A Paracletic Homiletic

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A PARACLETIC HOMILETIC

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Department of Practical Theology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Sacred Theology

by

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INTRODUCTION

In antithesis to the thinking of natural humanity that salvation comes by way of law, Holy Scripture declares that salvation comes by way of faith in Christ (Romans 10:4). Paul says that the prophetic Old Testament Word spoken by Joel, "Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved" (2:32), applies to Christ. But through what means shall people believe? Paul asks, "How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:14). Having posed the question, he then gives the answer. "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17).

The proclamation of "the Word of Christ" is commonly called preaching. But it is more than simply talking in public about religion. The following principle applies: Praedicatio verbi Dei est verbum Dei! The preaching of the Word of God is the Word of God! Furthermore, the "what" of preaching is accompanied by the "how" of preaching. Homiletic form and content are like the Law and the Gospel. They accompany one another. They need to be distinguished from one another. Each is important in its own right. Whichever it is called, proclamation (the more precise term) or preaching (the
more generic term), this fact remains: the ministry of the Word is the central and essential activity of the Christian church. The Introduction to Lutheran Worship reads as follows:

Our Lord speaks and we listen. His Word bestows what it says. Faith that is born from what is heard acknowledges the gifts received with eager thankfulness and praise.¹

It is the intent of this study to answer the question, What is the nature of parakaleō/paraklesis in proclamation? While the form and content of this paper are academic and are intended to meet an academic need, they are also aimed at meeting an individual need. The pursuit of better and more effective proclamation is a personal and ongoing goal. For this project to be successful the academic study needs to be of real benefit in terms of pastoral application.

There is a very real limitation to this study. While there are nearly three dozen terms in Scripture that have to do with proclamation, the emphasis in this study is essentially proclamation as parakaleō/paraklesis. Furthermore, study of these terms as they are used in the Septuagint obviously means that a translation is being utilized. Ancient secular literature does not receive the consideration it deserves only because of space considerations.

The procedure which this study follows begins by establishing the definitions of the terms in question. The

first and most basic definition is of proclamation itself (Chapter I). Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions will provide the basis for this definition. Secondly, then, parakaleō/paraklēsis are singled out and defined in greater detail as distinct aspects of proclamation (Chapter II).

The next step is to examine parakaleō/paraklēsis proclamation in terms of those involved in the process. They are first, God (Chapter III); second, the public minister (Chapter IV); and third, the lay people of a congregation (Chapter V). Correspondingly, each of these is presented in terms of their roles in an elementary triad model of communication; namely, speaker, hearer, and message. David Buttrick describes the model in the following way.

In basic communication theory, words are the medium of exchange. Just as a dollar bill is a convenience, a substitute for cumbersome bartering, so words are handy signs we use to transfer mental images. Words, like things, are inert until we pick them out and use them to convey thoughts which are in our minds. Thus, in a crude communication model we have a "Sender," "Words," and a "Receiver." The sender translates some particular thought into a word code for transmission. The receiver, in turn, decodes the words and, thereby, reproduces the sender's original thought. In the basic communication model, words are signals--like the "dit" and "dahs" of a Morse code--used to transmit thoughts from one person to another. Thus, behind each word is a thought, idea, or concrete reference.2

Finally, the last chapter (Chapter VI) deals with the transmission itself; the style of the language that characterizes parakaleō/paraklēsis as proclamation. The

thesis is that parakaleō/paraklesis, in part, define and describe proclamation.
Communication of the Christian message is the principle mission of the Church. What that message is and how the communication happens deserves continual study. After all, those doing the communicating have been entrusted to perform a special function. It is generally referred to as "preaching" but is better described as "proclamation."

Proclamation is like an orchestra that involves musicians playing different instruments together in concert. Orchestras have a wide variety of instruments that produce varieties of sounds and combinations of sounds. The instruments have tone qualities that have different effects when they are played, according to what is played, how it is played, and even where it is played. Proclamation is like that. It is made up of a variety of terms. It involves the artistry of sounds put together and arranged so as to reverberate in a person’s heart, soul, and mind. Proclamation has harmony, rhythm, tempo, and timbre. It may drone on like a single tone from a oboe. It can be as brilliant and penetrating as a trumpet, or as soothing as only stringed instruments can be. Proclamation involves composer,
composition, and score. It may also be impromptu. But it must be more than fiddling around with faith.

One instrument of proclamation is like the ancient harp-like lyre. (This analogy reads better than it sounds.) It is a mortal sound box with two arms . . . and a crossbar that gives it tension and tone. When the Holy Spirit touches this instrument proclamation happens and a sacred ensemble begins as God works through people to make His will known.

The purpose of this chapter is to define proclamation. This will be done by a selective examination of various terms in Scripture which, like instruments in an orchestra, are similar but still very much different in their contribution. The Lutheran Confessions will also be examined. Then a definition of proclamation will be established.

Proclamation In Scripture

There is a wide variety of words used in Holy Scripture that have to do with speaking the Word of God. The richness and vigor of what is generically called "preaching" begin to be evident as the different nuances, the various verbal instruments, are identified, studied, and appreciated for their own specific contribution to a fuller understanding and definition of proclamation. Gerhard Friedrich presents the variety of terms as follows:

When we to-day speak of the proclaiming of God's Word by men, we almost necessarily think of preaching, and with few exceptions Luther always uses this word (predigen) in translation of Κηρύγγιν. The NT is more dynamic and varied in its modes of expression than we are to-day. In
addition to κηρύσσειν it uses λέγειν, λαλείν, 
apoθέγγασθαι, διψάειν, διηγείσθαι, 
eκαθηγείσθαι, 
edηγείσθαι, διερμηνεύειν, γνωρίζειν. 
Sometimes it has ἀγγέλειν, ἀγαγγέλλειν, ἀγαγγέλλειν, 
διαγγέλλειν, ἐκαγγέλλειν, καιαγγέλλειν, εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, and 
sometimes again παρηγαγόρεσθαι, μαρτυρεῖν, ἐπιμαρτυρεῖν, 
dιαμαρτύρεσθαι, πείθειν, ὀμολογεῖν. We find κράζειν, 
προφητεύειν, διάσκειν, παραδίδοναι, νομθετεῖν, τὸν λόγον ὅρθοτομεῖν, παρακάλειν, ἐλέγχειν, and ἐπιτιμᾶν. Naturally 
there are differences between these verbs. But our almost 
exclusive use of "preach" for all them is a sign, not 
merely of poverty of vocabulary, but of the loss of 
something which was a living reality in primitive 
Christianity.¹

A study of each of these words follows.

**Angellein (**Ἀγγέλειν)**

Angellein² and its related terms, based on angelía and 
angellō, Julius Schniewind indicates, carry a general sense of 
"telling, declaring, or proclaiming." In 1 John 1:5, angelía³ 
was what John and others heard from Jesus and announced 
themselves and, in 1 John 3:11, what was heard. In the former 
the Word of Jesus is meant while in the latter preaching 
itsel is being referred to. And the two harmonize. In the

¹Gerhard Friedrich, "κηρύσσω," Theological Dictionary of 
Geoffrey Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 3:703 
(hereafter cited as Kittel, TDNT).

²Julius Schniewind, "ἀγγελία, ἀγγέλλω, ἀν-, δι-, ἐκ-, 
kατ-, ὀροκαταγγέλλω, καταγγελεύς," Kittel, TDNT (1964), 1:56-
73.

³New Testament references in Greek are based on Kurt 
Aland, Matthew Black, Carlo Martini, Bruce Metzger, Allen 
Bible Society, 1968).
Septuagint it is used for good news where it is "like cold water to a weary soul" (Proverbs 25:25) as well as bad news as in 1 Samuel 4:19 regarding the capture of the ark of God. The close relationship to euangélion is self-evident. John 20:18 attests to angéllō in connection with Mary Magdalene's words to the disciples as to whom she had seen and what she had heard Jesus say. Resurrection and the proclamation of it belong together.

Anangéllō is common in the Septuagint. It is especially frequent in the Psalms (23 times), Isaiah (48 times), and Jeremiah (23 times, but more often in a secular sense). In Isaiah 46:10 the Lord Himself is declaring what He will do. His prophets will do it for Him to their fellow Israelites as well as to people throughout the world (Isaiah 53:1; 52:15). Especially noteworthy is Amos 4:13: "anangéllōn eis anthrōpous tón christón autóú." In the Psalms declaration is made of God's righteousness (70:15), truth (29:10), works (63:10), mercy or compassion (91:3), name (101:22), praise (50:17), to and among the people of the nations (95:3). In the New Testament the man whom Jesus miraculously healed near the pool of Bethesda declared to "the Jews that it was Jesus

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1Septuagint references are based on Alfred Rahlfs ed., Septuaginta (Stuttgart: Biblia-Druck, 1979).


3Schniewind, pp.61-64.
who had made him well" (John 5:15). In Acts 14:27 and 15:4 Paul and Barnabas report to the churches in Antioch and Jerusalem "all that God had done with them" in their mission work to and among the Gentiles. In Peter's first epistle, 1:12, the announcing was done "through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit." In Acts 20:20-27 Paul "did not shrink from declaring" what was profitable, even God's whole purpose, His "boule," to the Ephesian elders. His "declaring" is synonymous with "didachai" ("teaching") in verse 20, and "diamartyresthai" ("solemnly testifying") in verse 21. In 1 John 1:5 what was heard from Jesus is what is announced for others to hear. *Anangelei* is repeated three times in John 16:13-15 in connection with the speech of the Paraclete. His speech will all be "the truth" (verse 13), will disclose that which is of Jesus and glorify Him (verse 14), and that means disclosing the things of the Father, too (verse 15). The woman from Sychar expected the coming Messiah to "declare all things to us" (John 4:15).

*Apangéllō* has limited religious use in the Septuagint and is analogous to *anagéllein*. It may refer to God's speech (Isaiah 44:8), the oracular speech of a prophet (1 Samuel 9:9), and prophetic proclamation (1 Samuel 9:19; Micah 3:8). It may also refer to declaration by the faithful of God's mighty acts (Psalm 144:4), His truth (Psalm 88:2), His works (Psalm 104:1), His desires (Psalm 39:6), and His praises

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(Psalm 77:4). In the New Testament it is used in conjunction with miracles. The Gadarene herdsman reported everything to the people in the city (Matthew 8:33). The woman who had had a hemorrhage "declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed" (Luke 8:47). In connection with God's work Peter and John reported to their fellow believers after their release from prison (Acts 4:23), Peter describes that Cornelius reported what he had seen and heard. In 1 Corinthians 14:25 Paul writes that a hearer impressed by the Word of God will declare his response. The resurrection accounts indicate that those who discover the open and empty tomb report to the others (Matthew 28:8; Luke 24:9). Jesus tells John the Baptizer's followers, "Go and report to John the things you hear and see" (Matthew 11:4). Paul, defending himself before King Agrippa, tells that since his heavenly vision and hearing Jesus, he has kept on declaring to both Jews and Gentiles (Acts 26:20). To the Athenians Paul even says, "God is now declaring to men" (Acts 17:30). In 1 John 1:2-3 the apostle says that what was seen and heard is what they proclaim. With quotations from Isaiah 42:1 and Psalm 22:22, Christ is identified as One who shall proclaim in Matthew 12:18 and in Hebrews 2:12 respectively.

Diangélló is found nine times in the Septuagint and always in a sacral sense including the announcing of the

*Ibid., pp.67-69.*
sabbatical year (Leviticus 25:9) as well as the shouting that is to happen at Jericho (Joshua 6:10). In Exodus 9:16 the Lord tells Moses "to proclaim My name through all the earth." In Psalm 2:7, "I will tell of the decree of the Lord:" is Messianic. In the New Testament Paul is "giving notice" in the temple of the completion of his vow (Acts 21:26). Exodus 9:16 is quoted in Romans 9:17 and indicates that part of God's plan was and is "THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH." In Mark 5:19 Jesus tells the Geresene man from whom Jesus had expelled the demons named Legion, "Go home to your people and report to them . . . ." To the man who wanted to bury his father before following Jesus, Jesus says instead, "Go and proclaim everywhere the Kingdom of God" (Luke 9:60). Thus, the eschatological Lordship of God is proclaimed beginning with the proclaiming itself.

Exángëllō⁹ is found only in 1 Peter 2:9. " . . . proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you" carries the sense of "publish abroad or solemnly proclaim."

Katangéllo¹⁰ is not used in the Septuagint. In the New Testament its seventeen uses are always sacral. In Acts 3:24, "prophets . . . also announced these days," has the sense of prophecy and promise. Philippians 1:17-18 and Colossians 1:28 specifically refer to proclaiming Christ. 1 Corinthians 2:1 speaks of "proclaiming to you the testimony of God." "Those

⁹Ibid., pp.69-70.

¹⁰Ibid., pp.70-73.
who proclaim the gospel" are to get their living from it according to 1 Corinthians 9:14. In Acts, katangéllein is the language of mission. In Acts 4:2 Peter and John are speaking to people in Jerusalem "and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead." In Acts 17:2-3 Paul is in Thessalonica in the synagogue on Sabbath days speaking on the basis of the Scriptures. Opening them up and setting them before the people, his message is, "This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ." Similarly, the Gentiles in Athens were ignorant about God. In Acts 17:23 Paul proclaims Him who is unknown to them. In 1 Corinthians 11:26 the proclaiming of the Lord's death is not in the act of communing but in the words of institution. "... your faith is being proclaimed" in Romans 1:8 refers to the declared work of God which is believed.

**Apophthéngesthai (Ἀποφθέγγεσθαι)**

*Apophéngomai* has to do with speaking out loudly, clearly, and with emphasis (Psalm 58:8). Johannes Behm notes usage in the New Testament in connection with Pentecost in Acts 2:4 when Christians "filled with the Holy Spirit began to speak with other tongues, . . . ." In Acts 2:14 it refers to Peter's Pentecost sermon when he "raised his voice and declared . . . ." Its only other usage is in Acts 26:25 where Paul uses the word to describe the persuasive proclamation he

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11Johannes Behm, "Ἀποφθέγγομαι," Kittel, TDNT, 1:447.
made in his own defense to King Agrippa in Caesarea. Again, the sense is inspired prophetic speech.

**Gnōrizein (γνωρίζειν)**

Gnōrizo\(^1^2\), carrying the sense "to make known," is common in the Septuagint. In some cases it has an emotional quality to it such as the desperation felt by the Philistines who had come to realize they had one ark too many (1 Samuel 6:2). Rudolph Bultmann indicates that it may refer to a priest, teacher or prophet (1 Samuel 6:2; 10:8; Ezekiel 43:11), or God Himself who makes His power or grace known (Jeremiah 16:21; Psalm 97:2) or gives secret knowledge (Daniel 2:23, 28). In the New Testament the word is used for God’s making known His secret counsel of salvation. "God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, "Colossians 1:27; "He made known to us the mystery of His will," Ephesians 1:9; "that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church" Ephesians 3:10. When the shepherds had seen the Infant in the manger, "they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child" (Luke 2:17). Through Paul’s preaching Jesus Christ "has been made known to all the nations" (Romans 16:26) and Peter "made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:16). Jesus is the subject of gnōrizein as the Revealer in the Gospel of John. He says,

"all things that I heard from My Father I made known to you" (John 15:15). In His High Priestly prayer Jesus prays, "I have made Thy name known to them," (John 17:26). And Christians are to "let your requests be made known to God" (Philippians 4:6).

There is also a sense of "to perceive, to know." In Proverbs 3:6 the direction from father to son is, "In all your ways acknowledge Him,. . . ." Elihu, speaking to Job about God's justice in dealing with people says, "Therefore He knows their works," (Job 34:25). In the New Testament Paul's concern is that Christ be exalted be it by his life or his death. Paul says, "I do not know which to choose" (Philippians 2:22).

Didásko (Διδάσκειν)

Didásko means "to teach or to instruct." In the Septuagint didásklein occurs some 100 times. It has a secular usage as in preparing for battle in 2 Samuel 22:35. But, as Karl Rengstorff points out, it also applies to the song God tells Moses to write "as a witness for Me" in Deuteronomy 31:19. In Psalm 93:10 God "teaches man knowledge . . . ." Didásklein is used in conjunction with making known God's statutes and judgments (Deuteronomy 4:1) and His words (Deuteronomy 4:10). The teaching may be done by God (Deuteronomy 4:10), the head of the family (Deuteronomy

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11:19), or the righteous (Psalm 50:13). The term always directs attention to volition and intellect. The complete and comprehensive sense of the word suits the purpose of presenting God's will to people so that they may submit to it. It makes a total claim on a person and that person's education including the relationship according to the Law, between the person and God on the one hand, and with one's neighbor on the other hand, according to the will of God.

