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THE IMPORTANCE OF HOMILETICS AND COMMUNICATION

Abstract. Formal homiletics, which treats the homily as an act of interpersonal communication involving the connection of four elements, the preacher, the listener, the content and the mode of transmission, demands that contemporary developments in communication studies concerning the art of effective transmission be considered. The article discusses the importance of homiletics and communication theory and their interrelationship concerning the collection, analysis, interpretation and transmission of preaching content. Additional material is provided on the relationship between neuroscience and homiletics, revealing their mutual relationship and the need for collaboration in the effective communication of God's Word. Homiletics and communication theory are included in a comparative analysis in the context of preaching metadiscourse. The article aims to collect and organise the current state of knowledge in this area.

Keywords: Homiletics; preaching; preacher; sermon; communication theory; neuroscience.

Then John went from place to place on both sides of the Jordan River, preaching that people should be baptized to show that they had repented of their sins and turned to God to be forgiven (Luke 3:3).

INTRODUCTION

A topic that is of constant interest concerns homiletics or the art of preaching. This subject considers the study of the exact composition and delivery of religious discourses in a manner that the listening people can understand. When looking at preaching, people hear sermons and Bible teachings via Bible study. They get answers to questions about the different scriptural passages found in the Bible. This paper is a discussion on homiletics and its link to communication. The scripture quoted above gives the very

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meaning of homiletics and preaching. It examines the literature that shares information concerning the understanding of homiletics, reaching people concerning the word, communication and its link to homiletics and homiletics theory, ensuring that the listeners hear what is spoken, including a discussion of the above topics. The conclusion will unite the information for the reader's clarity.

1. GATHERING AN UNDERSTANDING HOMILETICS

The term homiletics has been used to promote homiletical theology.¹ The word homiletics comes from a Greek verb in the New Testament found in Luke 24:14 concerning the post-crucifixion, mentioned when the disciples left Jerusalem and traveled to Emmaus while conversing with each other about what they had witnessed. The word converse comes from the Greek word *homileō*.² Moreover, while this topic has been discussed many times, it is important to realize its relevance to those studying it for the first time.

A basic understanding of homiletics is necessary for anyone who desires to preach, study, and understand the word of God.³ Another interesting point is that, for anyone who desires to understand God's word, there is no need to be a Bible scholar, a leader, or a Church pastor to have the desire to learn.⁴ This is where homiletics can be used as an effective tool for helping those who teach to create a message that relates God's word to those listening in an understood way. Before beginning the practice of homiletics or preaching, one must start with prayer, read the passage, meditate on the scripture, and take notes that can be useful in delivering a preached homily.⁵ In this way, success can be experienced by the speaker and those hearing the scripture.

However, one must remember that before standing at the pulpit to teach or preach the Gospel, there is a need to learn how to properly transmit the

¹ David S. Jacobsen, *The Promise of Homiletical Theology* (eBook Oregon: Cascade Books, 2015), 3, www.bu.edu/homiletical-theology-project/files/2015/04/Jacobsen_45654_Excerpt.pdf, accessed: 10 April, 2022.

² *Ibid.*, 4

³ "Homiletics – The Basics," *Homiletics, 101. Studying God's Word to His glory!*, homiletics101.blogspot.com/p/bsf-homiletics-basics.html, accessed April 10, 2022,

⁴ Peter Horsfield, "The Bible and Communication – Religion Online," *Religion-Online.Org*, Last modified 1996, www.religion-online.org/article/the-bible-and-communication/, accessed: 10 April, 2022.

⁵ *Ibid.*

Word of God.⁶ This means learning to interpret scripture so that there will be effectiveness in delivering the word through preaching. While it is a common scenario that a group of people will come together to eat food, spend time in fellowship, and attend Bible study, it is vital that teaching the Bible during Bible study is done correctly and effectively. The group is usually enthusiastic about hearing God's word, so it is essential to speak the truth when teaching it. A person speaking for God must be able to influence other people in teaching and preaching and their lifestyle. All their homiletical and theological skills will only have value with these assets.⁷

