

However, conversion has lost its comprehensive meaning for the entire renewal of a human being because it has often been considered as a cognitive change only. H Conn (1980:159) sees the impact of Protestant scholasticism and its syncretistic accommodations to western rationalism as the cause. In my opinion however, it happened much earlier, with the beginning of the Christendom. Accordingly, A Kreider (1999:xvi) explains distinctively that in the four hundred years between Caesarius, a mid-sixth century bishop, and Justin, a mid-second century bishop, a new Western Christian civilization called Christendom had dawned and conversion, which entailed change, had itself changed. Clovis, for example, the king of the Franks in the late fifth century killed off his every relative in order not to have political rivals after his conversion. How could we possibly accept and even understand his conversion! J Moorhead (1985:338-9) explains that murderous behavior did not disprove the genuineness of religious convictions by the standard of the late fifth century. Indeed, for the Franks, conversion was a rite of passage to becoming civilized (see J Russel 1994:150-3). Conversion that had turned Christians into distinctive people, resident aliens, became something that made people ordinary, not resident aliens but simply residents.

I assert that *culture conversion* had emerged since then. This type of conversion to culture was more centrally conceived than genuine *conversion to Christ*, especially in the western churches. I respect A Walls' (1997:148; see 2000:20-1) view that the early church's abandonment of the proselyte model of dealing with Gentile converts (well established as it was) indeed built the principle of cultural diversity of Christianity (see 4.2.2.3). However, this did not make the converts devout Christians, but rather nominal ones. In fact, their pagan or worldly segment did not lose face by the conversion.

Unfortunately, this is not just a historical story that happened once upon a time in Jerusalem and Athens, but also a contemporary reality. It possibly happens in all communities claiming to be Christians including the Korean church. It is even possible for people to be incorporated formally into the Church, to engage in its services and make use of its means of grace, and yet never to grow in grace or mature. Because no one demands as Jesus did, we rarely hear conversion preaching on our pulpits, and even when there is conversion preaching taking place, it does not challenge contemporary people today. This is one of the major reasons for the lack of comprehensive meaning of conversion in preaching. As a result, the Korean pulpit is weakened. Therefore, it is the urgent and ultimate task of the Korean church to regain a holistic conversion that is biblical and Jesus demanding; challenges a total change of people's belief, behavior, and belonging, and will strengthen Korean pulpit.

Second, preaching aims for a hermeneutical conversion that can be encountered in the interaction between faith and context. Many historians and missiologists agree that Christianity finds itself *growing* and *maturing* in the southern continents of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (see D Barrett 1982). What I do believe is that in those continents "many who heard the gospel (through preaching) believed, the number of men *grew* to about five thousand" (Act 4:4) and "our Lord added to their number daily those who were being converted and saved" (2:47). There is certainly much growth numerically, and there is the work of conversion through preaching. What I however do doubt is,

that there is something *maturing* (not just growing numerically) and the work of *holistic* conversion (not merely conversion) through preaching. It does not mean that I am apathetic because of the doomed situation the Korean church faces or pessimistic that it would happen. I definitely want this to happen even more abundantly than ever before in Christian history. As A Walls (2000:21) dreams, we may see that “the tabernacle is now adorned with African gold and hung with curtains of Asian cloth” (cf Exo 12:35).

One reason why I doubt the possibility of their maturity and the presence of a holistic conversion in preaching is that Christianity seems to face theological, ecclesial, and missional challenges similar to the ones faced by the early church in those areas (see C Cardoza-Orlandi 1999:3-4). Such challenges emerged out of the interaction of faith and context. It can function either positively to produce vitality of faith as Cardoza-Orlandi optimistically wishes, or negatively to shake the genuineness of the faith as the Korean church in one of the southern continents severely experienced in her history. It is not an easy task to be dealt with simply optimistically, but it is a task to be approached hermeneutically.