In the New Testament the word is primarily used in the Gospels and the first part of Acts. The emphasis, then, falls on the first followers, and in the early Church these were primarily Jews rather than Gentiles. While didásklein is not always used in a religious sense (Matthew 28:15), it was very prominent in Jesus' ministry. As Jesus traveled He taught (Matthew 4:23). A synagogue (Matthew 9:35; 12:9-14; 13:54) or the temple (Mark 12:35; Luke 21:37; Matthew 26:55) were frequent sites for the instruction as well as in the open air (Matthew 5:2; Luke 5:3). In Luke 4:16-29 Jesus begins teaching by reading Scripture; standing to read and seated to explain. In Matthew 22:37 His points of reference are God and one's neighbor. Because Scripture is the Word of God He will not violate its integrity in the slightest (Matthew 5:17-20), for it confirms His relationship to the Father. To deviate from Scripture would only establish a credibility gap. Jesus' teaching is to educate and reform people. "... you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew
5:48). Through His teaching, then, Jesus caused His hearers to encounter the will of God as He has revealed it.

While each individual context determines the purpose and to some extent the content of what is taught, in numerous instances Jesus’ teaching is preaching. Klaus Wegenast writes:

In 13 places in the Gospels didaskō is used absolutely as a comprehensive term for Jesus’ preaching (Mk.2:13; 6:6; 10:1; 12:35; 14:49; Lk.4:15; 3:22; 26; 19:47; Matt.4:23; 9:35; 11:1). In addition, the vb. is also used to denote his teaching in given situations (e.g. Mk.1:21f.; 4:1f.; 8:31; 11:17; Matt.5:2; 21:23; Lk.5:3,17; 6:6; 13:10)...

What did Jesus teach when on earth? In brief, the answer is God, his kingdom and his will...

Didáskein in the writings of John suggests the divine inspiration of Jesus’ teaching (John 8:28; 14:26; 1 John 2:27). Jesus and the Father are united in will as Jesus speaks in the name of God according to John 8:28. In John 14:26 His people continue His work. In 1 John 2:27 His people are to resist teaching from false teachers. Jesus sent His disciples out and they taught (Mark 6:30) even as He made it the mission of all His people (Matthew 28:20). The content of the teaching is to be the faithful proclamation of Jesus plainly spoken with the Scriptures as starting point, constant reference, and background. In Paul’s letters teaching is connected to what he did as he founded churches and what continues internally (2 Thessalonians 2:15; Colossians 2:7; Ephesians 4:21). Teaching

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is to be an aspect of the relationship between Christians (Colossians 3:16) and doing so carries both privilege and responsibility (1 Timothy 4:11; 6:2). Those teaching are to be men who are selected as qualified by virtue of their faithfulness to the Scriptures and who will be able to do it (2 Timothy 2:2). Women are to be exempted from teaching in some circumstances such as when authority over a man is involved (1 Timothy 2:12).

Diermēneίn (Διερμηνεύειν)

Hermeneuo\(^{15}\) has the basic meaning of "to interpret or to explain." Johannes Behm mentions that in the Septuagint when Nebuchadnezzar demands to know the dream he had had and its interpretation Daniel answers that doing so lies not within mortals but comes from God (Daniel 2:27-30). In the New Testament when Paul refers to the "interpretation of tongues" in 1 Corinthians 12:10, he is talking about converting what is unintelligible to what is intelligible to edify the church (1 Corinthians 14:5,26). On the road to Emmaus the risen Jesus speaks to Cleopas and his traveling companion. The Gospel record says, "And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to [diermēneusen, interpreted for] them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures" (Luke 24:27).

\(^{15}\)Johannes Behm, "ἐρμηνεύω," Kittel, TDNT, 2:661-666.
A. C. Thiselton adds "to translate" to the understanding of hermeneuo. In Ezra 4:7 it has to do with a letter in Aramaic sent by the enemies of Judah and Benjamin to King Artaxerxes that needed to be translated. In the New Testament the same sense applies in more than half of the twenty plus usages. For example, in Matthew 1:23, Immanuel "translated means, 'God with us.'" Other instances where translation is applied include the words Jesus spoke to the dead child of Jairus (Mark 5:41), Golgotha "is translated, Place of a Skull" (Mark 15:22), and so on. A broader sense of the word can be seen in connection with John 9:7 and Hebrews 7:2 since Siloam does not strictly mean "Sent."

**Dīegeisthai (Διηγείσθαι)**

Egōmai carries the meaning "to lead," "to think," "to believe," or "to regard as" according to Buchsel. Further, diēgēsis in Luke 1:1 has to do with oral or written record. Dīegeisthai means "to lead throughout," "to declare thoroughly," "detail," "recount," "relate," or "tell." In Mark 5:16 frightened swineherders "describe" to the townspeople what had happened to their pigs and to the man who had been demon-possessed. And when the man who had been

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17 Friedrich Büchel, "ἡγεῖμαι," Kittel, TDNT, 2:907-909.

demon-possessed begged to go with Jesus, Jesus told him, "Return to your house and describe [diēgou] what great things God has done for you" (Luke 8:39). Consequently, "he departed, proclaiming throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him" (Luke 8:39). Coming down the mountain after the transfiguration Jesus "gave them orders not to relate [diēgesontai] to anyone what they had seen," (Mark 9:9). Speaking of faith and men who have triumphed by it the writer of Hebrews states, "For time will fail me if I tell [diēgoúmenon] of" (11:32). Ekdiēgéomai\textsuperscript{19} means "to narrate fully," "in detail." In Acts 15:3 Paul and Barnabas were "describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles. . . ." Exēgéomai\textsuperscript{20} means "to detail," "to set forth in language," "to tell," "to narrate," "to recount." When Cleopas and his traveling companion returned to Jerusalem from Emmaus, "they began to relate their experiences on the road" (Luke 24:35). In Acts 10:8 Cornelius "explained everything" to his servants and sent them to find Peter. The sense in John 1:18 is "to make known," "to reveal" when it reads, "He [Jesus] has explained Him [God]."

\textsuperscript{19}"ekídaηγεόμαι," TAGL, p.123.

\textsuperscript{20}"ἐκήγεόμαι," TAGL, 146.
Elégchein (Ἐλέγχειν)

Elénchō, in Link’s treatment, means "to bring to light," "to expose," "to set forth," "to convict," "to convince," "to punish," or "to discipline." In the Septuagint it may also be understood in the sense of "to bring to account," "to correct." It is used without real significance in Job, Psalms, and Proverbs. In Numbers 5:18-19 "the water of bitterness" used in testing a woman charged with adultery is "the water of conviction . . . ." When a well of Abraham had been seized by the servants of Abimelech, he "complained (ἐλέγχα) to Abimelech" (Genesis 21:25). In prophetic proclamation it is used with the terms "righteousness" and "judgment." That priests are to pronounce judgment and advise is evident in Hosea 4:4, Amos 5:10, and Malachi 2:7. On the negative side, the prophetic message was one of reproof as when Jeremiah spoke to the people of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 2:19) and the day of punishment as when Hosea spoke of Ephraim (Hosea 5:9). On the positive side, the prophetic message proclaimed that "with righteousness He will judge the poor" (Isaiah 11:3-4) and God’s reign, "And He will judge between the nations," (Isaiah 2:4). In Psalm 6:1, the Psalmist fears rebuke from God and asks to be spared. But in Psalm 141:5, coming from righteous men, it is a blessing. When rebuke comes from God Job keeps it in its right perspective (Job 5:17). Proverbial wisdom says the ungodly do not benefit from

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being reproved (Proverbs 9:7) but the faithful see the loving hand of the Lord in it (Proverbs 3:11-12) as one walks the way of life (Proverbs 6:23; 5:12). In one’s relationship to a neighbor correction short of incurring sin is acceptable (Leviticus 19:17).

In the New Testament in the Gospel of John, Link indicates that *elenchō* still carries the prophetic weight of judgment (John 16:8), disclosure (John 3:20), and conviction of sin (John 16:8). Timothy, as congregational leader, has the responsibility to "rebuke in the presence of all," the ones who continue to sin (1 Timothy 5:20). He is charged to "preach the word; . . . reprove (élegxon), rebuke, and exhort," (2 Timothy 4:2). Likewise, Titus, having been instructed himself, is to "speak and exhort and reprove (élegxe) with all authority" (Titus 2:15). In the case of problem people according to Titus 1:9 the overseer must be prepared to "refute (elégxein) those who contradict." In the case of some individuals he will even have to "reprove them severely" (Titus 1:13). In this regard St. Paul writes, "All Scripture is . . . profitable for . . . reproof," (2 Timothy 3:16). Balaam (Numbers 22:21-35) even "received a rebuke for his own transgression" from none other than his donkey (2 Peter 2:16). Erring Christians in a church are to be approached and reproved in private first (Matthew 18:15). Proverbs 3:11-12 is quoted in Hebrews 12:5 to give instruction about how to receive being reproved by the Lord. In
Revelation 3:19, to the errant Laodicean church Jesus says, "Those whom I love, I reprove . . . ." In Hebrews 11:1, "the conviction [élegxos] of things not seen" refers to the certainty of what God has promised.

**Epitiman (Ἐπίτιμαν)**

Epitimaó, Ethelbert Stauffer points out, may mean "honor," on the one hand, or "blame" or "punishment," on the other. Thus, there is the Word of God that is creative and the Word of God that reproves. In the Septuagint God's rebuke may be aimed at His creation such as heaven (Job 26:11), the sea (2 Samuel 22:16), and the Red Sea in particular so His people could go through (Psalm 105:9). By His rebuke He can calm a storm (Psalm 106:29) and deal with Satan (Zechariah 3:2). Mostly, however, it is directed against people. On the receiving end are those who are hostile to His people (Psalm 75:6), those who "wander from Thy commandments" (Psalm 118:21), the wicked (Psalm 9:5), His own who have forsaken Him (Deuteronomy 28:20), and priests who do not listen and take to heart what He says (Malachi 2:3).

In the New Testament rebuke is allowed as brotherly correction and is also the prerogative of God. Epitimaó, Stauffer shows, is the nature of the disciples' words to the people when they were bringing their children to Jesus for Him to touch them (Mark 10:13). It also characterizes the stern

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words of people to blind Bartimaeus as he called out to Jesus for mercy (Mark 10:48). In Mark 8:32 Peter "took Jesus aside and began to rebuke Him." Jesus counters with His own rebuke in the following verse. On Calvary the one dying thief rebuked the other who was blaspheming Christ (Luke 23:40). Within the Church brotherly concern may require the brotherly correction of a rebuke Jesus says in Luke 23:40. The pastoral instruction given to Timothy (2 Timothy 4:2) echoes Jesus' words (Matthew 18:15) indicating that rebuking is a proper form of discipline in the Church. In Jude 9 Michael the Archangel demonstrates how rebuking is a divine prerogative of lordship when he says to Satan, "The Lord rebuke you." When James and John suggest consuming fire from heaven as a form of outreach ministry to the Samaritans who would not receive Jesus, He rebukes the two thunderheads (Luke 9:55). When Jesus wanted His disciples not to tell others about Him He "warned them" (Mark 8:30) as He did the demons (Mark 3:12). The unclean spirit in the man in the synagogue must yield to Jesus' rebuke (Mark 1:25). The powerful Word of the Son of God makes things happen. When Simon's mother-in-law had a high fever Jesus rebuked it, too (Luke 4:39). On the Sea of Galilee Jesus rebuked the wind (Mark 4:39) and His lordship was revealed. Epitimia in 2 Corinthians 2:6 has to do with punishment in the context of congregational censure.
Euangelizethai (Εὐαγγελίζομαι)

Euangelizomai, according to Gerhard Friedrich, carries the general meaning "to proclaim good news." In Isaiah 52:6-10 the Lord Himself is the Messenger (and the message) of "good news of happiness, who announces salvation, and says to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'" (Also, note that Nahum 2:1 echoes Isaiah 52:7.) With His announcement His rule is effected. The peace, happiness, and salvation He brings come with the word which announces them. When the message is spoken by His messenger, it is actually He Himself who is speaking through them. (Psalm 95:2 in the Septuagint is similar with "Εὐαγγελίζεσθε ἡμέραν ἡ ἡμέρας το ὄστηριον ὄφω." The Lord’s people are to listen first and then lift up their own voices, for they have been comforted. In the epiphany of God those who had not been God’s own people "will bear good news of the praises of the Lord" (Isaiah 60:6). In Isaiah 61:1 the Messianic Messenger/messenger brings "good news to the afflicted; . . . ." What is proclaimed is what the result is. A close association between euangelizesthai and soteria is evidenced in Joel 3:5 and Isaiah 60:6.

The advent of the eschatological good news that Isaiah referred to is at hand in the incarnate Word who by the words He preaches miraculously makes it happen. Jesus tells John the Baptist’s disciples to report back that (in the words of

Isaiah 61:1) "the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED (euangelizontai) TO THEM" (Matthew 11:5). In the Nazareth synagogue on the Sabbath (Luke 4:18) Jesus reads Isaiah 61:1 and in His sermon He applies it to Himself. He thereby fulfills the text, preaches the Gospel, and accomplishes its purpose. Luke 8:1 adds dimension to what Jesus' ministry was about with complementary terms. He was "proclaiming [κηρύσσων] and preaching [εὐαγγελίζομαι] the kingdom of God . . . ." Luke also indicates the content of that preaching as he records Peter's words in those gathered in Cornelius' quarters. "The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching (euangelizomenos) peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all)" (Acts 10:36). Even in Hades Jesus preached the gospel (1 Peter 4:6).

John the Baptist's preaching is parallel to Jesus'. Luke writes of John, "So with many other exhortations also he preached the gospel to people" (Luke 3:18).

Elsewhere in the New Testament when Romans 10:15 quotes Isaiah 52:7, "THOSE WHO BRING GLAD TIDINGS OF GREAT THINGS" are the Messiah's messengers with the Gospel. When the twelve are sent out by Jesus to proclaim the kingdom of God, "they began going about among the villages, preaching the gospel" (Luke 9:6). In Acts 5:42 there is indication that this continued. "And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ." One of the consequences of Saul's persecution in
Jerusalem was the scattering of believers who "went about preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). Philip went north to the city of Samaria "preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 8:12). Later, on the road to Gaza in the chariot of the Ethiopians who had been reading Isaiah 53, in this one-on-one situation, he "opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to Him" (Acts 8:35). From Azotus to Caesarea Philip "kept preaching the gospel" (Acts 8:40). For Paul preaching is a gift of God's grace (Ephesians 3:8), his calling (1 Corinthians 1:18), and he cannot do otherwise (1 Corinthians 9:16).

On the hearing end of euangelízesthai are Jews (Acts 5:42) and Gentiles (Acts 14:1-7), Christians (Romans 1:15) and unbelievers (Acts 14:15), men and women (Acts 9:12). Euangelízesthai thus meets both new mission outreach and established congregation needs. Those speaking the good news of the Gospel include the apostles (Acts 5:40-42), laymen (Acts 8:1-4), and at least some who had been approved and chosen by the church for a form of social ministry and had received the laying on of hands (Acts 6:1-6; Acts 7-8). The message itself is Jesus (Acts 5:35), "Jesus as the Christ" (Acts 5:42) and as Lord (Acts 11:20), "the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus" (Acts 8:12), "Jesus and the resurrection" (Acts 17:18) and "the unfathomable riches of Christ" (Ephesians 3:8). The one who does the preaching does it for the benefit of the hearers by the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:12).
Preaching the good news is based on Scripture (Acts 8:35) and has "the word of the Lord" (Acts 15:35), faith (Galatians 1:23) and love (1 Thessalonians 3:6), and the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:1) as its subject matter. *Evanángelizesthai* is closely connected with *didaskein* (Acts 5:42), *keryssein* (Acts 8:4-5), *lalein* (Acts 8:25), *diamartyresthai* (Acts 8:25), *matheteuein* (Acts 14:21), *katangellein* (Acts 16:17), and *anangellein* (1 Peter 1:12).

In Acts 10:36 God Himself does the preaching of the good news with the message of "peace through Jesus Christ ...." His audience began as "the sons of Israel," but He intends the message to be heard by all. His hearers in Revelation 10:7 are "His servants the prophets." His angelic messengers bring good news on His behalf to Zacharias the priest in the temple of the Lord in the context of a formal worship service (Luke 1:19); and, also to "shepherds staying out in the fields, and keeping watch over their flock by night" (Luke 2:10).