2. HOMILIES, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

Homilies are religious discourses having the primary purpose of spiritual edification that differs from the doctrinal instruction given in a sermon by the preacher. Nevertheless, note that there is also consideration given to homily work and its connection to searching for God's truth. Patristics, the branch of Christian theology concerned with the lives, doctrines, and writings of the early Christian theologians, reminds us that by studying homilies, the Greek Fathers approached the Word of God by talking first via a unique form of speech that had been inherited by the synagogue-proclamation that was called a homily before writing anything.⁸ This was seen as the logical point of view, allowing the homily to better state the conditions of truth to be viewed as their form of life. Furthermore, since the Greek Fathers used verbal and nonverbal languages, they created an approach capable of accounting for the liturgical symbols inclusive of the homiletic approach that was discussed and included in the content of their writings.⁹

It is through the study of past master homilists that the analysis of masterful techniques can be beneficial.¹⁰ In the review of Acts 28:24-26, the Holy Spirit and his relationship to the Lord can be seen. When reading Psalm 33:6, Psalm 47:8, 1 Corinthians 13:11 and Luke 1:35, the descent of the Ho-

⁶ "Handling Scripture: From Hermeneutics to Homiletics," *Info.Tms.Edu*, Last modified 2022, info.tms.edu/handling-scripture, accessed: 11 April, 2022.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Marcello La Matina, "Does Homily Work as a Theory of Truth?" *Scrinium: Journal of Patrology and Critical Hagiography* 11 (2015): 276-279.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Brando P. Otto, "Lessons from a Patristic Homily," *Homiletic & Pastoral Review*, www.hprweb.com/2018/05/lessons-from-a-patristic-homily, accessed: 19 May, 2018.

ly Spirit is found in the texts, the basis for a Pentecost homily.¹¹ This information reveals the Patristic homilies that cross-reference this message of the Baptism of believers via the holistic view enabling a clear interpretation of what has been written.

3. HOMILIES AND THE ELDERLY

The elderly must always be considered, as Pope John Paul II stated when addressing this issue in 1999, talking about the importance of hope and justice when looking at human life.¹² Since contact with Jesus makes people aware of the source of eternal justice, consideration must also be given to the act of the human will seeking justice, people's feelings and educating them to keep hope.¹³ It is vital for every human being to realize that death will come to every individual, including those who have faith, enabling the transformation from earthly life to eternity. The rhetorical steps of *inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*, *memoria*, and *actio* are the five steps that shape a sermon enabling the process of effective communication to begin.¹⁴

It is through the ministry of preaching within the Church that people can hear a persuasive argument that leads them to Christ; however, there are times when the proclamation of the Gospel can offer more confusion than understanding to those who are suffering. As the preacher approaches those nearing the end of their lives, there must be a focus on the Word of God that offers light in a time that may appear to be darkness. The appeal of *ethos* in preaching allows the persuasion of the listener to move to action with feelings that move toward God. The *pathos* argument in preaching has a positive impact on the listener, awakening positive emotions that will affect practical judgments.¹⁵ Understanding these methods sheds light on the faith that one has, which includes hope after a life justly lived. This is a positive message

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Michał Klementowicz, "Proximity to Death. The Affective and Volitional Dimension of Preaching as a Way to Effectively Communicate with People in Danger of Death," in *Dignity in Suffering. Closeness in Dying. Love in Mourning. Interdisciplinary Study*, ed. C. Ciccarino, M. Kalinowski, K. Konstany Masłowski, L. Szot, A. Świerczek, D. Traflet (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL–Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II–Seton Hall University, 2020), 189-198.

¹³ Ibid., 189.

¹⁴ Ibid., 190.

¹⁵ Ibid., 195.

that not only offers hope but also offers the elderly inspiration as they face death, giving hope to any Christian who is a true believer in Jesus Christ.

4. THE ART OF PREACHING

How can one define the art of preaching? Is it the ability to deliver scripture from memory? Does it possess knowledge relative to scripture? Charles Horne, a well-known preacher/lecturer, shared that he saw preaching as the process of “Keeping the world’s soul alive.”¹⁶ In a set of lectures he wrote before passing away, he stated that, when looking at preaching, one’s hopes to be the servant of man’s spirit, contrasting the word’s materialistic thoughts with the prophetic thoughts of the universe as the Church.¹⁷ This preacher states clearly that when viewing God’s prophetic power, the preacher must understand the word and how to deliver it.¹⁸ It is the responsibility of the preacher to have a “romance” with preaching, because this process is the mystery that revives the people’s interest in Christianity and the very wonder of conversion.¹⁹

4.1 Metadiscourse in preaching

It is known that preaching is an art to those who have titles in preaching the Word of God.²⁰ Preaching is also an art for those entrusted with such a mission in the Church. We must note also that preaching concerns sharing the word with the baptized and believers to strengthen them in the faith or re-evangelize them if they have departed from the faith. A homilist, or priest, works in this environment, emphasizing being baptized and living by the faith. Through preaching, one can find the strength that aids the believer in faith while calling them to profess their faith.²¹ This should be the primary idea in examining preaching, thereby making it effective.