However, I agree with Cardoza-Orlandi's (:3) significant point that faith is stimulated as Christianity crosses all types of boundaries – geographical, cultural, and religious – and interacts with those realities. I have emphasized throughout this study the fact that Christianity cannot simply ignore all the contextual factors or pretend to be beyond all the boundaries without interacting appropriately. I strongly assert that this is a hermeneutical task. It can be effectively carried out through preaching that aims for hermeneutical conversion in the interaction between faith and context, gospel and culture or Christianity and other religions.

Another reason why I doubt is related to my third point and comes from the fact that the maturity of faith cannot be accomplished by one chance or one

occasion. It takes time. If we want to see not only numerical growth, but also the fruits of a total maturity of people through conversion preaching, it will take time. In that sense, conversion can be understood as a process. If we expect not only a cognitive change, but also a whole person's change of belief, behavior, and belonging through conversion preaching, it will take quite a while. Conversion is thus a process, not an event. Theologically speaking, conversion preaching then aims not just for people to be saved (conversion), but also "the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:13)" (sanctification). If we wish to have no proselytes, but converts through conversion preaching, it shall take time because conversion works through a process. If we desire not some memory of a particular story or a particular event, but a never-changing biblical truth, which modifies people, through that story and event, through conversion preaching, it will probably take time. If so, then conversion is definitely a process.

I am not however denying the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit who can make it possible at once as one essential element. The importance of the transforming moment as a starting point of conversion process should also not be diminished. What I am trying to do here is to keep some balance between the two by stressing another essential but neglected element of conversion preaching. Therefore, the third aim of preaching is *conversion as a process*.

Fourth, preaching aims at communal conversion. This is another missing point with regard to the Korean pulpit, as discussed in Chapter 2 and 4.2.2.3. Conversion preaching rarely takes place in the Korean church and even if there is conversion preaching, it is exclusively focused on individuals. There is surely a reduction of conversion to the experience of the individual in Korean preaching. This reduction of conversion, together with other factors such as faith of supplication of individual blessing, caused an individualistic faith. This type of faith promotes a lack of concern for neighbor and society, and encourages strict separation between religious and social life, and between church and society. In view of that, E S Cho (1996:353) rightly points out that in a such trend, the concern of the church is limited to spiritual matters and

believers are not much concerned with how to live in the society as Christians or how to carry out their worldly tasks. As a result, while more than 25% of the total population is Christian, the Korean church as a whole is not as influential on her society as she was between 1884-1945.

According to H Conn (1980:166), this communal dimension of conversion was abundantly evident in the early church of Korea when people's life styles were more primitive and based on the web of family ties. A person hearing the gospel would go back to his or her own village, talk it over with his or her family members and relatives, and if a positive decision was made, the whole group often quite naturally became Christian. Nevertheless, this no longer happens in Korea.

On the contrary, Korean Christians often come into conflict with the families of faith inside church, especially between orthodox members and evangelized members. Orthodox members are understood as a group of people who did not have a clear experience of conversion, but mostly grew up in Christian family and have been in church for quite a long time. On the other hand, evangelized members are considered as a group of people who have invited Christ into their lives and who had quite an obvious experience of conversion. According to I S Choi (1994:103-4), the evangelized consider the orthodox as nominal Christians due to them not having had a conversion experience. On the other hand, the conversion of the evangelized is doubtful because their experience can be understood as a subjective decision based on human effort or human situation, rather than a divine work of grace.

I assert that such conflict comes from the lack of communal meaning of conversion. The individualistic faith discussed above encourages this conflict more seriously. Conversion is clearly an individual experience. Its communal character however cannot be neglected. In John 3:7, when Jesus said, "you must be born again" he used a verb for second person plural which means he did not deal with Nicodemus' conversion only. In John 17:20, Jesus did not pray

for the twelve, but “for those who will believe in me through their message.” Therefore, conversion is the individual incident that produces individual spiritual change. Simultaneously, it is the communal event, which builds up the community and helps it to become mature in Christ.