**Keryssein (Κηρύσσειν)**

*Kérýssó* is one of the most significant terms for understanding proclamation or preaching. Noting that *keryssein* occurs thirty-three times in the Septuagint, Gerhard Friedrich points out that it has no single Hebrew equivalent. The escorts for Joseph (Genesis 41:43) and for Mordeci (Esther 6:9,11) made proclamations to indicate royal honor. Daniel’s

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interpretation of the handwriting on the wall (Daniel 5:29) resulted in proclamation being made of his new political status. Jehu's ruse to eradicate Baal was proclaimed (2 Kings 10:20) by Baal worship leaders. When King Joash was preparing to repair the temple proclamation was made for the people to bring the levy Moses had set (2 Chronicles 24:9). Once Aaron had made the golden calf and an altar for it, he "made proclamation" for a feast the next day (Exodus 32:5). When too much was being received for the construction of the sanctuary, Moses' proclamation was that for contributions to be restrained (Exodus 36:6). Jehoshaphat proclaimed a fast (2 Chronicles 20:3) as did the king of Nineveh (Jonah 3:5) once he received word of what Jonah was proclaiming (Jonah 3:4). Cyrus, king of Persia, was stirred up by the Lord to send out "a proclamation throughout the kingdom, and also put it in writing" (2 Chronicles 36:22).

*Kēryssein* is not often used in connection with the proclamation of God's prophets. In Micah 3:5 false prophets proclaiming what is necessary in order to get what they want are denounced by God. Jonah, though, is told by God Himself to go to Ninevah and "*kēryxon en autē*" (Jonah 1:2). He is told again a second time (Jonah 3:2) and then he goes and does it (Jonah 3:4). Jeremiah says that when his proclamation is resisted, then he is resisted, too (Jeremiah 20:8). Isaiah 61:1 is fulfilled in Jesus (Luke 4:21). His word and God's Word are one and at the same are giving and effecting what is
proclaimed. In Hosea 5:8 κῆρυσσεῖν means "sound the alarm" as it does in Joel 2:1. The alarm in the former has to do with the enemy, and the alarm in the latter has to do with the day of the Lord. In Joel 3:9 the sense is a call to war. In Zephaniah 3:14 and Zechariah 9:9 it characterizes the celebration of the redeemed.

Friedrich summarizes the following:

When we survey the use of κηρύσσειν in the OT we may conclude that it does not have here the predominant place which it comes to have in the NT. Mention of the most important references enables us to see the similarity and the differences between OT and NT κηρύσσειν. The preacher’s call for repentance, the announcement of the day of God, the word which brings fulfillment and the proclaiming of the ruler -- all these remain in the NT. But nowhere do we find κηρύσσειν in the sense of Zeph.3:14 and Zech.9:9.25

In regard to the New Testament Friedrich goes on to state:

κηρύσσειν does not mean the delivery of a learned and edifying or hortatory discourse in well-chosen words and a pleasant voice. It is the declaration of an event. Its true sense is "to proclaim."26

What is proclaimed includes miraculous healing (Mark 1:45); Moses (Acts 15:21); circumcision (falsely) (Galatians 5:11); another Jesus (2 Corinthians 11:4); baptism (Acts 10:37); baptism of repentance for forgiveness of sins (Mark 1:4); release and recovery for captives and the blind (Luke 4:18); the favorable year of the Lord (Luke 4:19); Jesus (Acts 9:20); Christ (Acts 8:5); Christ crucified (1 Corinthians 1:23);

25Ibid., p.702.
26Ibid., p.703.
Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 1:19); the Kingdom (Acts 20:25); the Kingdom of God (Luke 8:1); the Gospel (Mark 13:10); this Gospel (Matthew 26:13); the Gospel of God (Mark 1:14) the Gospel of the Kingdom (Matthew 4:23); this Gospel of the Kingdom (Matthew 24:14); the word (2 Timothy 4:2); the word of faith (Romans 10:8); against stealing (Romans 2:21); that Jesus is the Son of God (Acts 9:20); that Jesus "is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead" (Acts 10:42); Christ's resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:12); that people should repent (Mark 6:12); that what is heard from Jesus deserves housetop exposure (Matthew 10:27); the great things Jesus has done by the one who is the beneficiary (Mark 5:20); "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17; an invitation to open the sealed book (Revelation 5:2).

Those doing the proclaiming include John the Baptist (Mark 1:4), who proclaims not himself but, "After me comes One who is mightier than I" (Mark 4:7). Jesus proclaims because "that is what I came out for" (Mark 1:38). His proclamation is the event itself that is happening. What He proclaims happens as He proclaims it. Even crucifixion cannot prevent Him from proclaiming Himself as the victor (1 Peter 3:19). As the risen Lord He is present in the words of those who proclaim Him. Thus proclamation is more than talking about Christ. Jesus says, "The one who listens to you listens to Me," (Luke 10:16). Therefore proclamation is Christ speaking
and, hence, it is a divine activity. People who had been healed made proclamation even though not commissioned to do so such as the leper in Mark 1:40-45. The Gerasene man from whom Jesus expelled the demon named Legion, however, proclaimed what Jesus had done for him specifically at Jesus’ direction (Mark 5:19-20). The disciples and apostles proclaim the same thing John the Baptizer and Jesus proclaimed, namely, repentance (Mark 6:12), the nearness of the kingdom of God (Matthew 10:7), and what they heard from Jesus (Matthew 10:27). God’s plan for salvation includes ongoing proclamation by sinful men commissioned by God to others. As St. Paul wrote, "For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord" (2 Corinthians 4:5).

Lothar Coenen’s treatment of kerysso runs a close parallel with Gerhard Friedrich’s. He writes,

The act of proclamation is ultimately a prerequisite of faith, inasmuchas it has as its goal not simply the imparting of information or a formal allegiance, but a faith which involves self-surrender and trust (cf. I Cor.15:11). Therefore, Paul sees proclamation as legitimate and possible only where a commission and authority has been given (Rom.10:8ff.; cf.Rom.10:15 with Acts 13:3 and Isa.52:10). This means that Christ is not merely an object of proclamation, but also the subject, who has authority over. He himself is the one who commands the proclamation, who at the same time wills to be present, and allows the hearers to experience in and through such human proclamation (cf.Gal.3:1).27

Kerygma in the New Testament, Friedrich goes on to point out, describes Jonah’s preaching in Nineveh (Matthew 12:41). It is Paul’s act of proclaiming but "not in persuasive words

of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power" (1 Corinthians 2:4). Through the foolishness of preaching Christ saves believers (1 Corinthians 1:21). Christ (Romans 6:25) and His resurrection is what kērygma is about (1 Corinthians 15:14). According to Titus 1:3 preaching manifests His word and through it Christ comes. In 2 Timothy 4:17 kērygma has to do with the preaching office. In these latter two references the kērygma is actus praedicandi (the actual act of proclamation).

Krazein (Kpάζείν)

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Krazein (Kpάζείν)

Krάζο is noted by Walter Grundmann to mean "to croak or to cry with a loud harsh voice." Its onomatopoetic character is like the cawing sound (or, perhaps, crawing would be better) made by a raven (Job 38:41). In the Septuagint it is used of the braying of a wild donkey (Job 6:5) and of a woman with labor pains (Isaiah 26:17). It is the sound that Joshua called on the people to make after they had marched around Jericho on the seventh day (Joshua 6:5,16). The meaning carries the sense of "to cry out in demand." In Genesis 41:55 it is what the people of Egypt did when they had run out of grain for food. In Exodus 5:8 it is used in connection with Pharaoh's description of what the Israelite slaves were doing. Krάζο is descriptive of what Joshua and Moses heard coming from the Israeliite camp when the golden

(Exodus 32:17). More positively, krázō is used in the sense of "crying out to or calling on God for help." Such a cry from afflicted widows and orphans God will hear (Exodus 22:22). When the Moabites defeated Israel and controlled the people for years, "the sons of Israel cried out to the Lord" ( Judges 3:15) as they would continue to have to do because of their evil ways. Psalm 21:5 recognizes this and the resulting deliverance that God gives His people. Krázō is used in the Psalms as man turns to God in prayer to express trust (Psalm 3:4), for protection (Psalm 17:6), for salvation (Psalm 87:2), and as indication of confident certainty (Psalm 4:3). It can also be used in conjunction with anguish (Psalm 21:2) or relief (Psalm 54:16).

Among the prophets, Grundmann continues, in Isaiah's vision the term is used of the angels' voices of praise (Isaiah 6:3-4). In Isaiah 42:2 it is the sound the Servant of the Lord will not make. However, in Jeremiah 33:3 the prophet is told by God Himself, "Call to Me, and I will answer you."

Grundmann indicates the significance of krázō in the New Testament in the story of Christ. Legion, the demons in the Geresene man, make him cry out (Mark 5:5). At the base of the mountain after Jesus had been transfigured, the unclean spirit in the boy cried out when Jesus ordered it expelled from the boy's body (Mark 9:26). In Mark 1:23 the unclean spirit who possessed the man in the Capernaum synagogue cried out in understandable language as in Mark 3:11 and 5:7. Two blind
men cried out to Jesus for help in Matthew 9:27 as did the Canaanite woman whose daughter was possessed in Matthew 15:22-23 as well as the father whose son was possessed in Mark 9:24. Fear prompted the disciples to cry out when they saw what they thought was a phantom walking on the water (Matthew 14:26). Peter cried out to Jesus when he was beginning to sink (Matthew 14:30). Cries of celebration welcomed Jesus when He entered Jerusalem (Matthew 21:9,15). When the Pharisees want it stopped Jesus answers that if it is then "the stones will cry out" (Luke 19:40). Still, the mob in front of Pilate kept on crying out for Jesus' crucifixion (Matthew 27:23) and the release of Barabbas (Luke 23:18). On the cross Jesus cried out in prayer to His Father (Luke 23:46). The Isaiah 42:2 reference concerning the Servant of the Lord not crying out is applied by Matthew to Jesus' manner (Matthew 12:19).

It is in the Gospel of John, as Grundmann notes, that krázein refers to a message cried out as a proclamation. In John 1:15 it is used in connection with John the Baptizer's witness of Jesus. Jesus cried out in the temple in John 7:28 and 37. Again, Jesus cried out to the multitude in Jerusalem as He concluded His last public discourse in John 12:44. When Jesus "cried out with a loud voice" to Lazarus in the tomb, the verb is kraugazein indicating more the ordinary rather than the proclamation sense of the word (John 10:43).

Elsewhere in the New Testament krázein is used for the Ephesians demonstration in support of Artemis (Acts 19:28),
the mob in the temple on the occasion of Paul's seizure (Acts 21:28), and the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:57). Like Jesus, just prior to death Stephen cried out in prayer to God (Acts 7:60). When Paul and Barnabas were mistaken for gods, they wanted to be heard immediately and decisively and so cried out (Acts 14:14). Paul did the same thing again before the Council in Acts 23:6. In Revelation 6:10 the souls underneath the altar "cried out with a loud voice" to God. The multitude before the throne in Revelation 7:10 did the same in praise. An angel with great authority made a proclamation, "And he cried out with a mighty voice" (Revelation 18:2). In Romans 8:15, "you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, 'Abba! Father!'" is similar to calling on God in the Psalms.

Finally, kraugē (noun) is Elizabeth's cry of joy when Mary comes (Luke 1:42), the announcement of the groom's arrival (Matthew 25:6), and the reaction to Paul's defense (Acts 23:9). In Ephesians 4:31 it is put in a negative sense and so is to be avoided. Kraugē is excluded from God's eternal kingdom because it has passed away (Revelation 21:4). In Hebrews 5:7 it refers to Jesus' last prayers and supplications.
Lalein (Ἀλείν) and Legein (Ἄγείν)

Laleó and legó (and variants) are the more common terms meaning "to say," "to talk," or "to speak." The former occurs almost four hundred times in New Testament and the latter more than a thousand. Bertold Klappert emphasizes legó as being the more important of the two because of its regular association with Jesus' Amen-sayings and His words of healing.

In the Septuagint dialegesthai use simply means "to speak" or "to say." In the New Testament it occurs as God's "exhortation which is addressed to you as sons" (Hebrews 12:5). It is used for Paul's addresses in synagogues (Acts 17:2, 17; 18:4, 19), in the temple (Acts 24:12), in the school of Tyrannus (Acts 19:9), and to the church in Troas (Acts 20:7, 9). In Mark 9:34 dielexthesan is used for the discussion among the disciples about which one of them they thought was the greatest. Finally, it refers to the dispute Michael the archangel had with the devil about the body of Moses (Jude 9).

Martyrein (Μαρτυρεῖν)

Martyreo has to do with the witness to facts, truths, or views on the basis of personal knowledge and also the proclamation of views of which the speaker is convinced. In the Septuagint martyrein is used for a person who is a

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judicial witness (Numbers 35:30; Deuteronomy 19:15,18). The song of Moses is to be a witness for God against Israel (Deuteronomy 31:19,21). In Isaiah 43:9-13 and 44:7-11 God challenges all competition to His deity to present their case by presenting their witnesses. Of Israel the Lord says, "You are My witnesses" (Isaiah 43:10-13). H. Strathmann underscores the point when he writes,

Hence a distinctive point in the LXX use in so far as it goes beyond the popular is the fact that Yahweh Himself is the subject of the μαρτυρεῖται contained in the μαρτυρία. But this μαρτυρεῖται is worked out in the revelation imparted to Moses. The commandments are its content. The full appropriation of the word μαρτυρία and its plural μαρτυρίαι for the self-witness of God in the Mosaic legislation is a highly significant process for the development of OT nomism.32

Martyreín has to do with the activity of a martus. It can refer, first of all, "to a declaration of facts" such as the Pharisee's hypocritical respect for late prophets (Matthew 23:31), Paul saying that the Jews have zeal for God (Romans 10:2), and that Christians are false witnesses if Christ has not been raised from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:15). Secondly, martyreín can mean "to give a good report." For instance, when Jesus was preaching in Nazareth, the people "were speaking well of Him" (Luke 4:22). And in Acts 6:3 the congregation selected seven men "of good reputation . . . ." Direct observation is involved and must be attested to. Thirdly, martyreín can refer to "the witness of God" or "the witness of Scripture." In Paul's sermon in Antioch he tells

32Ibid., p.486.
of God's witness regarding David as His selection to be king (Acts 13:22). The writer of Hebrews in 7:17 uses the term in making the connection between Psalm 110:4 and Jesus. And in Acts 14:3 as Paul and Barnabas were "speaking out boldly with reliance on the Lord," the Lord "was bearing witness to the word of His grace, . . . ." Fourthly, martyrēn can refer to a witness based on faith and the content of the Gospel. Facts here may not be observable, but the witness is still a witness to revealed truth. Thus the witness becomes evangelistic confession. In Acts 23:11 the Lord was standing by Paul's side and said, "as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also."

Strathmann goes on to specify that the Johannine use of martyrēn has to do with the person and significance of Jesus, not the facts or specifics of His history. "John bore witness of Him" (John 1:15). In John's Gospel when Jesus speaks the witness is of Himself (John 5:31-39; 8:13-18; 10:25; 15:26). The content of the witness is "that this is the Son of God" (John 1:34) who is preexistent (John 1:15) and who does the works His Father gave Him to do (John 5:36). In John's epistles the witness is "that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world" (1 John 4:14). Further, "And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 John 5:11). The ministry of John the Baptist was "to witness of the light" (John 1:7; 8:12). Jesus' witness is to what He had seen and heard (John 3:32).
In answer to Pilate Jesus says that the purpose of His incarnation is "to bear witness to the truth" (John 18:37) and He himself is the truth (John 14:6). Thus, the Scriptures, John the Baptizer, God, the works Jesus does, and Jesus Himself witness of Him. After His ascension the Holy Spirit also witnesses of Him (John 15:26) as do His disciples (John 15:27). In 1 John 4:14-15 martyrein and homologein become intertwined (also in 1 Timothy 6:13). The Spirit and the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion ("water and the blood") all agree and bear the same witness (1 John 5:8). John himself bears witness (John 21:24) and as the witness of God is received the one who believes becomes a witness. In Revelation the revelation is to John "who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all he saw" (Revelation 1:2). The mission of Jesus' angel (Revelation 22:16) is to testify to the churches. John testifies "to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book" (Revelation 22:18). His testimony is the testimony of Jesus (Revelation 22:20).