¹⁶ William J. Hutchins, “Review of The Art of Preaching,” *The American Journal of Theology* vol. 19, no. 2 (1915): 301-304.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 301.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 302.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 302.

²⁰ Ockert Meyer, “The Art of Preaching: The Folly of Beauty and The Beauty of Reality,” *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* vol. 5, no. 2 (2019): 326.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 331.

However, a person understands the term “art” in this context, the word implies that preaching has its aestheticity.²² Beauty underpins the art of preaching while also shaping it, thereby giving the preacher the ability to persuade and move those who listen in the same way as the ancient orators did; therefore, when reviewing the literature, it can be seen that the “art” of preaching pertains to rhetoric and theology individually as well as collectively.

Contemporary preaching includes the process of elevating those who listen and are seen as the co-constructors of the message.²³ Research, performed to investigate how preachers respond to homiletics, challenges listeners via the deployment of metadiscourse and the operationalized framework. This aids in understanding preaching, not as a primary Gospel proclamation but as a form of social as well as communicative engagement.²⁴

The researchers used the quantitative analysis of 150 messages/sermons from three well-established English Christian denominations discovering that metadiscourse is the prolific feature when looking at preaching with close to one word in ten words performing the metadiscursive function, with much of the discourse being metadiscursive interactional resources.²⁵

The findings from the research revealed that, when viewing discussions from within homiletics, by using empirical as well as applied approaches to language, one can better serve through homiletics to make preaching more effective.

4.2 Inductive preaching

In the discussion of inductive preaching, it has been found that these sermons are reserved in a thesis until a later time, with the thesis acting as a result of homiletic exploration conducted jointly by the preacher, including the congregation.²⁶ Yet, in the review of this subject without attention to academics, it has been found that preachers think inductive preaching is somewhat deliberately obscure, with the congregation being invited to discover

²² Ibid., 326.

²³ Hans Malmström, “Engaging the Congregation: The Place of Metadiscourse in Contemporary Preaching,” *Applied Linguistics* vol. 37, no. 4 (2014): 561-582, doi:10.1093/applin/amu052.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ William H. Shepherd, Jr., “A Second Look at Inductive Preaching – Religion Online,” *Religion-Online.Org*, Last modified 1990, www.religion-online.org/article/a-second-look-at-inductive-preaching/, accessed: 15 April, 2022.

not so much the message in the text, but whatever it is the preacher attempts to say.²⁷

Some see Fred Craddock as the influential contemporary homiletical theoretician who created the phrases “inductive preaching” as well as “overhearing the Gospel” to become well-known while making him entirely responsible for the “sermon in a sentence.”²⁸ Craddock also believes that these sentences will help a preacher gain thematic unity while suggesting that the sermons should be delivered as the narrative. He believes that this is a process that aids in delivering preaching that can be understood by the listening people, even though Craddock did not intend for inductive preaching to be a select form.

In the view of communication and preaching, the process can be seen as part of practicing theology with a need for the preacher to understand the vision of preaching.²⁹ For example, the social realities that come through the art of preaching may be seen differently based on the church. One author shared that preaching at Faith Church does not belong to a contemporary moment, but in another community, this may not be the truth.

4.3 Reaching people through preaching

The body of believers becomes part of the sermon and the text. They gather an understanding of what is being said.³⁰ At this point, the preacher, pastor, or teacher observes the people, as if looking at a group of faithful people who may feel shipwrecked or stoned like the Apostle, including being imprisoned on behalf of the Gospel.³¹ Through the Word of God, the sermon or act of preaching acts as a life-giving transfusion of blood from a

²⁷ Jan Twardy, *Aktualizacja słowa Bożego w kaznodziejstwie* (Przemyśl: Wydawnictwo Archidiecezji Przemyskiej, 2009), 159-165.