I further assert that the conflict has another reason: the lack of a communal character of preaching. Preaching is not primarily addressed to individuals, because it is precisely as individuals that we are most apt to fail as Christians. In relation to this, W Willimon (1989:77) gives a clear example: “Only through membership in a nonviolent community can violent individuals do better. The sermon on the Mount does not encourage heroic individualism, it defeats it with its demands that we need to be perfect even as God is perfect, that we deal with others as God has dealt with us.”

The Korean church is still actively involved in evangelism and church planting despite facing many challenges in pluralistic society. If the situation regarding the Korean pulpit can recover and emphasize this communal conversion, it would help the church become one strong community as God’s family. It would also turn the world to view the church as the love of God so that they can come to Christ.

Fifth, needless to say, preaching aims divine conversion because conversion is a divine work. No religion, not even Christianity has ever reconciled anyone to God. Only Jesus Christ has done that, and he did it for Abraham and people like him as well as for those of us who have heard of him. Preaching can be a very important means, but it is not itself the saving agent. Preaching in reality even can be an obstacle to the faith that receives the saving grace of God.

Conversion does not come from one’s intellectual brilliance, but only from God above. Conversion preaching is, therefore, an action to help people recognize their limitations. When it is done well, we can expect the work of divine conversion in their lives. In this sense, we find the indisputable fact that God

works *with* us as preachers for conversion. Although conversion preaching is unquestionably a divine work, yet we cannot totally ignore the role of preachers and the human response of those who hear the gospel of salvation. This relates with the orthodox Calvinistic outlook that considered human will hostile to God's sovereignty. Conversion preaching, therefore, is better understood from the Evangelical position that sees the relationship of two harmonically.

From this discussion, it can be concluded that preaching aims conversion as a *holistic hermeneutical communal divine process*. In addition, it is obvious that not just preaching, but also worship and all kinds of ministry of the community should always have the character of conversion in calling those who are within theory but not in practice inside church. At the same time, it is also a call to those who are outside of God's grace. What conversion preaching can give is what they really want but do not have from the world they live in.

4.3.4 Ecclesiology

How do we rethink and reestablish the ecclesiology of the Korean church?

A multipurpose strategy proposed for the Korean church is a *theocentric communalistic participant ecclesiology for an essentially and effectively balanced ministry both within the church and with culture*.

This study defines the most Korean ecclesiology as the church as herald although many diverse ecclesiological ideas exist together. From this definition, the Korean church can be understood as a hierarchical, mystical, and preaching-centered church. This structure comparatively lacks the importance of the congregation. Y K Park (1998:86) declares the Korean church as a worshipping community. The preacher functions as a central axis in such community. Whether we consider the Korean church a worshipping community

or the church as herald, there is the same emphasis on the preacher and the same evasion on the congregation.

This study also examines the fact that the Korean church is neither participating much into her surrounding culture nor exercising a positive role over the society. We cannot think of this fact without relating it to the preaching-centered structure. Such a centripetal structure naturally results in the lack of the consideration for the congregation, the socio-cultural context and the communal and social function of baptism, worship and Eucharist. In addition, the Korean church has interpreted these problems mistakenly as problems on an individual level, not on a church level as a whole. The Korean church responded to them mistakenly in terms of management strategies for church growth, not in terms of theological reflections on the validity of ecclesiology.

In sum, the present ecclesiology of the Korean church is humanistic in her attempt to manipulate church growth, individualistic in her approach to preaching, worship, baptism and Eucharist, and prophetic in her attitude toward the surrounding culture and society. I assert here that the Korean church needs a multipurpose ecclesiology to solve these multidimensional problems. Therefore, I propose a theocentric communalistic participant ecclesiology for an essentially and effectively balanced ministry both within the church and with the culture.