Diamartyresthai\textsuperscript{33} means "to declare emphatically." In the Septuagint its basic sense is demonstrated, Strathmann notes, in Deuteronomy 4:6 when Moses addresses the people about the consequences of disobeying God. It can refer to statutes that are to be made known and kept (Exodus 18:20). More commonly it has to do with prophetic warnings to repent.

\textsuperscript{33}H. Strathman, "διαμαρτυρομαι,"Kittel, TDNT, 4:510-512.
(2 Kings 17:13; Psalm 50:7; Ezekiel 16:2). Malachi 2:14, where the Lord serves as a witness between husband and wife, is a special use. In the uses in the New Testament the term can carry a sense of warning (the plea of the rich man in Hades that Lazarus be sent to his brothers, Luke 16:28; how Timothy is to deal with nit-pickers, 2 Timothy 2:14) and mean "to declare emphatically" by admonition (in maintaining the principles given Timothy he is to remain unbiased, 1 Timothy 5:21; Timothy is to preach the word, 2 Timothy 4:1). Or, it can indicate a solemn command or direction (regarding the reading of Paul's letter in 1 Thessalonians 5:27). Otherwise, the meaning is that of emphatic affirmation that something is or will be. It is in this sense that Paul preached that the Lord is the ultimate avenger (1 Thessalonians 4:6). Paul says that the ministry Jesus gave him was "to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24), "the Kingdom of God" (Acts 28:23), "the word of the Lord," (Acts 8:25), "about Me" (Acts 23:11), "of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21), "that Jesus was the Christ" (Acts 18:5), and that Jesus "is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead" (Acts 10:42).

Epimartyrein\(^3\) occurs only in I Peter 5:12. More than "to attest emphatically," it means "to attest to an assertion already made." It is used here in reference to what he has written, "that this is the true grace of God."

\(^3\)H. Strathmann, "ἐπιμαρτυρεῖν,"Kittel, TDNT, 4:508.
Nouthetein (νουθετείν)

Nouthetein35, Johannes Behm indicates, carries the general meaning of "to set right," "to lay on someone's heart," or "to impart understanding." It involves well-intended correction aimed at putting right what is wrong. When the Lord was speaking to young Samuel (1 Samuel 3:13), He points out Eli's error with regard to his sons saying, "he did not rebuke them." Eliphaz, speaking to and of Job, said that he had "admonished many" (Job 4:3). Job is chastened by God in Job 40:4. Job is to let himself be instructed in Job 37:14. In the New Testament the word is used in regard to the raising of children (Ephesians 6:4) denoting admonition without provocation. God's actions recorded in the Old Testament serve "for our instruction," (1 Corinthians 10:11). Nouthetein is a pastoral function as Paul's preaching of Christ demonstrates in order that each hearer may be "complete in Christ" (Colossians 1:28). Paul would have those who heard him in Ephesus remember his commitment and dedication as he worked to correct and change not ceasing "to admonish each one with tears" (Acts 20:31). His first epistle to the Corinthians was written for paternal admonition (1 Corinthians 4:14). Christians are to appreciate their pastors who do this (1 Thessalonians 5:12) even as they themselves are to "admonish the unruly" (1 Thessalonians 5:14; Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16). Second Thessalonians 3:15, in conjunction

with Titus 3:10, indicates a complementary approach in nouthetein (setting right).

**Homilein (Ὅμιλεία)**

Homileō carries the meaning of "to be in company or associate with," or "to converse or talk with." In Luke 24:14-15 this is what Cleopas and his traveling companion were doing on the way to Emmaus on Easter. They were "conversing with each other about all these things which had taken place." In Acts 20 when Paul began talking to those assembled in the upper room in Troas, it was dielegeto (verse 7) that was taking place. When he resumed, following the resurrection of the young man who had fallen out of a window, the word homileśas is used (verse 18). But in Acts 24:26 Felix, the governor in Caesarea, would converse (hōmilei) with Paul hoping that Paul would give him money. Homilia is corruptible by bad company (I Corinthians 15:33).

**Homologein (Ὅμολγεία)**

Homologeō, as Michel points out, generally means "to confess." Homolegein is what Ezra instructs the people are to do to God (Ezra 10:11). The confession of sins is associated with the worship of God in Nehemiah 9:3.

In the New testament homolegein may be used in several senses. First, it may mean "to assure," "to promise," "to

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36 "ὅμολογέω," TAGL, p.288.

admit," or "to concede." The general usage means that the speaker is bound by his word as when God made a promise to Abraham (Acts 7:17). Christian usage includes the solemn declaration of John the Baptizer that he is not the Christ (John 1:20). In 1 John 1:9, the confession is of our sins and that we are sinners. Secondly, homolegein may have a legal sense to it as when one is called upon to make a statement as a witness. This is the sense of confession in Luke 12:8 where the confession of Jesus before men results in the eschatological confession by Jesus before angels, and, in Matthew 10:32, before His Father. Otto Michel writes,

In this context ὀμολογέω denotes an act of proclamation in which the concrete relation of man to Jesus is expressed in binding and valid form. Definitive importance is thus ascribed to the disciple’s confession here on earth. 38

Therefore, Paul’s reply to the accusations by Tertullus before Felix (the governor) in Paul’s own words is his confession (Acts 24:14). Thirdly, homolegein can mean "to make solemn statements of faith." Confession and faith are linked in Romans 10:9-10 as Paul explains Deuteronomy 30:14; likewise in 2 Corinthians 4:13 regarding Psalm 116:10. Faith, then, provides the basis for confession and proclamation. In Hebrews 13:15 God’s name is to be confessed in the context of praise. To confess knowing God but then live otherwise is a mark of a false teacher (Titus 1:16). A specific Christological understanding that is to be confessed begins to emerge

38 Ibid., p.208.
in 1 John 4:2-3: "every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come into the flesh is from God, . . . ." Here specific truth about Christ is involved in opposition to false teaching in a liturgical sense. And a closer and more intimate relationship exists between the person who "confesses that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," and God (1 John 4:15). As solemn proclamation confession involves praise and acknowledgment of the work of Christ. Jesus' own words before Pilate constitute such confession (1 Timothy 6:13) as do the words Timothy spoke in the presence of many (1 Timothy 6:12). The solemn confession of Peter (Mark 8:29), the centurion at the site of the crucifixion (Matthew 27:54), and Martha (John 11:27), is that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Their confession serves as a paradigm for the confession each Christian is called on to make (Matthew 10:32). Such confession (notice the close relationship between homolegein and martyrein) is public (1 Timothy 6:12; Matthew 10:32; Luke 12:8), binding (1 Timothy 6:13), and definitive (Matthew 10:32; Luke 12:8; 1 Timothy 6:12-13).

Michel indicates that confession may come in reply to a question such as when John the Baptizer answered the priests and Levites in John 1:19-34.

No assurance is given that a confessing person will not err in the future or that knowledge apart from faith is sufficient. Confession constitutes being on side with the Holy Spirit through the power of the Holy Spirit.
Confession that Jesus is Lord calls attention to His resurrection from the dead and salvation through faith (Romans 10:9-10) and gives the credit to God the Father (Philippians 2:10-11). It is evident, then, that confession in the early church involved proclamation characterized by dedication and a certain obligation.

**Ton Logon Orthotomein (Τὸν Λόγον Ὀρθοτομεῖν)**

Orthotomein is limited in use to Proverbs 3:6; 11:5; and 2 Timothy 2:15. Köster points out that in the Septuagint both of the Proverbs passages are used in the sense of "to make (the way) straight." In 2 Timothy 2:15 if one understands Paul as referring to Timothy not as a casual laborer but as an artisan or a craftsman in the sense of a precision cabinetmaker or a tailor, then a "cut straight" image begins to emerge. The material he works with is "the word of truth." While Koster understands the meaning to refer to Timothy's conduct and not to the way he handles the word the context in verse fourteen clearly has to do with speech since a risk to hearers is expressed. Verse sixteen refers to "worldly chatter" and verse seventeen refers to "their talk" which is like a deadly infection (or perhaps deadly inflection) in contrast to Timothy's speech. Since the word is defined and drawn by God according to His pre-printed and ready-to-use pattern, the instruction here to "handle

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39Helmut Köster, "ὀρθοτομεῖν," Kittel, TDNT, 8:111-112.
accurately" might be read in the sense of a simple hermeneutic principle for precision and following familiar directions, such as, "cut on dotted line."

**Paradidonai (παραδίδωμι)**

*Paradidomi* is used in several senses in the New Testament. Friedrich Büchsel begins by showing its frequent use in the passion accounts. In Mark 14:10 Judas seeks "to betray" Jesus. The Sanhedrin "delivered Him up to Pilate" (Mark 15:1), and so on. A second sense is evident in 1 Corinthians 5:5 and 1 Timothy 1:20 as first a man guilty of incest and, secondly, blasphemers are delivered over to Satan. A third sense has to do with God's judgment as in Romans 1:24 against the ungodly. A fourth sense has to do with a willingness to die (Christ "gave up His spirit," John 19:30) or a self-sacrificing love ("if I deliver my body to be burned," 1 Corinthians 13:3). Fifthly, it has to do with the authoritative position Jesus is in as Christ, the Son of God (Luke 10:22). More in keeping with the focus on preaching is the sixth sense of paradidomi where teaching is involved. In Mark 7:13 Jesus refers to man-made traditions that have been "handed down . . . ." In 1 Corinthians 11:23 Paul, speaking of having received and passed on the Word unsullied, says, "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered (paredoka) to you . . . ." And later, Paul is more specific:

For I delivered [paredoka] to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.\(^1\)

**Parakalein (Παρακαλεῖν)**

Because *parakaleō* and *paraklesis* are dealt with in detail in the following chapter, they will receive only a limited treatment at this point.

*Parakaleō*\(^2\) in the Septuagint may be used in the sense of "to be moved to pity," "to comfort," "to be sorry," or "to have compassion." Georg Braumann indicates that the latter is the more common. In Genesis 37:35 it has to do with mourning the dead. To comfort is the prophet's role in Isaiah 40:1. In Psalm 135:14 the Lord "will have compassion on His servants." In Judges 2:18 the Lord "was moved to pity" by the groaning of the oppressed. *Parakaleō* may also mean "to encourage" (Deuteronomy 3:28), "to strengthen" (Job 4:3), "to entice" (Deuteronomy 13:7), or "to guide" (Exodus 15:13).

In the New Testament *parakaleō* may mean "to summon," "to invite," "to ask," "to implore," or, "to exhort;" or, "to comfort," "to encourage," "to cheer on." *Paraklesis* can mean "exhortation," "encouragement," "appeal," "request," "comfort," or "consolation." The evil spirits named Legion (Mark 5:12) and some Jewish elders (Luke 7:4) "entreat" Jesus.

\(^1\) 1 Corinthians 15:3-5.  
The word comes into play in Jesus' parables of the merciful king (Matthew 18:29) and the forgiving father (Luke 15:28). Jesus reminds His disciples that He can "appeal" to His Father if He needs help (Matthew 26:53). Similarly, the Macedonian in Paul's vision was "appealing" to him for help (Acts 16:9). The conclusion reached was that "God had called us to preach the gospel to them" (Acts 16:10).

Exhortation of all assembled is to be the purpose of orderly prophetic speech in 1 Corinthians 14:31. The lengthy message by Judas and Silas to the congregation at Antioch encouraged the hearers in Acts 15:32. Paul and Silas, having left the prison in Philippi, encouraged the believers gathered in Lydia's house in Acts 16:40. Because there is "encouragement in Christ . . . ." Christians have the basis for caring for one another in Philippians 2:1. In 1 Thessalonians 3:2 Paul indicates that Timothy was sent "to encourage you as to your faith, . . . ." The basis for Paul's urging in Romans 12:1 is "by the mercies of God," and "by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit" in Romans 15:30. In 1 Thessalonians 4:1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy exhort believers "in the Lord Jesus" to sanctified living. Of John the Baptist, Luke notes, "So with many other exhortations also he preached the gospel to the people" (Luke 3:18). When the church in Jerusalem heard that Gentiles were to be converted, Barnabas was sent and he began "to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord" (Acts 11:23). Paul
and Barnabas while retracing their steps on the first missionary expedition, spoke to the new believers "encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, ‘Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God’" (Acts 14:22). In 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 "comfort" is juxtaposed with "affliction" and "suffering" within the contextual relationship of God the Father, believers, and Christ. In 2 Corinthians 7:4-7 Paul echoes the theme again. Comfort, encouragement, consolation; however it is expressed, God gives it to His people (2 Thessalonians 2:16) in and through the Scriptures (Romans 15:4).

Parrēsiazesthai (Παρρησίαζεσθαι)

Parrēsia43, in the Septuagint, has to do with the voice of Wisdom (Proverbs 1:20), and, as Heinrich Schlier mentions, it is the mark of a free man (Leviticus 26:13). It refers to open and straightforward speech. The edict issued by King Ahasuerus that the Jews could defend themselves from attack is referred to this way in Esther 8:13. Parrēsia is heard by God in prayers in Job 22:22-27 and presupposes righteousness in Proverbs 13:5. God’s own parrēsia in Psalm 93:1 is that He shines forth and breaks through the darkness of silence to manifest Himself in, by, and through His speech.

Parrēsia is a mark of Jesus who "spoke openly" in places of public worship (John 18:20) as opposed to speaking "in

43Heinrich Schlier, "παρρησία," Kittel, TDNT, 5:871-886.
secret." Schlier notes, however, that even though Jesus' speech is parresaiic He Himself remains concealed from those who do not believe (John 10:24). Thus, faith and revelation through the spoken word are linked. The disciples misunderstood Jesus' words when He spoke figuratively of Lazarus and his death. So Jesus found it necessary to speak "to them plainly" (John 11:14). With the coming of the Paraclete though, in the context of an ever-present risen Christ and the Holy Spirit, what had been told in figurative language will be told plainly (John 16:25) and disciples will note the difference (John 16:29). When Jesus taught the small group of His disciples in private with regard to His suffering, death, and resurrection, "He was stating the matter plainly" (Mark 8:32); but candid Gospel speaking does not insure a warm reception of either the message or the person who speaks it.

Parresia by people may be expressed as prayer that God hears which presupposes an innocent heart or a clear conscience based on obedience to God which in turn is based on faith in God's Son, Jesus Christ, and love for others as a result of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1 John 3:21-23; 5:14). Christians have a God-given freedom and privilege to speak openly, even boldly, to God. But parresia and parresiazesthai also includes speech on a horizontal plane, from one person to another, mortal to mortal. It takes on the dimension of preaching when referring to Paul (Acts 9:27),
Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:3), and Apollos (Acts 18:26) carrying the sense of "to speak candidly or boldly." Often the audience is made up of Jews (in Jerusalem at Pentecost, Acts 2:29; in Ephesus in the synagogue, Acts 19:8). Sometimes the audience is hostile as they were in Antioch (Acts 13:46) and in Jerusalem (Acts 4:13). Greeks were present at times, too, as at Iconium (Acts 14:1-3). The setting varied from being a company of believers (Acts 4:23,29) to Paul's rented quarters (Acts 28:31) to a synagogue (Acts 14:3). Candid, bold, and open speech is speech "with reliance on the Lord," (Acts 4:29; 14:3) that is a God-given spiritual ability to use language effectively (Acts 4:13,31) and happens concurrent with the activity of the Lord (Acts 4:29-30).

In the remainder of the New Testament parresia has the sense of openness, confidence, and boldness both toward God and other people (2 Corinthians 3:12,18; Ephesians 3:11-12; Philippians 1:20). The one who is righteous through faith in Christ can look to God with an unveiled face (a metaphor indicating exposure for the purpose of understanding) that others can see, too. In Ephesians 6:19 the subject of this boldness is "the mystery of the gospel . . . ." In 2 Thessalonians 2:2 the boldness of Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy is "in our God" in order "to speak to you" about "the gospel of God" even if the context is "amid much opposition." Thus the nature of parresiac speech is not to conceal but to reveal, not to deflect but reflect God, grace, glory, and
hope. Such speech is free-flowing and joy-filled both in prayer to God as well as in transaction with others. In the only reference to Christ (Colossians 2:15) it has to do with His exercising His rule and authority over the same of the world. In Hebrews, Schlier observes the following:

As has been correctly observed, παρεσία has "a peculiarly objective character." One has it, not as a subjective attitude, but as the appropriation of something already there. One keeps it by holding fast, not merely oneself as a believer, but the presupposition of faith in the promise."