²⁸ Shepherd, “A Second Look at Inductive Preaching – Religion Online,” www.religion-online.org/article/a-second-look-at-inductive-preaching/, accessed: 15 April, 2022.

²⁹ Arthur Van Seters, “Preaching as A Social Act: Theology and Practice,” *Religion-Online.Org*, Last modified 1986, www.religion-online.org/book/preaching-as-a-social-act-theology-and-practice/, accessed: 12 April, 2022.

³⁰ Ellen T. Charry, “Awakening to Judaism and Jews in Christian Preaching,” *The International Journal of Homiletics* 4 (2020): 53-60.

³¹ Don M. Wardlaw, “Chapter 2: Preaching as the Interface of Two Social Worlds: The Congregation as Corporate Agent in the Act of Preaching,” in *Preaching as a Social Act: Theology and Practice*, ed. Arthur Van Seters, *Religion-Online.Org*, Last modified 2022, www.religion-online.org/book-chapter/chapter-2-preaching-as-the-interface-of-two-social-worlds-the-congregation-as-corporate-agent-in-the-act-of-preaching-don-m-wardlaw/, accessed: 14 April, 2022.

faith that seems to many to be ancient yet very much alive to the modern body of Christian believers. Everyone needs preaching, no matter where they live, with missionaries doing a tremendous job preaching and sharing the Gospel.³² There is a need for preachers to share the Good News, thereby enabling every person to accept Jesus, be baptized, and have all of their sins forgiven.

4.4 The relationship between neuroscience and homiletics

In neuroscience, two unique visions with correlating methodological approaches can be found that compete with each other.³³ The first concerns finding and associating the specific neuron with every human action or behavior.³⁴ Here, human beings are reduced to a simple electrochemical phenomenon such as that taking place in the brain. Neuroscience assists in understanding the process of listening to preaching.

An individual choosing to teach and research homiletics should perform a self-examination concerning personal complicity, complacency, resistance, and vulnerability.³⁵ It may also be helpful to discover any critical issues that homileticians and preachers may need to address in a post-truth era marked by exclusion, division, polarization, and violence.³⁶ The relationship that exists between neuroscience and homiletics is personal and unique. In this process, an individual needs to perform a self-examination to ensure a proper focus on homiletics and personal motive.

In exploring neuroscience when in dialogue with homiletics, the process concerns comprehending the neurological processes attached to hearing via the emotional system that results in cognitive processing with synapses and memory.³⁷ People become involved when they participate in a service or listen to a sermon. Their corporeality (relating to the physical body) allows words to bring the sense of smell to mind, allowing a sentence to become associated with experiences that are about the narrative, thereby uplifting the

³² David M. Csinos, "Light Art, Street Art, and the Art of Preaching: Sound-and-Light Shows as Public Proclamation," *The International Journal of Homiletics* 4 (2020): 74-79.

³³ Klaus A. Stange, "Neuroscience and Homiletics in Dialogue: Perspectives for Preaching," *International Journal of Homiletics* 4 (2020): 108.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ HyeRan Kim-Cragg, "Preaching in a Post-Truth Era," *The International Journal of Homiletics* 4 (2020): 92.

³⁶ Ibid., 92-93.

³⁷ Stange, "Neuroscience and Homiletics in Dialogue," 103.

listener.³⁸ Preaching reaches out to the individual and activates all their senses. The human brain's sensory system works and considers the information heard also using one's sight. The visual system is the most dominant of the sensory systems, with the other senses functioning together to confirm the information via the optical system.³⁹ Here, neuronal communication occurs, which is the electrochemical event allowing the dendrites that contain receptors for the neurotransmitters to be released by nearby neurons.⁴⁰

The process of neuronal communication is also called synaptic transmission achieved through the most complicated chemical process. This consists of neurotransmitters that are present within the synaptic vesicles, which is the stimulus causing the neurotransmitters to escape into the synaptic cleft, the postsynaptic neuron that is capable of receiving a neurotransmitter while producing the electrical response and the mechanism to remove the neurotransmitter from the synaptic cleft, thereby zeroing out the cycle.⁴¹ Moreover, while the explanation is lengthy, the process occurs relatively quickly. It has been found that quality listening accepts the merging of synapses. When synapses consolidate in the brain, the brain creates a memory. Memory makes it possible to learn as well as grow cognitively.