With regard to *theocentric* I do not exclusively mean God the Father only. I rather connote it inclusively and interchangeably with the christological ecclesiology as a traditional view and the pneumatological ecclesiology – as a new aspect emerging since the latter half of the twentieth century. More specifically, this theocentric character comes in opposition to the present humanistic ecclesiology. The contemporary Korean church seems to seek too much of a new style of ministry and merely imitates it without serious theological examination, if it works for church growth. In line with what L Newbigin (cf 1966; 1983; 1986) consistently argues the church and its theology have thus made an

uncritical compromise with the dominant culture of society, which has resulted in the exclusion of God from His church. Accordingly, Y K Park (1998:9) points out that such a trend proves the lack of obvious ecclesiology and ministry philosophy.

I however assert that it is not confirmation that the Korean church has no ecclesiology, but confirmation that she rather has a quite humanistic ecclesiology to control God's church by human effort. Despite the fact that preaching is centered in ministry, if she seeks such humanistic way of ministry, the preaching-centered structure will guarantee neither theocentric conversion nor a theocentric church. Without recovering a theocentric ecclesiology, a contextually sensitive church or so-called culturally appropriate preaching means nothing.

A theocentric ecclesiology is closer to the ecclesiology in the Gospel of John⁸⁶ than to that of the letters of Paul. Both John and Paul show the christological ecclesiology in their vine ecclesiology (Jn 15) and in Christ's body ecclesiology (1Cor 12:12-27; Eph 1:22-3). John however emphasizes a direct and vertical relationship between Christ and the believers while Paul describes a horizontal relationship between the believers. In addition, the Gospel of John shows the democratic office regulation that considers every Christian including women equally (D S Kim 1999:73). The term *apostle* occurs just once (13:16) in the Gospel of John, not as one of the apostles representing the twelve in particular, but as a messenger in general. This understanding is quite different from that of the pastoral epistles as contemporary writings with the Gospel of John and the letters of Ignatius in the second century (ibid). The pastoral epistles place the overseers, elders and deacons on a certain level of official rank (1Tim 3:1-13). Ignatius' letters identify overseers with the church and maintain that the church

⁸⁶ Although many doubt there is surely an ecclesiology in John due to the absence of the term for church such as *ecclesia*, the kingdom of God, or New Jerusalem, the ecclesiology in the Gospel of John was one of the significant issues in the latter half of the twentieth century especially among the scholars such as E Schweitzer, R Brown, E Schnackenburg, R Kysar, J Grady, and J Baker. For the recent research on this, see D S Kim, *The Church in the Gospel of*

only exists where there are overseers (Ignatius, Letter to the Smyrnaeans 8:1 in D S Kim 1999:74).

Ultimately, the Korean church in a hierarchical and preacher oriented structure is indeed quite similar to the church that Ignatius defines. The Korean church thus needs a theocentric ecclesiology to turn people's attention from the preacher back to Christ (especially in the practice of preaching). In addition, the Korean church needs a theocentric communal ecclesiology to shift her office regulation from a hierarchical form, that mainly focuses on the preacher to a horizontal form, that values both the preacher and the believer equally as a disciple before Christ the most high.

With regard to *communalistic*, this multipurpose strategy stands against the present individualistic aspect of people's faith and the ministry of preaching, worship, baptism and eucharist. Despite C Colson's (1997:39) warning, many Korean Christians are infected with the contemporary most toxic virus called radical individualism. It happens not just in the individual Christians' faith and lives, but also in the church ministry as a whole. T Y Cho (1994:62) asserts that the Korean church has weakened the communal and social function of the baptism. H M Yim (1996:178-80; 212-16) claims that the baptismal practice and the eucharist of the Korean church were accomplished mainly on an individual basis. Infrequent (twice a year) administration could not encourage the Korean Christians to promote fellowship among Christians or even affect the church divisions in Korea. In addition, U Y Kim (2002:95-6) indicates that the practice of preaching and worship in the Korean church has individual characteristics.