This is the promise of God received through faith. On that basis "by the blood of Jesus" one may unhesitatingly and openly approach God as others look on and even do so on their behalf. Parrēsia is not timid but bold (Hebrews 4:16) and endures opposition having as its great reward what God has promised (Hebrews 10:34-36). In addition to being characterized by words like "bold" and "open," parrēsia connotes frontiersmanlike words like "daring," "brace," and "courageous." One could also add "candid," "forthright," and "straight-forward."

Peithēin (Πείθειν)

Peithō carries the general meaning of "to persuade," "to convince," or even "to win over." Rudolf Bultmann indicates that in a negative sense it may also mean "to corrupt," "to seduce," or "to deceive." Old Testament

"Ibid., p.884.

examples include Mordecai's refusal to be persuaded to remove his sackcloth by Esther in Esther 4:4 and the caution regarding deceivers with gracious speech in Proverbs 26:25.

Paul was trying to persuade Jews and Greeks every Sabbath in the Corinthian synagogue (Acts 18:4). In Ephesus Paul went to the synagogue for months "persuading them about the kingdom of God" (Acts 19:8). His effectiveness was recognized by the opposition (Acts 19:24-26) who understood what he was saying, rejected it, and mounted a counter campaign of persuasion. King Agrippa is nearly persuaded to become a Christian by Paul as he makes his defense (Acts 26:28). In his quarters in Rome Paul received the leaders of the Jewish community and was "trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets," and had some success (Acts 28:23-24). In other New Testament texts, in conjunction with his apostolic calling Paul says, "we persuade men" (2 Corinthians 5:11) thus providing the answer to his own rhetorical question in Galatians 1:10. "To persuade people or to please them?" That is the question. For Paul preaching involves persuasion. To some extent, since preachers are people, too, one must also persuade oneself (1 John 3:19). In context of the love John refers to it may be axiomatic to say, "Persuade your neighbor as yourself." Obedience is linked to persuasion in Romans 2:8, Galatians 5:7, and Hebrews 13:17.
Prophêteuein (Προφητεύειν)

Prophêteuo, Rolf Rendtorff observes, generally means "to call, proclaim, impart, or prophesy" in the Septuagint. The prophet Samuel tells Saul that first "the Spirit of the Lord will come upon you mightily," and then he will prophesy with others (1 Samuel 10:5-6). Later, with Samuel presiding, as prophets were prophesying messengers from Saul were also inspired as the Holy Spirit came over them (1 Samuel 19:20). Prophecy is linked to and dependent on the word of the Lord according to Amos 3:8. Prophetic speech in Jeremiah may be divided into two categories, true prophecy and false prophecy. False prophecy done in the name of the Lord dooms its speakers and makes victims of those who are its hearers (Jeremiah 14:14-15). It means identification and condemnation of its pseudoprophetic speakers (Jeremiah 20:6; 28:6; 29:21). False prophecy is opposed by God (Jeremiah 23:32). It is a lie (Jeremiah 27:10) that is to be ignored (Jeremiah 27:16). Genuine prophecy finds its origin in the Lord who chooses to communicate to people through the people He sends (Jeremiah 19:4). Those not wanting to hear true prophetic words may vent their disapproval on the messenger (Jeremiah 20:1; 26:11-12; 32:3). Regardless, God will bring His prophetic word to pass. A strong case is made in Ezekiel that true prophecy takes place when it is God who commissions and directs it as

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46Rolf Rendtorff, "προφητεύω," Kittel, TDNT, 6:796-812.
opposed to prophecy happening by human inspiration (Ezekiel 13:17; 21:2,9; and more than a dozen others). Joel 2:28 refers to a general prophesying in the time of salvation at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit which occurred at Pentecost. In post-exilic Zechariah 13:2-4 false prophecy is regarded with disgrace and action to stop it is endorsed.

In the New Testament usage of propheteuo Friedrich identifies the broad meaning as "to proclaim the revealed message of God" in conjunction with passages from Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians. Prophecy is not to be done so as to result in disgrace (1 Corinthians 11:4-5). It is done "in part" because humans have only partial knowledge (1 Corinthians 13:9). It is the most desired spiritual gift (1 Corinthians 14:4-19). Secondly, propheteuo may mean "to foretell or proclaim the future in advance." Prophecy to this effect, for example, was spoken by Isaiah (Mark 7:6), Zacharias (Luke 1:67), John (Revelation 10:11), and many many more. Thirdly, it may mean "to make known or reveal something concealed." Such was the demand on Christ before Caiphas in Matthew 26:68. Fourthly, it may mean "to teach, admonish, or comfort." In 1 Corinthians 14:3 prophecy is directed "to men for edification and exhortation and consolation." In 1 Corinthians 14:31 prophesying is to be done in an orderly fashion for learning and exhortation. On the other hand, prophecy of judgement and repentance will also come from the

"Gerhard Friedrich, "προφητεύω," Kittel, TDNT, 6:828-861."
church to the torment of many (Revelation 11:3,10). Prophecy, which is discernable and understandable speech, convicts the unbeliever who hears it resulting in his worship of God (1 Corinthians 14:24-25). Fifthly, propheteuō may refer to inspired and ecstatic speaking that magnifies and exalts God as in Acts 19:6; 10:46. Sixthly, the gift of prophecy was exceptionally ascribed to some women (Acts 21:9; 1 Corinthians 11:5) who would "speak of Him" (Luke 2:38). Lastly, propheteuō, as in Matthew 7:22, may mean "to proclaim in the Lord's name like a prophet" while, in fact, being a false prophet.

Some distinctive aspects of propheteuō may be identified. First, it is prophetic proclamation which is a gift from the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:10; 13:2; Romans 12:6) which is not necessarily permanent (1 Corinthians 13:8). Also, prophetic speaking is for the benefit of the hearers (1 Corinthians 14:6) and is a sign to believers (1 Corinthians 14:22). It may include prediction (Matthew 13:14). Prophecy is Scripture based, non-subjective, not made by human will, and is spoken by men from God moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:20-21). In Revelation 19:10 "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Prophecy is to be heard and not altered (Revelation 22:18). It may also contain immediate direction (1 Timothy 1:18; 4:14). Hence, prophetic proclamation consists of God's own words being spoken by the one He chooses. In prophetic proclamation the speaker behind
the speaker is God. So prophesying is a DIVINE-human event. More than speaking of Christ it is, in fact, Christ speaking. In Luke 4:17-21 Jesus reads Isaiah 61:1-2 in this very way. As Isaiah was voicing the words it was Christ doing the speaking. Thus with the suffering and resurrection of Jesus at the heart of prophetic preaching, the divinely authorized speaker within whom God dwells and through whom He speaks (Hebrews 1:1) prophesies Christ like Christ the Prophet and speaks both threats (Luke 6:24-26; Matthew 11:21-22) and promises (Luke 6:20; Luke 10:23-24; Mark 10:29-31).

Gerhard Friedrich gives the following working definition:

Primitive Christian prophecy is the inspired speech of charismatic preachers through whom God’s plan of salvation for the world and the community and His will for the life of individual Christians are made known.48

The framework for such a definition is made upon numerous support pieces. Prophecy has to do with knowledge related to divine mysteries according to I Corinthians 13:2. Acts 2:16-21 indicates a more sweeping call by the Holy Spirit for the people of God to prophecy. Prophecy involves insight such as knowledge and practice of God’s saving will being aimed at those who had been outsiders according to Ephesians 3:5-7. Revelation 22:6 indicates that prophesying is eschatological and Acts 11:28 and 21:10 show that it is predictive of certain other events. Prophecy sets men apart for ministry according

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48Ibid., p.848.
to Acts 13:1-2; 1 Timothy 1:18; 4:14. It involves admonition of the lazy and weary but consolation and encouragement for those under duress as in 1 Corinthians 14:3 and Acts 15:3. In 1 Corinthians 14:25 prophecy brings secret wickedness to light. While love is to be pursued, prophecy is to be earnestly desired according to 1 Corinthians 14:1. Generally, Scripture depicts prophecy involving a receiving of the Word and preaching it. The Word is the revealed Word of God, and prophecy depends on it (1 Corinthians 14:26-31). Then what has been revealed is proclaimed in the congregation. Prophecy is proclamation. It is the delivery of God’s message to listeners who are primarily believers within the congregation (1 Corinthians 14:4) yet not without missionary significance. For to prophesy is to set forth God’s gracious will to people.

In addition to the terms mentioned above, Boë (Boœ) of διαφωνίζειν may also be worth noting.

**Boœ (Boœ)**

Boœ means "to cry or call" as Ethelbert Stauffer points out. Boœ itself means "cry, outcry, or exclamation." So, in the Septuagint in Isaiah 40:3,6 (picked up in Mark 1 and parallel passages) indicates the meaning "to proclaim God’s message," and that is what John the Baptizer did. John (the apostle) even speaks of himself this way in 1 John 1:2. Here the reference is to preaching.

"Ethelbert Stauffer, "Boœ," Kittel, TDNT, 1:635-628."
Interestingly, in reverse of the direction of God (through a man) calling to mankind, the term is used more often of victimized people calling upon God to be the Listener. The sons of Israel (Judges 10:10) often "cried out to the Lord, . . . ." And, God's promise is that when His afflicted people cry out to Him "I will surely hear his cry" (Exodus 22:23). The reference here, then, is to prayer.

In a sense perhaps both preaching and prayer occurred at the same time when Jesus "cried out" from the cross (Mark 15:34). Here, the Christ of God, though speaking to God, does so before others who can hear Him. Both prayer and preaching involve mortal men and their edification. Both are heard by God. And, both preaching and prayer find common ground in the Word of God which brings the human condition into proper perspective by the gracious work of the Holy Spirit.

Diaphēmizein (Διαφημίζειν)

Diaphemizo so carries the meaning "to spread the news." In Matthew 9:31 it applies to the actions of the two men who had been given their eyesight by Jesus. In Mark 1:45 a man healed of leprosy by Jesus did as the others mentioned had done. The root of the word is phēme meaning "utterance or report."

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so "διαφημίζω," TAGL, p.97.
Preaching and the Lutheran Confessions

The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church are also helpful in outlining a proper perspective of preaching. The scores of references throughout The Book of Concord are indicative of the emphasis placed on preaching and a right understanding of it.

In "The Augsburg Confession" the authority to preach is implicitly identified with a specific office.

To obtain such faith God instituted the office of the ministry, that is, provided the Gospel and the sacraments. Through these, as through means, he gives the Holy Spirit, who works faith, when and where he pleases, in those who hear the Gospel.\(^{51}\)

That church office has a very distinct characteristic.

It is taught among us that nobody should publicly teach or preach or administer the sacraments in the church without a regular call.\(^{52}\)

The doctrinal content of preaching boils down to, first, justification, and, second, sanctification.

This is just about a summary of the doctrines that are preached and taught in our churches for proper Christian instruction, the consolation of consciences, and the amendment of believers.\(^{53}\)

Under Article twenty-eight, "The Power of Bishops," the following is maintained:

Our teachers assert that according to the Gospel the power of keys or the power of bishops is a power and command of


\(^{52}\)Ibid., p.36.

\(^{53}\)Ibid., p.47.
God to preach the Gospel, to forgive and retain sins, and to administer and distribute the sacraments.  

The Confession goes on to state that by "divine right, therefore, it is the office of the bishop to preach to the Gospel . . . ." Such preaching of the righteousness of faith is to be done "with clarity and purity."  

In the "Apology of the Augsburg Confession," especially in "Article IV. Justification," what is to be preached is made clear. Citing Luke (24:47) as a supporting text the point made is that "Christ commands that penitence and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name." The emphasis on Law-Gospel preaching in both form and content is reiterated again in the following way:

In the preaching of the law there are two things we must always keep in mind. First, we cannot keep the law unless we have been reborn by faith in Christ, as Christ says (John 15:5), 'Apart from me you can do nothing.' Secondly, though men can at most do certain outward works, this universal statement must be permitted to interpret the entire law (Heb.11:16), 'Without faith it is impossible to please God.' . . . Thus in the preaching of penitence it is not enough to preach the law, the Word that convicts of sin. . . . Therefore it is necessary to add the Gospel promise, that for Christ's sake sins are forgiven and that by faith in Christ we obtain the forgiveness of sins.

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54 Ibid., p.81.
55 Ibid., p.84.
56 Ibid., p.92.
57 Ibid., p.115.
58 Ibid., p.144.
The significance of a single sentence in "Article XV. Human Traditions" cannot be overstated. "But the chief worship of God is the preaching of the Gospel."59

The "Smalcald Articles" echoes the important role preaching plays because of Who and what it puts forward.

... the merits of Christ are obtained by grace, through faith, without work or pennies. They are offered to us without money or merit, not by the power of the pope but by the preaching of God's Word.60

Preaching serves as a channel for the Gospel to flow through. It may be said that where the Gospel is there is preaching and where there is preaching there is the Gospel.

... the Gospel, which offers counsel and help against sin in more than one way for God is surpassingly rich in His grace: First, through the spoken word, by which the forgiveness of sin (the peculiar function of the Gospel) is preached to the whole world;61

The "Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope" also reiterates "The Augsburg Confession" and the "Apology." Namely, "The Gospel requires of those who preside over the churches that they preach the Gospel ... ."62 It is a unanimous confession "that this power belongs by divine right to all who preside over the churches, ... ."63

59 Ibid., p.221.
60 Ibid., p.296.
61 Ibid., p.310.
63 Ibid.
In the Catechisms Luther takes a very practical approach to preaching. In his "Preface" to the "Small Catechism" he talks about being sensitive to who the hearers are and adjusting accordingly.

When you preach to intelligent and educated people you are at liberty to exhibit your learning and to discuss these topics from different angles and in such a variety of ways as you may be capable of. But when you are teaching the young, adhere to a fixed and unchanging form and method.64

Luther identifies the third commandment as the preaching-hearing commandment in the explanation of that commandment. He writes,

We should fear and love God, and so we should not despise his Word and the preaching of the same, but deem it holy and gladly hear and learn it.65

As far as what to preach Luther advocates making the most of the basics. One can only speculate as to whether he is referring to content only or may also be saying something worth hearing about form (preaching as catechesis) when he says,

The young people should also attend preaching, especially at the time designated for the Catechism, so that they may hear it explained and may learn the meaning of every part. Then they will also be able to repeat what they have heard and give a good correct answer when they are questioned, and thus the preaching will not be without benefit and fruit. The reason we take such care to preach on the Catechism frequently is to impress it upon our youth, not in a lofty and learned manner but briefly and very simply,

64Ibid., p.339.
65Ibid., p.342.
so that it may penetrate deeply into their minds and remain fixed in their memories.\(^{66}\)

It is interesting to take note of the fact that there are eight references connecting preaching with the Holy Spirit in the "Second Part: The Creed" in the "Large Catechism." The single reference connecting preaching and God the Son is significant: "Indeed, the entire gospel that we preach depends on the proper understanding of this article."\(^{67}\) No direct connection between preaching and God the Father is made at this point although explicit connections are made elsewhere in the Confessions in terms of His Word, His will, and His drawing people to Himself by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The "Formula of Concord" gives emphasis to work of the Holy Spirit in preaching and in hearing. It is through "preaching and the hearing of God’s Word"\(^{68}\) that He effects conversion, states the "Epitome." In the "Solid Declaration," "Article II. FREE WILL OR HUMAN POWERS," the parts played by God, the message, the speaker, and hearer in preaching are all brought together.

To this end (salvation), in his boundless kindness and mercy, God provides for the public proclamation of his divine, eternal law and the wonderful counsel concerning our redemption, namely, the holy and only saving Gospel of his eternal Son, our only Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. . . . Therefore the eternal Father calls out from heaven concerning his beloved Son and concerning all who

\(^{66}\)Ibid., p.364.

\(^{67}\)Ibid., p.415.

\(^{68}\)Ibid., p.470.
in his name preach repentance and the remission of sins, 'Listen to him' (Matt. 17:5).

All who would be saved must hear this preaching, for the preaching and the hearing of God's Word are the Holy Spirit's instrument in, with, and through which he wills to act efficaciously, to convert men to God, and to work in them both to will and to achieve.

Through this means (namely, the preaching and hearing of His Word) God is active, breaks our hearts, and draws man, so that through the preaching of the law man learns to know his sins and the wrath of God and experiences genuine terror, contrition, and sorrow in his heart, and through the preaching of and meditation upon the holy Gospel of the gracious forgiveness of sins in Christ there is kindled in him a spark of faith which accepts the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake and comforts itself with the promise of the Gospel. And in this way the Holy Spirit, who works all of this, is introduced into the heart.