The information mentioned above reveals that (1) when viewing the perspective of neuroscience, the brain is triggered through preaching that amazes the listener. (2) With the brain functioning as a system of mirror neurons, preaching engages the principle of correlation that enables the listener to grow in empathy that can act as mercy. (3) Neuroscience reveals how context forms the brain's development, with preaching being understood as a process that occurs within symbolic contexts. (4) The discussion on neuroscience details the vital insights for preaching relative to the hearing system, which provides the listener with the possibility of constructing mental images that can record themselves deep in the memory. Lastly, (5) neuroscientific reflection concerning the limbic system, the system of emotions, validates the importance of positive emotions and feelings in preaching. These feelings enable memories to exercise the creative and transforming function within the listener.⁴² These five observations present the relationship between homiletics and neuroscience.

³⁸ Stange, "Neuroscience and Homiletics in Dialogue," 111-114.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 105.

⁴⁰ "Neural Communication. Introduction to Psychology," *Lumen*, courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-hvcc-psychology-1/chapter/outcome-neurons/, accessed: 8 April, 2022.

⁴¹ Stange, "Neuroscience and Homiletics in Dialogue," 105-107.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 105-107.

5. COMMUNICATION OUTCOMES

Communication is simply using language within the social context,⁴³ and is an art, just like preaching, with preachers, orators, and many others using this art. The way people greet each other, talk to each other, and speak differently to children versus adults are all examples of communication used by people daily. While numerous studies have taken place concerning the communicator and the characteristics that affect the response of those receiving the communication, there is still much to be learned about the process.⁴⁴

A review of social and interpersonal communication and preaching shows the ongoing process of the need for effective communication that involves the dynamic interrelationship that should exist between the preacher and the congregation. This predominantly occurs using the spoken word that is sacred and used for a divine purpose.

Let us not forget that there are also interpersonal communication outcomes when looking at communication with children. Just as there must be a difference when communicating with a child that has developmental challenges,⁴⁵ consideration must be given to those who may have issues with communication when hearing the message of the preacher or teacher within the body of Christ. There must be a collaborative effort that can include the family and other communication partners to ensure that the message is heard and understood.

5.1 Difficulties with communication

While this subject has been slightly discussed, there is a need to examine information gathered from research concerning communication difficulties causing restricted and repetitive behaviors as predictors of such things as anxiety in adults with autism.⁴⁶ Social communication concerns a variety of

⁴³ Carl I. Hovland, "Social Communication," *Proceedings of The American Philosophical Society* vol. 92, no. 5 (1948): 374-375.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 371.

⁴⁵ Elizabeth A. Fuller and Ann P. Kaiser, "The Effects of Early Intervention on Social Communication Outcomes for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder: a Meta-Analysis," *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders* vol. 50, no. 5 (2019): 1683-1700, doi:10.1007/s10803-019-03927-z.

⁴⁶ Erika Kuzminskaite, Sander Begeer, Rosa A Hoekstra, and Rachel Grove, "Short Report: Social Communication Difficulties and Restricted Repetitive Behaviors as Predictors of Anxiety in Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder," *Autism* vol. 24, no. 7 (2020): 1917-1923, doi:10.1177/1362361320934218.

different skills that include social engagement as well as initiation and maintenance.⁴⁷ The research study examined whether social communication difficulties were more decisive risk factors for anxiety symptoms in autistic adults. The mean level of anxiety in the present sample was average and comparable to that identified in Australian and British adolescents and young autistic adults.⁴⁸ When looking at the implications of the research, it was found that in the past, children's samples were used with reports from parents. This caused the researchers to expand knowledge by using the self-reports of autistic adults themselves, with the conclusion that the higher- and lower-order non-social autistic traits were found to be more substantial risk factors for comorbid anxiety than for the autistic social traits in adulthood.⁴⁹ This information reveals that, for the individual practicing the art of preaching, consideration must be given to any member within the congregation that may have communication issues that could impair their understanding of what is being preached.

5.2 Communication and homiletics

When looking at the subject of communication and homiletics, there is a need for the preacher to identify their social locations as a preacher, thereby gaining an understanding of the critical approach for homiletics that includes interdisciplinary followed by intercultural and interreligious.⁵⁰ This subject will be discussed later in this paper.