In contrast, (1) a communal ecclesiology aims to recover the communal and social function of church ministry (preaching and worship) and sacraments (baptism and eucharist). In addition, (2) a theocentric ecclesiology aims to regain the lost unity with Christ (incorporation into the body of Christ) in the

John. PhD Thesis. University of Cambridge. 1999.

baptismal practice treated as a mere ritual of passage. Furthermore, (3) a theocentric communal ecclesiology aims to retrieve the lost horizontal fellowship in the eucharist. The contemporary Korean church, therefore, needs a theocentric communalistic ecclesiology for the unity both with Christ and with brothers and sisters in Him through all church ministry and sacraments. Especially preaching should be practicing based on this ecclesiology.

With regard to *participant*, this strategy stands in relation to the Korean church's multipolar attitude, prophetic, ignorant or transformative, toward the surrounding culture and society. This attitude comes from her centripetal structure, the church as herald, in which preaching is centered and all others are peripheral. This is also related to the lack of validity test of the ecclesiology that presupposes the interaction with context. The Korean church sometimes acts like a prophet who believes the fall has fatally infected every aspect of culture and views the moral and spiritual health of the society with uncertainty (cf J Gustafson 1974:73). At times, she also functions unaware of any detail of culture and society. In addition, the conservative churches, the majority of Korean churches, rank themselves as the prophet while the liberal churches stand as the transformer who tries to change the existing social values and systems (cf H Niebuhr 2001:190-6).

With this realization of the Korean church, a participant ecclesiology emerges. A participant model between the two (prophet and transformer) goes beyond the limit of the prophet by actively participating in the process of social construction, and not merely criticizing society passively from outside of it. A theocentric communal participant ecclesiology provides a theological and practical blueprint for both the conservative and the liberal churches to participate together as one community of one God in constructing God's kingdom and cultivating His love and justice in it.

4.3.5 Christian culture

How do we formulate the Christian culture against or in the rage of worldly thoughts and cultures in Korea?

A strategic model proposed for formulating the Christian culture is *selective engaging and disengaging in participation*.

This attempt is encouraged by the realization that any cultural interchange should result in mutual influence (cf G Snyder 1999:1-5). This realization was formed out of the existent fact in the Korean church history. Scholars typically have attempted to show how Korean culture or religion impinged on the Korean church and altered it. Their efforts are relevant in this study, as discussed in Chapter 2, because some of the trends (e.g., the Confucian orthodox mentality) that prevailed long enough in Korean society to influence all the areas of politics, society, culture, and religion have also impacted continuously on the formation of the theological tradition of the Korean church.

I, however, attempt to demonstrate the opposite, that is, how the Korean church altered the Korean culture and society. This study presents an obvious historical example. The early church that took the cultural initiative for her society not only provided the background for the later development of the indigenous church of Korea, but also formulated a positive and powerful Christian culture in the Korean society through works of inculturation, such as educational, medical, and evangelical ministries (cf 2.2.2.1.5 in Chapter 2). Understood this way, this strategy is an opposite challenge that asks how then the Korean church should formulate Christian culture and *alter again and consecutively* the Korean culture and society.

G Lindbeck (1984:134) identifies the present Christian ecclesiastical context as “the awkwardly intermediate stage of having once been culturally established (in Christendom) but are not yet clearly disestablished (in post Christendom).” His

diagnosis is fairly applicable in contemporary Korea as well as in the North America. He recognizes two ways, quite opposed to one another, in which Christians attempt to surpass their currently ambiguous state, socially and religiously. One is the liberal theological inclination to present the Christian message in whatever ways one can and to keep one's standing within the dominant culture. For this purpose, Christians will lose many things dear to tradition (:129).

The other way of getting beyond the current awkwardness of the relationship between the church and culture is to accentuate, on the contrary, the dimension of distance, difference, and discontinuity. According to Lindbeck (:134), this is the postliberal approach, "Theology should therefore resist the clamor of the religiously interested public for what is currently fashionable and immediately intelligible... instead prepare for a *future* when continuing dechristianization will make greater Christian authenticity communally possible."