On the one hand, it is true that both the preacher's planting and watering and the hearer's running and willing would be in vain, and no conversion would follow, if there were not added the power and operation of the Holy Spirit, who through the Word preached and heard illuminates and converts hearts so that men believe this Word and give their assent to it. On the other hand, neither the preacher nor the hearer should question this grace and operation of the Holy Spirit, but should be certain that, when the Word of God is preached, pure and unalloyed according to God's command and will, and when the people diligently and earnestly listen to and meditate on it, God is certainly present with his grace and gives what man is unable by his own powers to take or give. We should not and cannot pass judgement on the Holy Spirit's presence, operations, and gifts merely on the basis of our feeling, how and when we perceive it in our hearts. On the contrary, because the Holy Spirit's activity often is hidden, and happens under cover of great weakness, we should be certain, because of and on the basis of his promise, that the Word which is heard and preached is an office and work of the Holy Spirit, whereby he assuredly is potent and active in our hearts (II Cor. 2:14ff.).

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69 Ibid., pp.530-532.
Summary

On the basis of Scripture and the Confessions, what might be a profile definition of preaching? It may be better to describe the end result as more of a composite sketch. Proclamation itself may be something that seems familiar, yet it may not always have the same features. Though thought to be recognized it may not be so easily defined. What one has in the following, then, is a working definition of proclamation which details fixed features such as content, source, and norm as well as describing its more fluid form and function.

Proclamation involves the following though they need not and, indeed, cannot all occur simultaneously:

angellein - telling, declaring
anangellein - reporting, announcing, disclosing
apangellein - declaring, reporting, proclaiming
diangellein - reporting, proclaiming widely
exangellein - proclaiming, publishing abroad
katangellein - proclaiming, words of instruction or faith
apophthēngesthai - loud, clear emphatic speech
gnōrizein - making known, acknowledging
didáskēin - teaching, presenting
diermēnorein - interpreting, translating
diēgeisthai - to declare thoroughly to relate in detail, to recount fully
exēgeisthai - recount, narrate, explain, reveal
elēgxein - bringing to light, judging, disclosing, refuting
epitiman - reproving, rebuking, firm or stern words, warning
euangelízesthai - to proclaim the good news, to preach the gospel
kēryssein - proclaiming, sounding the alarm, declaring krazein - crying out with a loud voice, and onomato-poetic voice
lalein and legein - saying, talking, speaking
martyrein - witnessing, solemnly witnessing
diamartyresthai - to declare emphatically, to solemnly command or direct
epimartyrein - to attest to an assertion already made
nouthetein - setting right, laying on the heart for the purpose of correction, imparting correction, admonishing
homilein - talking or conversing with
homologein - confessing, solemnly declaring, stating solemnly
ton logon orthotomein - speaking straightforwardly, speaking with precision and accuracy
paradidonai - to deliver, to hand down
parakalein - comforting, speaking with compassion, encouraging, exhorting, consoling, appealing
parrēsiazesthai - open and straightforward speech, plain and uncoded language, candid or bold speech, forthright talk
peithein - persuading, convincing
prophēteuein - prophesying, proclaiming a message, foretelling, making the unknown known, inspired
ecstatic speaking
boaō - to cry or call out, to exclaim
diaphēmizein - spreading the news

Proclamation or preaching, then, may be defined as
- the divinely authorized exercise of the Office of the Keys in the Office of the Ministry of the Word in the Church which includes the personal involvement of the Holy Spirit; and,
- spoken words whose source and norm is the Word of God, carefully and plainly taught Law and Gospel, justification and sanctification, for the benefit of believers and unbelievers, adults and children; and,
- the oral consolation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins usually spoken by a sincere believer and preferably in a clear and pure way; and,
- worship; and,
- being as historical as the Word itself, the written past and the past oral now spoken pastorally; and,
- fixed in terms of Law and Gospel, sin and grace, as its content; and,
- flexible in terms of form as determined by the context.

In a nutshell, then, proclamation/preaching is the divinely authorized expression of the Gospel to one or more people in a plain and understandable way either personally by God Himself or by someone appointed by God to speak for Him.
Chapter One provided a line up and an overview of the numerous words which collectively define what proclamation is. Once again, proclamation is the divinely authorized expression of the Gospel to one or more people in a plain, understanding, and personal way either by God or His designated spokesman. That serves as the backdrop and the basis for this chapter’s more detailed look at one aspect of proclamation. The study of parakaleō/paraklēsis in this chapter is intended to show its role in Scripture’s definition of proclamation in greater detail. Its purpose is also to demonstrate the three dimensional nature of parakaleō/paraklēsis. These three dimensions are as follows: asking for help (height), exhortation (breadth), and consoling help (depth). This study will be done by examining passages throughout Scripture that incorporate parakaleō/paraklēsis. These passages, which have to do with the art and craft of proclamation, serve to identify the characteristics of what may be described as paracletic proclamation. Then a summary definition will be made.
The prominent meaning of παρακαλέω, the passive παρακαλέονσι, and παράκλησις in the Septuagint is "to comfort," as Otto Schmitz indicates. Even though the equivalent Hebrew words vary, the overall meaning remains the same. Integral to the understanding is καλέω which has to do with more than simply a "calling to" someone but "to call someone to oneself." Καλέω involves the calling by one person to another that has the effect of attracting and drawing the one called to the person doing the calling. Παρά has to do with the idea of "motion towards," "being beside," or "to be with." In a legal context this adds up to the advice of a lawyer. In a medical context it involves the diagnosis and prescription of a physician. In a spiritual setting, in the context of the Church, it primarily involves the proclamation of a preacher.

Where death comes the need for comfort follows. Grief-stricken after his mother's death, Isaac was comforted (παρεκληθέ) by having Rebekah to love in Genesis 24:67. Even though all of Jacob's sons and daughters sought to comfort (παρακαλέσαν) him as he anguished over young Joseph's alleged death, the inconsolable father rejected the comfort offered (Genesis 37:35). In Genesis 38:12, it sounds like Judah's comfort (παρακληθέσις) after the death of his wife came with

time and perhaps from himself. When the son conceived as result of David and Bathsheba’s adulterous affair died, David comforted (parekalesen) his wife (2 Samuel 12:24). Ephraim’s relatives "came to comfort (parakalesai) him" after Ezer and Elead had been killed (1 Chronicles 7:22). Job, lamenting how the tables have been turned, how roles have been reversed, recalls that at one time it was once he who "comforted (parakalon) the mourners" (Job 29:25).

The process or the effort made to be comforting has to do with the expression of empathy, compassion, and condolence in a sensitive and understanding way. Trying to show kindness, David "sent some of his servants to console (parakalesai)" newly crowned King Hanun of the Ammonites after his father had died (2 Samuel 10:1-2). David’s servants are identified as parakalountas by the Ammonite princes. The princes allege that that is only their cover as spies (2 Samuel 10:3; also recounted in 1 Chronicles 19:1-3). Job’s family and fortunes restored by God, friends and family come to express their sympathy and "comforted (parekalesan) him" because of what he had been through (Job 42:11). Involved here are people who know Job and are at least somewhat familiar with what has happened. They go to him, eat with him, speak with him, and give gifts to him. One wonders where they all were when Job was down and out. Perhaps the comfort shown here might be more rightly understood in sense of "congratulations." At least Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar
sought to go to Job during his chronic malaise in order to
comfort (parakalesai) him (Job 2:11). However, the three men
in their comments had something of the opposite effect.
Rather than being empathetic they were simply pathetic. Job’s
answer to their retrocletic (in contradistinction to
paracletic) words is for them to listen rather than talk.
There is more consolation in having good sympathetic listeners
standing by than counterproductive speakers (Job 21:2).

[Job’s bed, even if it had been a comfortable one, was not
even something to which he could escape for comfort
(Parakalesei) (Job 7:13).] Joseph had more of a handle on
what to say and how to say it though. After Israel had died,
Joseph’s brothers were afraid that now Joseph might take
revenge against them for their having sold him to slave
traders years before.

But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in
God’s place? And as for you, you meant evil against me,
but God meant it for good in order to bring about this
present result, to preserve many people alive. So
therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and
your little ones.” So he comforted (parekalesen) them and
spoke kindly to them.²

More literally, Joseph spoke to (touch) their heart: "καὶ
παρεκάλεσεν αὐτοὺς καὶ ἐλάλησεν ἀυτῶν εἰς τὴν καρδίαν"
(Genesis 50:21).

So when certain conditions exist comfort is needed.
Grief, sorrow, or fear brought on by a traumatic and
distressful event or series of events, accompanied by a sense

²Genesis 50:19-21.
of helplessness such as with death, dying, or another form of separation or victimization, warrants a comforting response. While a closer relationship between the one doing the comforting and the one receiving the comfort (assuming that a person other than oneself is involved in the needing and giving) may be helpful, it is no guarantee for success. However, the physical proximity of both parties to one another, actual physical presence, is a factor. Just being there can say a lot. By providing a sort of passive form of comfort, action without words may be just as helpful in some instances as an active verbal expression of comfort. Comfort, then, may be considered as something which is a "from the heart to the heart," more so perhaps than just "from the mouth to the ear," type of occurrence or series of occurrences.

Furthermore, as in the case of Job, those coming to comfort may bring gifts. Jeremiah, foretelling the distress that is to come upon Jerusalem, gives another example.

καὶ οὐ μὴ κλασθῇ ἁρτὸς ἐν πένθει αὐτῶν εἰς παράκλησιν ἐπὶ τεθνηκότι, οὐ ποτιοῦσιν αὐτῶν ποτήριον εἰς παράκλησιν ἐπὶ πατρὶ καὶ μητρὶ αὐτοῦ. 3

Neither will men break bread in mourning for them, to comfort anyone for the dead, nor give them a cup of consolation to drink for anyone's father or mother. 4

3Jeremiah 16:7 in the Septuagint.
Perhaps, as Otto Schmitz and Gustav Stählin\textsuperscript{5} observe, the bread and drink (presumably wine) as gifts accompanying the comforting process can be traced back past Moses to Melchizedek. In Genesis 14:17-20 as king of Salem and priest of God, Melchizedek brought bread and wine to Abram as he returned from battle (which can certainly qualify as traumatic and stressful even for the victors). And not to have shown the honor could have meant, or been taken as meaning, showing disregard for Abram and possibly resulted in a need for more extensive comfort at a later date. But Melchizedek seizes the day even as Abram had, and he blesses both Abram and God. And, how could this have happened had Noah (whose name is taken by some to mean "comforter"), hero of the Flood and rescuer of all surface creatures, first-born after Adam died and thus the second mortal father of the human race (a type of second Adam), not made the most of the fruit from his vineyard and introduced wine into the new world?

But from the ground that had been cursed consolation and comfort came in the form of both bread and wine. Such an allusion to grace and the imagery of the Lord’s Supper from antiquity is as unavoidable as the divine \textit{mysterium}. Bearing in mind Jeremiah, Melchizedek, and Noah in the context of showing paracletic comfort through bread and wine, perhaps three \textit{solas} might be worth considering:

\textsuperscript{5}Otto Schmitz and Gustav Stählin, "\textit{παρακαλέω, παράκλησις}," Kittel, \textit{TDNT}, 5:789.
**Sola Visitatio, Sola Verba, and Sola Vitis**  
(Visitation Alone, Words Alone, Drink Alone).

The source of comfort, true comfort, is God. Referring to His wayward and troubled people, God says, "παρεκάλεσα αὐτὸν καὶ ἔσωκα αὐτῷ παράκλησιν ἀληθινήν, (I will comfort him and give him true comfort)" (Isaiah 57:18). To those who are righteous but still have fears, the Lord gives a reminder, "I, even I, am He who comforts you" (Isaiah 51:12). Any other comfort received is "lifted up a vain excuse for comfort (ἀνέστη μαθαίων παρακλήσιν)" (Isaiah 28:29). A shipwrecked man might just as well wait beneath a baobab tree for a coconut to fall as expect genuine comfort from any source other than God. Small household idols called teraphim (the ancient equivalent of something like a lucky charm) are not good. As Zechariah says, "μαθαίων παρεκάλουν, (They comfort in vain)" (Zechariah 10:2). Job, in reply to Zophar, says the words he and his friends have spoken are hollow and empty, lacking in substance. Neither they nor their words do him any good. Their comfort is dysfunctional. Therefore, in Job 21:34 Job says, "How then will you comfort (parakaleite) me . . . ?"

But comfort is needed because people are at times beyond simple discomfort or are uncomfortable. They are comfortless. They are hurting . . . and hurting badly. David cries out in distress in Psalm 69:20 saying, "Reproach has broken my heart, and I am so sick. And I looked for sympathy, but there was
none, . . . ." The verse concludes in the Septuagint (Psalm 68:21), "καὶ παρακαλοῦντας, καὶ οὐχ εὐροῦ (And for comforters but I found none.)." In Psalm 77:1-2 even though Asaph looks to the Lord and cries out to Him, in Psalm 76:3 of the Septuagint, the comfort (parakλεθέναι) is as about as well received as Joseph with another dream to tell. In the oracle of the valley of vision Jerusalem’s high ground is of no consequence. The city will fall. The people will experience a low like they have never experienced before. Seized with inconsolable anguish Isaiah says in 22:4, "Do not try to comfort (parakαλεῖν) me . . . ." Jerusalem, as lonely as a woman recently widowed and as devastated as a princess become peasant, has had many lovers, but now "she has no one to comfort (parακαλόν) her" (Lamentations 1:1-2). That refrain echoes through Lamentations 1 in verses 9, 16, 17, and 21 and sets the stage for the people of God to turn to Him. In Lamentations 2:13 salvation and comfort are linked: "Τίς σώσει σε καὶ παρακάλεσει σε, παρθένος ὁγατερ Σιων; (For what shall he save you and comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion?)." In Ecclesiastes 4:1 the author sees the oppressed as people without power and says, and then says again, "They had no one to (parακαλόν) comfort them." God poses a rhetorical question to His people through Isaiah in 51:19, "How shall I comfort (parακαλεσαί) you?" Nahum (whose name means "comfort") offers no comfort to the Gentiles of Nineveh who relapsed from faith in God. As in Isaiah, a question is
posed, "Where will I seek comforters (paraklesin) for you?" (Nahum 3:7).

But God turns desolation into consolation. The Lord is the quintessential provider of comfort to those whom He looks after. In Psalm 23:4 the Psalmist says, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for Thou art with me . . . ." The same Septuagint text (Psalm 22:4) reads, "ἠράβδος σου καὶ ἡ βακτρία σου, αὕτη με παρεκάλεσαν." The Lord gives comfort to the elderly person who hopes in Him and is sure of Him (Psalm 71:21; Septuagint, Psalm 70:21), to the person having to contend with others who are working against him (Psalm 86:17; Septuagint, Psalm 85:17), to the person whose anxieties are building up within (Psalm 94:19; Septuagint, Psalm 93:19), to the one whose life is storm-tossed (Isaiah 54:11), and He gives comfort to His own who have angered Him (Isaiah 51:19). God’s word to His people contains comfort and is comforting. Isaiah 40:1-2a:

"Παρακαλεῖτε παρακαλεῖτε τὸν λαὸν μου, λέγει ὁ Θεός. ἵερεῖς, λαλῆσατε εἰς τὴν καρδίαν Ιεροσολύμων, παρακαλέσατε αὐτήν"

A translation of the above might read as follows:

"Comfort! Comfort My people, says the Lord. Priests, speak to the heart of Jerusalem. Comfort her!"

In Isaiah 51:3, Isaiah goes on to describe the Lord’s comfort as being like Paradise restored. For captive people set free and brought home after many years, the Psalmist writes (Psalm 126:1; Septuagint, Psalm 125:1), "ἐγεννηθήμεν ὡς παρακελώ-μένοι (We were as comforted ones.)."
Two noteworthy images appear in conjunction with God's comfort giving. The shepherd motif is used in Psalm 23:4 (Septuagint, Psalm 22:4). Isaiah picks it up as well in 40:11. Because the shepherd will be keeping the lambs in his arms, their mothers will have comfort. The motif of God's comfort being like that of a mother stands out in Isaiah 66:13: "As one whom his mother comforts (parakaleseι), so I will comfort (parakaleso) you; And you shall be comforted (paraklēthesēste) in Jerusalem." Through Jerusalem (His Church) will those who love her "be satisfied with her comforting (paraklēseos) breasts," (Isaiah 66:11). In Isaiah 66:12 His children, the children of His Church, shall be comforted on the knees.