The homiletics seeking the interdisciplinary approach can benefit from the postcolonial perspective because the process disrupts the static identities while creating small moments of intellectual coherence related to other complex identity positionings.⁵¹ The intercultural approach concerns a crucial issue concerning the power-laden aspect of language known as the intercultural context.⁵² There is a focus on the differences in modes of communication and the language used among the different cultures. The interreligious approach to Christian preaching aids in newly studied and unfolding areas that

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ HyeRan Kim-Cragg, "Unfinished and Unfolding Tasks of Preaching: Interdisciplinary, Intercultural, and Interreligious Approaches in the Postcolonial Context of Migration," *Homiletic* vol. 44, no. 2 (2019): 4-17

⁵¹ Ibid., 7.

⁵² Ibid., 10.

need to be explored.⁵³ This information reveals the many essential challenges of homiletics and the art of preaching.

Preaching includes the responsibility of preparing for preaching. Confronting this reality can also involve reviewing unfinished business concerning society, including the unfolding task of preaching that proclaims the Gospel in ways that build a sense of belonging versus prejudice.⁵⁴ The emerging tasks of homiletics lie within the new and not-so-new realities that include but are not limited to migration and postcolonial struggles.⁵⁵ The task of preaching can be seen as evangelism or witnessing in Christianity, thereby calling the act of preaching the Gospel with the total intention of sharing the Word of God and the message and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Preparing a sermon involves a series of steps that may differ based on the individual. These steps include:⁵⁶ prayer, ensuring that there is the ascertaining of the foremost thought that is to be delivered, identifying the people to whom the message will be preached, applying the text in a manner that the hearer understands, and deciding on the purpose of the sermon. These steps enable delivering a clear and understood message.

5.3 The importance of social location

A connection exists between hermeneutics and homiletics, with hermeneutics making the sermon understandable while homiletics leads to authentic preaching. Keeping this in mind, the preacher must also consider the social location, the place where he is preaching, as this location will impact hermeneutics.⁵⁷ In Acts 3 and Acts 4, Peter and John healed a man born crippled. The Sanhedrin, a group of local elites that also included the high priestly family, religious experts, and lay elders, had threatened these two disciples not to talk about Jesus; however, when this miracle occurred, Acts 4:21-22 AMP tells us that:

⁵³ Ibid., 14.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 7.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 7.

⁵⁶ John Albert Broadus, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979), 7; Jan Twardy, *Koncepcja pracy twórczej nad kazaniem* (Rzeszów: Wyższe Seminarium Duchowne, 1998), 155-223.

⁵⁷ Bruce L. Bauer, "Social Location and Its Impact on Hermeneutics," *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies*: 12 (2016): 74-80.

When the rulers and Council members had threatened them further, they let them go, finding no way to punish them because [of their fear] of the people, for they were all praising and glorifying and honoring God for what had happened. ... for the man to whom this sign (attesting miracle) of healing had happened was more than forty years old.

Some years later, as Paul and Barnabas were in Lystra, they met another man crippled from birth (Acts 14:8). Through prayers to Jesus, the apostles healed this man, with the people in Lystra believing that the gods of Zeus and Hermes had performed the miracle. These people gathered wreaths of flowers while also preparing a bull offering as a sacrifice.⁵⁸ Two different situations are present here, with one group of people praising God for the healing and the second group believing that the gods of mythology had performed the miracle.

These two events reveal the importance of social location and how it impacts an individual. Note that the social location also enables seeing how people read and create opinions. Social locations concern gender, race, religion, language, beliefs, behaviors, and customs comprising one's worldview.⁵⁹ This social location transmits and develops biases and assumptions that can impact how an individual reads and interprets the scriptural text.

The social location also shapes an individual's concepts and perceptions of power and privilege, as well as the power dynamics that exist between various social groups.⁶⁰ Examples of this social location concern the attitudes and expectations concerning men's and women's roles in and out of the home as well as the dynamics between the rich and the poor and the educated and uneducated.⁶¹ It is these aspects relative to the social location that the preacher must understand to seek wisdom from God to help people see the word in the manner God would have them see it.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 74-75.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 75.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 75-78.

⁶¹ Ibid., 78-79.