I assign myself to the latter approach at least in the sense that the church will have nothing to say to her culture if she simply attempts whatever ways she can to align with the ever-changing culture. I proposed in the previous section a theocentric communal participant ecclesiology that requires the active participation of the Korean church in the process of social construction *now* and *here*, not the critics to society passively from outside of it in merely hoping a better *future*. Although I recognize the reality Lindbeck describes as we are in the position as awkward, I strongly argue that we should neither stand off from the culture, nor give up our authentic tradition of faith to keep connecting with it.

In accordance with Gustafson (cf J Gustafson 1974:73; 3.4.2.1.3 in this thesis), the postliberal is the prophet who believes that the fall has fatally infected every aspect of culture and questions the moral and spiritual health of the society (and escapes from it). The liberal is the preserver who attempts to maintain the existing social value and system regardless of whether we lose our authentic tradition of faith for the objective. There are dangers that the former may end up

in the sectarian of Christianity while the latter may result in the total loss of Christian distinction. This is what we have often experienced through the two extremes, the conservative and the liberals in Korea. In relation, D Hall (1997:54-7) attempts to combine the two while proposing the integrative idea of *disengaging in order to engage*. Although I find myself in agreement with him on many thoughts, yet I have to argue that such integration is not something to clearly solve the problem, but something to only cover it. In addition, such effort is linear and sequential. I assert that such work should not proceed separately, but simultaneously.

Understood this way, I propose *selective engaging and disengaging in participation* for the Korean church in particular as well as for the church in general:

(1) This stands against the two, the postliberal and the liberal, that encourage the church to seek the absolute disengagement and engagement towards her culture, regardless of the existing conditions. This aims *selective* engagement and disengagement. There should namely be a careful theological examination to select what to disengage and what to engage.

(2) Opposed to the two standpoints that place the church *out of* and *of* the world, this aims for selective engagement and disengagement *in* participation since it is a biblical and traditional dialectic that the church is not *of* the world, (of course it is not *out of* the world) but *in* the world.

(3) Against the third, D Hall's *disengaging in order to engage*, that is linear and in sequence, this *selective engaging and disengaging in participation* emphasizes the *present progressive* character of the church ministry towards her culture that has to be undertaken simultaneously, not separately.

(4) In agreement with D Hall (1997:65), Christian disengagement from the culture is not the abandonment of that culture. This strategy thus presupposes

participation of the church (as a concrete illustration of what it means to be selective engaging and disengaging in participation). It does not just call the world to come into the church, but rather asks the church first to go into the world. It does not merely require the world to change, but challenges the Christian community first to transform. Practically speaking, to participate in the culture of boast, the church needs to be humble. To participate in the world that experiences the failure of community, the church should be a caring community. In addition, to participate in the age of cutthroat competition, the church is to show love, instead of power. If conversion as an essential work of the church could be understood as *participating* in a genuine decision for Christ (cf D McGabran 1980:300), culture ministry as another necessary work of the church would be considered as *participating* in the world for which God so loved that He gave His Son (Jn 3:16).

(5) This stands in relation to the worship of the church as another practical example of what this strategy means. The Korean church is a worshipping community that does not engage with the diversity of her culture (cf R Zacharias 2000:27). This nevertheless identifies her as the authentic tradition of faith within. Christian worship should include both community and culture. The Korean church thus needs to be a genuine worshipping community that connects with the diversity of her culture, education, backgrounds, and encourages people to participate in a corporate expression of worship. W Willimon (1979:31-52) defines worship as pastoral care because it contains elements of pastoral care such as healing, sustaining, guiding, and reconciling. Since we argue that there is the diversity of culture in our contemporary worship we have to care, worship is then cultural care as well as pastoral care. The Korean church with its severe and conservative atmosphere and form of worship may distract people to concentrate on preaching especially when there are visitors with a non-church background. From this, I have to say that she does not have a sense of worship as pastoral care. The Korean church with its current mood and style of worship may lack diversity of culture, especially when there are many subcultures in a congregation. In this, one should mention that she does not

have a sense of worship as cultural care. The Korean church needs to develop the horizontal function of worship because one of the most powerful appeals to the postmodern mind is a worshipping community.