God offers comfort and His people are comforted. More often than not that comfort, like grace, comes through means, indirectly not directly. The Word of God serves in this capacity. Psalm 119 (Septuagint, Psalm 118) serves to illustrate this. In verse 52, remembering "Thine ordinances from of old" gives comfort. The Lord's lovingkindness which comforts His servant is "according to Thy word . . . ." Waiting for comfort, according to verse 82, involves looking "for Thy Word, . . . ." This word of comfort, as well as the opposite sentence in God's justice, is what His human spokesmen proclaim. The calling of His servants is to give comfort when, where, and to whom it is needed. Those who speak on behalf of God, then, are comforters because their
mission is to "comfort (parakalesai) all who mourn" (Isaiah 61:2). Leading the way is His Servant, the Anointed One (Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18-19; 1 John 2:1).

In the New Testament

Asking for Help

Parakaleo/paraklesis\(^6\) in the New Testament may be rightly understood in three senses. It is Schmitz's observation that parakalein may refer to asking for help, exhortation, or consoling help. The asking for help sense, when directed toward Jesus, is like any other request except for the fact of who Jesus is and what He can do. This has a bearing on both the context of the request and the tone in which the request is made. In the context of Jesus' power to save, those in need turn to Him and ask for help. Such was the case with the centurion in Capernaum whose servant was paralyzed and in great pain (Matthew 8:5). His entreaty (parakalēn) was echoed by some of the Jewish elders who "earnestly entreated (parekaloun)" Jesus, too (Luke 7:4). In Mark 5:18 the Geresene man who had been demon-possessed "was entreating (parekalei)" Jesus to let him go with Him. The people who were sick in Gennesaret were "entreating (parekaloun) Him" to just let them touch the fringe of Jesus' cloak (Matthew 14:36 and Mark 6:56). Falling on his knees before Jesus, the leper asked (parakalōn) to be made clean

\(^6\)Schmitz, TDNT, 5:793-799.
(Mark 1:40). Jairus earnestly asked (parakalei) Jesus to make his daughter well so she would live (Mark 5:23 and Luke 8:41). In Mark 7:32 the ones who brought the deaf man, whose impeded speech prevented him from speaking for himself, asked (parakalousin) Jesus on his behalf to lay His hand on him. Similarly, the blind man who could not find his way to Jesus (Mark 8:22) was brought by others who also spoke up for him and asked (parakalousin) Jesus to touch him. In the parable of the king who calls his servant to himself in order to settle accounts in Matthew 18:32, "parekalesas" ("you entreated") represents prayer for divine forgiveness. At Gethsemane Jesus poses a rhetorical question to Peter who has just bloodied his blade with the ear of the high priest’s slave. "Or do you think that I cannot appeal (parakelesai) to My Father," Jesus asks (Matthew 26:53). Paul tells the Corinthians of how he asked (parekalesa) God to take away his thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:8).

That the content of parakaleō/paraklēsis is received from the salvation event is further borne out in Acts 8:31 where the Ethiopian asks ("παρακάλεσέν") Philip to join him in his chariot and help him understand what he is reading in Isaiah 53. Thereupon Philip "preached Jesus to him" (Acts 8:35). In Acts 13:42 the people of Pisidian Antioch "kept begging (parekaloun)" that the good news that they had heard from Paul and Barnabas after the reading of the Law and the Prophets in the synagogue that Sabbath might be spoken again
at their following Sabbath assembly. The Macedonian man in Paul's vision (Acts 16:9) made a paracletic appeal (parakalōn) for Paul to "come over . . . and help us." Paul and company immediately reached the conclusion "that God had called us to preach the gospel to them" (Acts 16:10).

Exhortation

The second sense in which parakaleō and paraklēsis is used is that of exhortation: to strongly urge someone. Note the reversal, the change of direction, from the first sense. In the previous sense the flow of words was from the person(s) seeking help to the One who could give it as in prayer. With exhortation the word proclaimed in the power of the Holy Spirit is not from the person who seeks help but by someone who speaks in the name of God and is extending help. Parakalein, then, is apostolic proclamation. It is the proclamation of salvation which courts ears and exhorts hearers. Preachers do this preaching with no less than divine authority. "Therefore," Paul writes, "we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating (parakalountos) through us;" (2 Corinthians 5:20). Again, in 2 Corinthians 6:1, "we also urge (parakaloumen) you not to receive the grace of God in vain-- . . . ." From these verses one may also begin to pick up the nuances, the verbal embroidery, the various hues of color braided into the fabric of the words themselves: to entreat, to console, to urge, to exhort, to appeal, to
encourage, to comfort, to implore, to admonish, to reassure, to enhearten. It is a coat of many colors.

Exhortation, like asking for help, takes into consideration the one to whom the words are directed. When exhortation is involved there are essentially only two categories of people on the receiving end. First, there are those who are not Christians. Missionary proclamation is involved here. Secondly, there are those who already believe. That is not to say, however, that a preacher’s audience will be made up of only those from one category or another.

Exhortation as missionary proclamation is evident in 1 Thessalonians 2:2-3. Having suffered and been mistreated in Philippi on the second missionary expedition, Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy proceeded to Thessalonica where they "had the boldness in our God to speak to you the Gospel of God amid much opposition." What was spoken was "our exhortation (paraklesis) . . . ." On Pentecost Peter proclaimed to the Jews of many national backgrounds. Once they had been cut to the heart, he went on to say,

‘Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself.’”

Then, he "kept on exhorting (parakalei) them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation!’” (Acts 2:40). John the

Baptizer, having told people that he was not the Christ but that His arrival was imminent, keeps on talking as Luke in his Gospel records in 3:18, "So with many other exhortations (parakalōn) also he preached the Gospel to the people."

Exhortation addressed to those who already have the Christian faith carries with it the intent of now providing people with what they need to know about living a sanctified holy lifestyle that is worthy of the Gospel. In 1 Peter 5:12, Peter identifies his entire letter as a paracletic epistle and tells the faithful what to do next. "I have written to you briefly, exhorting (parakalōn) and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!" The epistle of Jude is similar. In verse three he writes, "I felt it necessary to write to you appealing (parakalōn) that you contend earnestly for the faith ...." In Philippians 2:1-2 Paul, talking to the saints about "encouragement (paraklēsis) in Christ," refers to it as one of the equalizing and uniting factors among Christians. Today one might use the term in connection with solidarity, a word emphasizing togetherness. Toward the end of his letter to the Philippians Paul applies what he has said. In 4:2, as a case in point, he writes, "I urge (parakalō) Euodia and I urge (parakalō) Syntche to live in harmony in the Lord." Parakaleō is a factor in Christians getting along with one another in God-pleasing relationships. To the saints in Rome Paul writes about their spiritual service to God, their worship, when he says in Romans 12:1, "I
urge (Parakalō) you therefore, brethren, ... to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, ... ." Paul's own lifestyle, his manner of dealing with other Christians, reflects what he is talking about. In 2 Corinthians 10:1 he writes, "Now I, Paul, myself urge (parakalō) you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, ... ." To the members of the church of the Thessalonians who are already conducting themselves in a God-pleasing way as a result of what they heard from these preachers before, Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy now "exhort (parakaloumen) you in the Lord Jesus, ... that you may excel still more" (1 Thessalonians 4:1). The saints at Ephesus receive the same message. In Ephesians 4:1 Paul writes, "I ... entreat (Parakalō) you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, ... ." He goes on to describe their behavior toward one another, what their "walk" should be like (verse two: humility, gentleness, patient, forbearing) as well as what a focus of their attention should be (verse three: preserving spiritual unity). In Paul's first letter to Timothy we have a pastor to pastor application of exhortation. In 1 Timothy 2:1 Paul states, "I urge (Parakalō) that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, ... ." When Peter wrote to the Christians in Asia Minor he calls the reader's attention to the quality of their behavior as they engaged in a spiritual tug-of-war. "I urge (parakalō) you ... to abstain from
fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11). Later, in 1 Peter 5:1-3, he specifically addresses the spiritual leadership and in an exercise and demonstration of mutual exhortation says,

... I exhort (parakalō) the elders among you, as your fellow-elder . . . shepherd the flock . . . not under compulsion, but voluntarily, . . . not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; not as lording it over . . . but proving to be examples to the flock.

This is not to say, however, that exhortation as missionary proclamation to the unconverted and as edification in sanctified living to the believing are mutually exclusive of one another. For instance, on the first missionary expedition at Pisidian Antioch, on the Sabbath, in the synagogue, after Scripture has been read, Paul and company are given the opportunity to make an initial proclamation of the Gospel (Acts 13:15). "... if you have any word of exhortation (paraklēseōs) for the people, say it." Meanwhile, the writer of Hebrews, addressing fellow believers, uses the very same word. He writes in 13:22, "But I urge (Parakalō) you, brethren, bear with this word of exhortation (paraklēseōs) . . . ." One may conclude, then, that those preaching in the church have paracletic exhortation of both believers and unbelievers as an integral part of their function in the faith. Understanding and applying this was part of the dynamic expansion of the Christian church in the earlier years. Luke records the results in Acts 9:31.

So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of
the Lord and in the comfort (paraklései) of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase.

The continued presupposition and support for exhortation, namely, the work of salvation, makes it more than a simple ethical appeal. Not only morals are at stake but morale is, too. Paracletic exhortation serves to encourage and build up the confidence of those who hear and believe. Hence, the exhortation is "by the mercies of God" (Romans 12:1), "by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit" (Romans 15:30), "by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 1:10), "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:1), "in Christ" (Philippians 2:1), "in the Lord Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 4:1), and, "in the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 3:12).

Those charged with and called to spiritual leadership within the church have exhortation as a conditio sine qua non for holding the position. Without exhortation ministry is incomplete. Likewise, people may rightly expect to hear words of exhortation from Christians in general and from church leaders in particular. Paul writes to Timothy to "appeal (parakalei)" to individuals just as if they were next of kin, loved ones, one's own flesh and blood (1 Timothy 5:1-2). First Timothy 6:2 may be a case of squints (to modify what precedes and/or what follows). If "preach (parakalei) these" is reflective on 1 Timothy 5:1-6:2, then factors which need to be taken into account are people's age, gender, marital status, the degree of an individual's personal dependence on
others, whether or not a person is a part of the presbyteroi (public ministry), as well as their status in society. If "preach (parakalei) these" is introductory to 1 Timothy 6:3-19, then the factors to take into account are false teachers, the danger of misplaced love, the charge given to him who is a man of God, and how financially well off a person is. Paracletic preaching involves these principles. In 2 Timothy 4:2, Timothy is to "preach the word; . . . ." One important aspect is that he is to "exhort (parakaleson)" and that "with great patience and instruction."

In fact, the ability to exhort, urge, and encourage is one of the qualifications for being an episkopon. Paul says to Titus in Titus 1:9,

. . . . holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort (parakalein) in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

Specifically, "urge (parakalei) the young men to be sensible," he says in Titus 2:6. Squints may occur again with Titus 2:15. If "These things speak and exhort (parakalei) and reprove with all authority." is reflective on Titus 2:1-14, then the exhortation has to do with the connection of ethical behavior with theology; that practical advice for Christian living and the epitome of the Christian faith go hand in hand. If Titus 2:15 is taken as introductory to Titus 3:1-11, then the exhortation is similar. The reminder is that Christian behavior is presented and lived out on a social stage set against the backdrop of God's justification by grace embodied
in mortal man. By the Holy Spirit this is personified in Jesus Christ for duplication in those who believe in Him.

Exhortation itself is a mutual exhortation. The responsibility, the privilege, of exhortation belongs to each individual in the church. Each person is a shareholder in a mutual exhortation fund which is constantly shifting and redirecting its stock, reinvesting as the demand requires in a variety of ways in order to secure any investor from loss. Speaking of those who have died in Christ and of the impending return of the Lord, Paul writes to the Thessalonians, "Therefore comfort (parakaleite) one another with these words" (1 Thessalonians 4:18). He goes on to point out how this was already, in fact, taking place. In 1 Thessalonians 5:11 he writes, "Therefore encourage (parakaleite) one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing." The writer of Hebrews underscores regularity and frequency when he writes in Hebrews 3:13, "But encourage (parakaleite) one another day after day, . . . ." A given context within which this may happen is the worship assembly. In Hebrews 10:25 he advocates "not forsaking our own assembling together, . . . but encouraging (parakalountes) . . . ." Additional references in Paul's letters contribute to understanding exhortation. In Romans 12:6-8 "exhortation (paraklēsei)" is identified as a gift that some have while others do not. In the light of previous texts which refer to mutual exhortation by the members of the church of one
another, this would seem to indicate a general exhortation on
the one hand (perhaps of the general laity). On the other
hand, there are individuals who have been specially gifted and
charged to exhort and encourage (those in the pastoral
ministry almost certainly according to Titus 1:9). Exhortation is associated with prophecy in 1 Corinthians 14:3.
Paul writes, "But one who prophesies speaks to men for
edification and exhortation (paraklēsin) . . . ." The
connection is made again in 1 Corinthians 14:31 when Paul
says, "You can all prophesy . . . so that . . . all may be
exhorted (parakalōntai); . . . ." According to 1
Thessalonianas 2:3-4, those authorized by God to preach the
gospel do so with "exhortation (paraklēsis)." Their
proclamation may be described as paracletic preaching. In 1
Thessalonians 2:11-12 the manner in which this "exhorting
(parakalountes)" is actually done is described as paternal
with the aim of sanctified living. One specific aspect of
Timothy's ministry is identified in 1 Thessalonians 3:2 as
being to "encourage (parakalesai) you as to your faith, . . . ."
Jesus and God the Father are identified as having given
"eternal comfort (paraklesin)" to the authors in 2
Thessalonians 2:16. Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy hope the
readers and hearers of their letter likewise will receive
"comfort (parakalesai)" according to 2 Thessalonians 2:17.
The "encouragement (paraklēsis) in Christ" in Philippians 2:1-
2 can serve to have a unifying effect in the church, too.
Other aspects of exhortation include that it is need oriented. Both Jewish and Gentile Christians who were escaping persecution in Jerusalem began speaking and proclaiming Jesus with a focus on those of similar ethnic background according to Acts 11:19-20. Barnabas, the Son of Encouragement (paraklēseos, Acts 5:36), liked what he saw and exhorted (parakelei) them to keep being true to the Lord (Acts 11:23). The role of the Holy Spirit in exhortation is evident here, too. Barnabas was "full of the Holy Spirit and of faith" (Acts 11:24) and the same could be said of others involved in the paracletic process such as Paul, Judas, Silas, and many more. Thus, the Holy Spirit works to exhort and encourage people through other people. Very often the exhortation is directed to Christians facing a particularly difficult situation. Paul, having been stoned himself by Jews from Antioch and Iconium (Acts 14:19), returns through those very same cities with Barnabas after proclaiming the Gospel in Derbe. "...encouraging (parakalountes) them to continue in the faith" (Acts 14:22) these preachers lived what they proclaimed for the sake of the kingdom of God. Exhortation occurs more frequently in the form of an oral message. In Acts 15:32, Paul, Barnabas, Judas, and Silas "encouraged (parekalesan) and strengthened the brethren with a lengthy message." While "lengthy" is something of a subjective term, this text also bears out that timely-effective preaching is not necessarily determined by Timex-efficient preaching.
(Although Paul did take a licking and kept on ticking.) Even before their oral exhortation, however, the congregation at Antioch read the written letter that had been brought from the consortium at Jerusalem and "they rejoiced because of its encouragement (parakłèsei)" (Acts 15:31).

Otto Schmitz draws from two helpful sources in pulling exhortation together. First, he includes the following from Adolf von Schlatter based on his Kommentar:

Here and elsewhere the words used with παρακαλέων or παράκλησις (παραμυθείσαι, 1 Th.2:12, σηρίζειν, 1 Th.3:2; 2 Th.2:17, ἐπιστηρίζειν, Ac.14:22; 15:32, ἐρωτάν, 1 Th.4:1, οἰκοδομεῖν, 1 Th.5:11, παραμύθιον ἀγάπης, Phil.2:1, παραμυθία, 1 C.14:3, οἰκοδομή, 1 C.14:3, ήπομονή, R.15:4,5) show that there is nothing sharp, polemical, or critical in the expressions. If on the other side terms like ἵππος (1 Th.2:12), διαμαρτύρεσθαι (1 Th.2:12), ἐλέγχειν (2 Tm.4:2), ἔπιτιμαν (2 Tm.4:2), παραγγέλλειν (2 Th.3:12), διδάσκειν (1 Tm.6:2; cf.4:13) are mentioned in the same breath with παρακαλέων, it is also clear how serious and urgent the word of admonition spoken in the power of the Holy Ghost can be. The fact that παρακαλέων is the proper expression for 'to comfort' pts. in the same direction. There are cases when it is hard to distinguish between exhortation and comfort. In 2 C.13:11 παρακαλέσθε embraces 'both the word which consoles the sufferer and the word which admonishes the slack and weary.'"