6. HOMILETICS THEORY AND PREACHING – COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The theory is essential to preaching and can be seen as the supposition of ideas intended to explain an idea based on principles that can be independent of what is being explained.⁶² Past studies have revealed that the formal theories of learning have resonated with what people may have experienced, thereby fitting comfortably with the personal perspectives or the individual's existing worldviews; however, there are instances where the learners may be exposed to ideas that create differences that were not known.⁶³ Keep in mind that the language of theory is dense. At the same time, challenging jargon includes specific technical terms or phrases that are not used in daily language, thereby being difficult to comprehend.⁶⁴ Theory and preaching are related based on the Bible being the written word of God that dates back thousands of years, having the ability to change people's worldview when that word is preached.

What is the purpose of theory, and why is it important? The most frequent controversial issue concerns virtually understanding a particular theory.⁶⁵ While seeking to find answers, there must be the ability to recognize the correct theories with the realization that there is a need to study and analyze theories. Note also that theory is the orderly, integrated set of statements describing as well as predicting behavior. This is the importance of theory to homiletics and other fields related to the ministry.

There is resistance to theory when looking at homiletics, including resisting the use of language about language that creates resistance to reading.⁶⁶ Yet, this process occurs not only in homiletics but also in education and other fields. Many find it a challenge to see the benefit of this theory when looking at the Bible. As an example, critical theory is one way that cultures attempt to explain and confront power structures, with many Christians embracing this theory as well.⁶⁷ When looking at critical theory, the degree to

⁶² Patricia A. Gouthro, "Taking Time to Learn: The Importance of Theory for Adult Education," *Adult Education Quarterly* vol. 69, no. 1 (2018): 60-76, doi:10.1177/0741713618815656.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Kevin C. Costley, "Why Do We Have Theories?" ERIC Institute of Education Sciences website, eric.ed.gov/?id=ED491769, accessed: 6 April, 2022.

⁶⁶ Paul De Man, "The Resistance to Theory," *Yale French Studies* 63 (1982): 3-20, doi:10.2307/2929828.

⁶⁷ Joseph Backholm, "Is Critical Theory Biblical? – What Would You Say," *What Would You Say*, whatwouldyousay.org/critical-theory-is-biblical/, accessed: 13 April, 2022.

which an individual is oppressed determines the level of moral authority. The more categories of oppression someone identifies with, the more moral authority is viewed.

A qualitative research study was performed comparing the practice of the expert preacher that is found to be at the core of the concepts relative to homiletic theory, or the art as well as the craft of preaching while searching for any discrepancies that exist between the theory that is suggested and what the preacher would practice.⁶⁸ The seminal theories were examined relative to content, arrangement, introduction, transition, conclusion and style, including the illustration and the delivery of the message.

The findings from the research reveal that whatever the preacher places at the center of the homiletic philosophy become the hub where their preparation as well as design and delivery center.⁶⁹ Note also that whether the preacher should place relevance at the center of preaching becomes a question essential to answer.

The role of the preacher is gigantic, with the preacher playing a significant role in such dramatic problems as promoting life, suicide prevention, or addressing people who are struggling with other mental issues and thoughts.⁷⁰ It is always important to remember that there are conditions for proclaiming the Word of God in contemporary Western culture and the mentality of Westerners; however, there has also been the sharing of comparisons and historical references based on the Word of God.

6.1 Communication theory and homiletics

Conclusions from the research reveal that communication theory grew from the mathematical theories created by Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver.⁷¹ Modern communication theory includes homiletics reflected in works created by homiletic authors over the past 45 years.⁷² These theories, as well as the critical theory, reveal that the field of communication theory

⁶⁸ Curtis Castillo, "A Comparative Analysis Between a Preanalysis Between a Preacher's Practice and Active and Homiletic Theory" (Graduate Thesis, Utah State University, 2022), 206.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 207

⁷⁰ Karen Mason, Esther Kim, and Martin W. Blake, "Clergy Use of Suicide Prevention Competencies." *OMEGA – Journal of Death and Dying* 81 (2020): 404-423, doi.org/10.1177/0030222818777373.

⁷¹ Mike Chandler, "The Adoption of Communication Theory in Homiletics," *Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* vol. 21, no. 2 (2021): 67-75.