(6) As a practical illustration, preaching is related. This strategy reflects the uniform preaching in the Reformation that was in fact effective to spread the Reformation ideas from town to town (cf B Moeller 1999:52). It is obvious that preachers need to study and practice the various contents and various forms from their own pulpits for the sake of their congregations. However, if we consider the Christian culture to spread nationwide and worldwide, we would not ignore an outstanding historical example of preaching form that had been tremendously useful just because it has the non-attractive old-fashioned name of uniform preaching. There is a well-known story that when England was about to enter into World War II, the English government requested every church in England to ring a bell at a certain time. Bishop William Temple had to give a broadcasting nationwide sermon to exhort people to go to church to worship the Lord at that very moment of the outbreak of war. Whether using the classic model of uniform preaching or the contemporary multimedia, it should be powerful enough for the church to present one God, one Christ, one Spirit, and useful enough to alter again and consecutively the Korean culture and society. In doing so, the Christian community can participate in her culture and society. In doing so, we as Christians may be able to formulate the Christian culture that gives the world something they never had in the name of Jesus Christ.

4.4 Summary

Chapter 4 consists of two parts, *integration* and *insight*. The first part, *Integration*, was introduced as a systematic practical theology (Browning 1991:51) that aims to fuse the horizons between the questions implicit in contemporary practices of preaching (Chapter 2) and the themes implied in the practices of preaching in the normative Christian sources (Chapter 3). The

following five claims emerged from the contemporary practices: (1) Context of preaching: How do we reset the context of preaching in the Korean church? (2) Preaching theory: How do we revise the present preaching theory of the Korean church? (3) Conversion preaching: How do we define and defend conversion preaching that is seemingly exclusive in contemporary pluralistic Korean society? (4) Ecclesiology: How do we rethink and re-establish the ecclesiology of the Korean church? (5) Christian culture: How do we formulate the Christian culture against or in the rage of worldly thoughts and cultures in Korea?

The second part of this chapter covers *insight* as a strategic practical theology (:58; Poling & Miller 1985:93) and developed strategies for the Korean church in relation to the five claims based on the fusion between the descriptive and the normative. The results are as follows:

(1) Preaching context

-The first strategy is *to place preaching in the interaction between church and culture.*

-The second strategy is *to see the congregation as a culture, which implies both that the congregation has a culture (subcultures) and that it is a culture (subcultures).*

(2) Preaching theory

-The first strategy is *to seek preaching as multiple purposes, multiple forms, and multiple aspects for culturally appropriate communication of the gospel.*

-The second strategy is *to understand preaching as theological interpretation of the contexts as well as the text in partnership with the congregation for theologically accurate communication of the gospel.*

-The third strategy is *to integrate preaching and teaching, conversion preaching and congregational preaching, and preaching and other Christian practices for a holistically balanced communication of the gospel.*

(3) Conversion preaching

-The first strategy is *to reconsider conversion preaching in relation to the congregation and cultural context.*

-The second strategy is *to define conversion as a holistic hermeneutical communal divine process in Christian preaching.*

(4) Ecclesiology

-A multipurpose strategy proposed for the Korean church is *a theocentric communalistic participant ecclesiology for an essentially and effectively balanced ministry, both within the church and with culture.*

(5) Christian culture

-A strategic model proposed for formulating Christian culture is *selective engaging and disengaging in participation.*

At this point, the focus should return to contextual experience so that the relevance of the developed strategies can be tested in real life in the Korean church.