⁷² Ibid., 66.

resembles the ways that communication scholars have enabled an understanding in the review of the evangelical homiletics society. Adopting communication theory in homiletics enables us to present preaching that assists in this communication being replaced presently with an electronic message that must also be understood.⁷³

When observing preaching, Christian preaching is seen as the central and significant custom to those who practice Bible research while leading communities in worship and evangelization inclusive of discipleship.⁷⁴ Modern preachers understand the challenges that are presented by the new homiletic style as well as the media environment. The homiletical triad that includes identity, teleology and responsibility offers practical guidelines that are seen for promoting human dignity while also generating theological responsibility in a world that is struggling with challenges.⁷⁵ Preaching is not only a matter of preparation but also includes the homiletic performance based on the sermon's text. This assumes the intended divine action that is accomplished through the Holy Spirit.⁷⁶

CONCLUSION

This research paper has been the discussion of literature that shares information concerning understanding homiletics, reaching people with the word, communication and its link to homiletics, theory and practice. All this ensures that the listeners hear what is being spoken. In examining homiletics today, the new homiletic has roots in the hermeneutical work of such founders as Gerhard Ebeling and Ernst Fuchs.⁷⁷ These founders understood the alleged separation between the theology delivered from the pulpit and the people receiving the message in the pews as a threat to preaching if the word was not

⁷³ Ibid., 69; Leszek Kuc, *Krótki traktat o teologii komunikacji* (Leszno koło Błonia: Lumen, 1997), 219-235.

⁷⁴ Weiwen Tu, "A Praxis of Oral Homiletics: Preaching from The Heart" (Doctoral dissertation, Duquesne University, 2019), 1-12, dsc.duq.edu/etd/1775.

⁷⁵ Duck-Hyun Kim, "The Homiletical Appropriation of Biblical Passages in the Light of Speech Act Theory: Preaching as a Performance of the Biblical Text" (Ph.D. diss., The University of Stellenbosch, 2014), 138-163.

⁷⁶ Krista M. Carter, "Rhetoric and Religion: Rediscovering Homiletics as A Site of Intentional Activity," (Master thesis, Xavier University, 2013), 23-44.

⁷⁷ Scott M. Gibson, "Critique of The New Homiletic," *Preaching Today*, www.preachingtoday.com/books/art-and-craft-of-biblical-preaching/style/critique-of-new-homiletic.html, accessed: 18 April, 2022.

delivered effectively. These writers insisted on the practical relevance in today's world, something greatly needed.⁷⁸ Today's new hermeneutic is further expressed based on the reality and language that is understood. New information has been revealed to show neuroscience in dialogue with homiletics, showing that the process concerns comprehending the neurological processes attached to hearing via the emotional system that results in cognitive processing with synapses and memory.⁷⁹

Note also that homiletics today is understood as conditions of proclaiming the Word of God concerning the conditions of contemporary Western culture, including Western mentality. Consideration is also given to reflecting on the importance of scriptures and the people being taught the Word of God. This makes possible the forgiveness of sin and baptism, making it possible for people to live a new Christian life.

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⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Klaus A. Stange, "Neuroscience and Homiletics in Dialogue," 103-120.

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O TYM, CO WAŻNE, W HOMILETYCE I NAUKACH O KOMUNIKACJI

Streszczenie

Homiletyka formalna, która traktuje homilię jako akt komunikacji interpersonalnej polegający na powiązaniu czterech elementów: głosiciela, słuchacza, treści i sposobu przekazu, domaga się uwzględnienia współczesnych osiągnięć nauk o komunikacji dotyczących sztuki skutecznego przekazu. W artykule omówiono znaczenie homiletyki i teorii komunikacji oraz ich wzajemne relacje dotyczące gromadzenia, analizy, interpretacji i przekazu treści kaznodziejskich. Dodatkowy materiał dotyczy relacji między neuronauką a homiletyką, ujawniając ich wzajemny związek i potrzebę współpracy w skutecznym przekazie Słowa Bożego. Teorię homiletyki i komunikacji ujęto w analizie porównawczej w kontekście kaznodziejskiego metadyskursu. Celem artykułu jest zebranie i uporządkowanie dotychczasowego stanu wiedzy w tym obszarze.

Słowa kluczowe: Homiletyka; przepowiadanie; kaznodzieja; kazanie; teoria komunikacji; neuro-nauka.