A succinct evaluation by Heinrich Schlier is beneficial as well.

Apostolic exhortation is a concerned and urgent address to the brethren which combines supplication, comfort and admonition."


Consoling Help

The third sense in which *parakaleō*/*paraklēsis* is used in the New Testament, that of consoling help, is the more general use. It has to do with consolation through God’s present and future salvation. While consolation and exhortation are distinct from one another, they are not mutually exclusive. The writer of Hebrews in 12:5 refers to Proverbs 3:11-12 as "the exhortation (*paraklēseōs*) which is addressed to you as sons, . . . ." He is concerned that those to whom he is writing "may not grow weary and lose heart" (Hebrews 12:3). In this text consolation and exhortation overlap one another. The exhortation to Christians enduring hardships is to remember God’s Word. The consolation and the encouragement involves a familial relationship with which God views believers as His Word reveals. Similarly, in Hebrews 6:17-18 the writer calls attention to God’s promise guaranteed and confirmed with an oath so that "we may have strong encouragement (*paraklēsin*), . . . ." The spiritual anchorage for God’s people is secure. Their hope is fixed despite winds and waves. Paul identifies "the Scriptures," God’s written Word, as having been "written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement (*paraklēseōs*) . . . we might have hope" (Romans 15:4). While the Scriptures themselves are encouraging and consoling, Paul goes on to identify God as the genesis of *paraklēsis* (*paraklēseōs* in Romans 15:5) and unity in Christ. In 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 comfort
(paraklēsin) is associated with the love of God in Christ and has eternal implications because of grace. Consequently it is prayed that His comfort (parakalesai) may be the present help. God's comfort in the past has meant definitive action in Christ. Now, comforted by that which has taken place, the prayer is that God may also extend comfort through the further definitive actions of good works and words by Christians, preaching included. Paul's objective, what he is "struggling" for in Colossians 2:2, is that believers' hearts "may be encouraged (paraklēthōsin), . . . ." That is why Tychicus was sent to them by Paul, "that he may encourage your hearts" (Colossians 4:7-8). In Philemon 7, as Paul is interceding for the runaway slave Onesimus, he holds up Philemon's own reputation for Christian love as that which he has come to have "comfort (paraklēsin)" in. Likewise, Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy "in all our distress and affliction . . . . were comforted (pareklēthōmen)" because of the good news of the Thessalonian's faith and love (1 Thessalonians 3:6-7). When Paul and Timothy arrived in Macedonia, they were "afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within" (2 Corinthians 7:5). They were "depressed" (2 Corinthians 7:6). But their source of comfort (parakalōn) was God, who "comforted (parekalesen) us by the coming of Titus; and . . . . also by the comfort (paraklēsei) by which he was comforted (pareklēthēe)" (2 Corinthians 7:6-7). Because of the turn around in Corinth and the news of it, "we have been comforted (paraklēsei)"
(2 Corinthians 7:13), say Paul and Timothy. It is worth noting that the ones initially comforted now find their roles reversed so that now they are the comforters while others are being comforted by them. The general contexts reflect God's people having been, being, or anticipate being under pressure and under stress.

While the comforting and encouraging process involves person to person contact, the ultimate source and Comforter is none other than God. And if 2 Corinthians thirteen is "The Love Chapter" in the New Testament (1 John 4:7-5:3 notwithstanding), then 2 Corinthians one is "The Comfort Chapter." In 1:3 it is made perfectly clear that God the Father is the "God of all comfort (paraklēseōs); . . . ." Christians, having afflictions in common, also have comfort (parakalōn) from God in common and are thus enabled to comfort (parakalein) others with the same comfort (paraklēseōs) with which they have been comforted (parakalouμεθα) by God (verse 4). Whereas the Christian church is invisible it is nonetheless oral and audible. It is a veritable paracletic communion of saints. In verse five two things are stressed: "the sufferings of Christ" and "our comfort (paraklēsis) . . . through Christ." The allusion is to His cross and resurrection. In verse six it is important to note that "comfort (paraklēseōs)" and "salvation" are together. Paul and Timothy want their readers to know and understand that their concern is for the church of God and the "comfort
(paraklēseōs)" of the saints. This comfort enables a person to effectively and patiently endure sufferings. The fellowship held in common, then, is a fellowship of sufferings and "comfort (paraklēseōs)" (verse seven). Therefore, it may be correct to say that comfort/consolation/encouragement in God’s salvation relative to a distress of the moment (perhaps, this could be thought of as "actual distress") is indicative of God’s eschatological rescue from the greater distress of an eternal trauma ("original distress"). Christians, then, are living lives in something of a bipolar and antithetical situation. Just as Christians on earth are simil iustus et peccator (justified and a sinner at the same time), a Christian, it might be said, is also simil tentatio et confortare (afflicted and comforted at the same time). Because the Christian life is lived between the poles (though perhaps at times is closer to one pole than the other) comfort (paraklēseōs) and hope also stand side by side (verse seven; also, Romans 15:4 and 2 Thessalonians 2:16). Implied in 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 is that now being comforted, the Corinthians can proceed to extend comfort to specific individuals in their own ranks as a result of the immorality that had taken place.

Words can serve as instruments of comfort. Paul writes to the Thessalonians, "Therefore comfort (parakaleite) one another with these words" (1 Thessalonians 4:18). Not just any words will do, however. Paul is referring to the word of the Lord which calls attention to the incarnate, crucified,
risen, reigning, and returning Word—Jesus (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17). Actions and events can also convey comfort and consolation. For instance, Titus' arrival "Comforted (parakalesen)" Paul and Timothy (2 Corinthians 7:6). When Eutychus had been picked up dead, Paul declared him alive and those present "were greatly comforted (pareklēthēsan)" (Acts 20:12). Bachmann emphasizes the significance of actions and events as comfort and consolation when he writes,

> Even such experiences, however, are a means for divine parakalein simply by the fact that they speak a language that goes to the heart, so that there is maintained the concept of encouragement suggested for parakalein by the etymon (to call) and by usage (in the LXX, e.g. synon. with λαλεῖν ἐὰν τὴν καρδίαν τίνος = ἐπιθυμοῦν, Gn.50:21; Is.40:2), and this is indeed an inner encouragement which establishes the spirit and has no need of outward demonstration.\(^\text{10}\)

Meanwhile, the Gospels connect human comfort to divine word and activity. Jesus in His so-called "Sermon on the Mount" says that those who mourn are blessed "for they shall be comforted (paraklēthesontai)" (Matthew 5:4). Here comfort should be understood eschatologically in the context of salvation and as God's activity. Conversely, the rich are getting their full measure of comfort (paraklēsin) already (Luke 6:24). The contrast between short term, material, and physical life on Easy Street and "being comforted (parakleitai)" (Luke 16:25) in the heavenly bosom of Abraham is evident in Jesus' parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke

Even more specifically, it is revealed to the devout and righteous Simeon that the "consolation (paraklesin) of Israel" (Luke 2:25), the Christ, is Jesus.

Otto Schmitz draws the following conclusion:

The possibilities presented by the wealth of meanings of παρακαλέω are very freely set in the service of testimony to the NT event of salvation. . . . the sense "to ask," which is very common elsewhere, is used predominantly for turning to Jesus with requests for help during His earthly life and within the account of the primitive Christian mission. . . . The use of παρακαλέω for "to exhort," . . . though almost completely absent from translation Greek of the LXX, serves in the NT to denote missionary proclamation and also as a kind of formula to introduce pastoral admonition. For both forms of exhortation, which include both the element of beseeching and also that of encouraging, apostolic usage has the norm too. The meaning "to comfort," "comfort," "consolation," . . . is influenced by the OT, and especially by Is. (and the Ps.) when the reference is to salvation history (cf. the "consolation of Israel" in later Judaism). It expresses divine aid which is already lavishly granted to members of the suffering community of Jesus by present exhortation and encouraging events, and which will reach its goal when the NT people of God is delivered out of all its tribulations.

If "asking" presupposes that the salvation of God is manifested in Jesus, "exhortation," being effected by the Spirit, is based on the salvation already accomplished, and "comfort" or "consolation" takes place through the present and future act of God Himself to salvation. Hence it is hardly too much to say that, as defined by the NT act of salvation, παρακαλέω and παρακλητός may be traced back to the saving work of the triune God which leads those in need of help as suppliants to the Son of God, which is preached as exhortation in the power of the Spirit of God, and which carries with it already in this time the eternal comfort of God the Father.11

11Schmitz, Kittel, TDNT, 5:799.
Summary

In drawing this chapter together it may be said that parakaleō/paraklēsis have three dimensions. It follows, then, that paracletic preaching is three dimensional. With the starting point being the calling of someone to oneself and having that person be with, stand beside, and give support, the first dimension has to do with a vertical relationship. It may be thought of as height. This dimension of parakalein involves our asking for help from God because of Jesus, who He is as our Savior and what He does, namely, saves. Both the content and the tone of what is said are received from the salvation event centered in Christ. But prayer is a response to and presumes God’s initiative. While God does not ask for or need our help, God does call people to Himself and to faith in Christ through the Gospel of His grace. In turn those who have received that gift of grace through faith can and do (though imperfectly) ask for help from God. Both those who proclaim and those who hear do this. Having been called by God to preach, those whose preaching is paracletic ask Him who has done the calling for help. They lift up their hearts to the Lord before opening their mouths to the people. With the Psalmist a paracletic preacher prays,

Let the words of my mouth
and the meditation of my heart
Be acceptable in Thy sight,
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

(Psalm 19:14)
The paracletic preaching of Christ is preceded by a paracletic prayer to Christ. So, because the Lord has spoken he who would speak for the Lord must have already heard and still be listening. The speaker's prayer is that God will empower him listen and that his proclamation will be faithful to the Word. And remembering the hearers, the prayer is that the Lord will also enable those present to benefit from their hearing. Thus the hearer is turned into a speaker and God is his foremost and lifelong Hearer.

A similar situation may exist within the audience. Those having already heard the Gospel call do well to pray that the Lord would help by giving them open ears and receptive hearts, that the same will be the case for others, and, that everyone will be all the more able to live the Word. Hearers also rightly pray asking the Lord to be with and help preachers (and their own preacher in particular) purely and soundly speak the word of God to them. This form of paracletic language, then, makes up the bridge, the masts, the sails, and the rigging of a tall and majestic verbal square-rigger: His Majesty's Ship, the H.M.S. Paraklesis. Such language bends knees but sets souls upright and supports their spiritual rigging. It supports and billows souls by the breath of the Holy Spirit so that otherwise dry-docked human beings are launched and propelled to go where they neither could nor would have gone before . . . into pulpits and into pews.
The second dimension of *parakaleo*/*paraklēsis* is more of a horizontal plane with breadth to its beam. It is the main deck on board ship. This aspect of paracletic preaching involves courting and exhorting, with divine authority and in His name, those who are within word range of one who is the Lord’s designated spokesman and calls all hands on deck. Consideration is given to who the hearers are and what their various circumstances in life may be by making the fundamental distinction that in an audience some hearers will be Christians and some not. Accordingly, paracletic preaching may target believers only, unbelievers only, or probably more often both at the same time. On the one hand, then, paracletic proclamation entails missionary proclamation for the purpose of conversion with the message being the Gospel of God’s saving grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Proclaimed initially to jump start spiritual life, this message is also proclaimed repeatedly in order to keep the spiritual life charged up and to continue to urge the unconverted to repent. On the other hand, paracletic preaching is also just as keenly aware that others (if not most of those who are on hand) are Christians already and at various stages of spiritual maturity. The Gospel through which God works to call people is the very same Gospel through which He keeps people in the faith. Without this Gospel of Jesus Christ there is no preaching or *parakalein*. Paracletic exhortation is a function of faith and has been and remains faith functioning. For
those who are Christians already, this type of preaching helps by not only asserting the faith but by further addressing what is needed as far as Christian living is concerned. With the Gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed and living in the hearts of hearers, believers are ready for help with practical application and for words that cheer them on toward that end. Paracletic preaching helps by providing answers to the perpetual question, "So what?" Preaching that is paracletic serves to clear the deck for believers by facilitating unity both in more distant inter-Christian relationships as well as in more familiar intra-congregational relationships (especially within the context of worship). The end result is something of a mutual exhortation community wherein speakers exhort hearers, hearers exhort speakers, hearers exhort other hearers, and speakers even exhort other speakers. Both morals and morale are addressed on this ship where ethics and theology swab the deck elbow to elbow.

Paracletic exhortation is integral to preaching. It is not optional. Christians may rightly expect to hear it from those who speak to them of Jesus and salvation just as any ship's crew appreciates words of exhortation and encouragement from their captain. Since the Owner of the fleet has taken the needs of all into consideration, all speaking and hearing is more effective when the spiritual as well as the temporal context is carefully weighed. While some individuals are specially gifted at exhorting (which hopefully is evident in
the public ministry), all Christians have opportunities to exhort (perhaps more so evident in individual circumstances). Images of fatherly care and concern, a shepherd's watchfulness, and a mother's love help in the personification of the concept of parakeleō/parakalēsis which hibernates in the abstract and thrives in animation. The Holy Spirit exhorts people through the Word. And the Holy Spirit also exhorts people to exhort people. People who are exhorted are more likely to be exhorting people. Paracletic exhortation is need oriented, culturally sensitive, ethnically perceptive. It may be brief or more lengthy, in written form or oral. In any case, distinguishing where paracletic preaching that exhorts and encourages leaves off and where paracletic preaching that comforts begins is hardly simple because it may occur simultaneously.

The third dimension of parakaleō/parakalēsis is depth. This is personalized preaching that goes inside . . . below decks. Paracletic preaching is more than a surfboard with a sail. More than skimming the surface to impress onlookers, this vessel has draft that displaces the very thing upon which it floats. This preaching gives consoling help, comfort, and encouragement with the Gospel of past, present, and future salvation in Jesus Christ to hearers. Paracletic proclamation goes inside, to the heart, to where fires are burning and where feelings are hurt. The cargo here is both cobwebbed and new with crates that hold heavy and even deadly freight. Here

Access here usually requires personal permission. But for sure it is no place for a preacher who is still sorting out the complications of his own troubled childhood. There are better places for that activity than a pulpit. Paracletic preaching helps to stabilize the insecure. Preachers who are unstable themselves will likely be of little help in securing anyone else.

Paracletic comfort begins with God who searches the heart. He took action in the person and the real presence of His appointed Comforter, namely, Christ. That initiative continues indirectly as the Holy Spirit works through the presence of Christians who, already having received comfort, are enabled to give comfort. They have been down like Jonah ... and up with him, too. They are the "voice box" for God, His Word, His Word in the flesh—Jesus. With distinctive and sensitive language that comes from the heart of the speaker and goes to the heart of the hearer, the paracletic proclamation is of God's salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. With this the Holy Spirit gives comfort that
has present consequences and eternal eschatological implications.

In summing up this chapter, then, it may be said that parakaleō/paraklēsis involves aspects of proclamation that seem to come in threes. Paracletic proclamation is a braiding together of the three meanings. It includes asking God for help, words of encouragement, and the expression of comfort. The role of the Trinity is evident. God the Father is the source. God the Son is the Person to which attention and thought are directed. God the Holy Spirit enables the preaching and the listening to be effective.

Paracletic proclamation is personalized and down to earth. It is the message of salvation which comes from the heart and mind of God, touches the hearts and minds of hearers, and also turns them into speakers (both publicly and privately) who touch the hearts and minds of others with the same message that moved them. Paracletic proclamation, as often as not, is a vessel in a Sunday morning nave-al engagement which involves the fortifying message of the Gospel being spoken by a person whose forte is proclamation to hearers who are vulnerable to misfortune.
CHAPTER III
PARACLETIC PROCLAMATION AND GOD

The previous chapters have provided the basic groundwork for defining proclamation; and parakaleο/paraklēsis as a specific and distinct type of proclamation. Proclamation has been identified as the divinely authorized expression of the Gospel to one or more people in a plain and understandable way either personally by God Himself or by someone whom He has appointed to speak for Him. Paracletic proclamation has been identified as preaching which has three distinct dimensions: asking for help, extending encouragement, and giving comfort with a personalized message of salvation by grace through faith in Christ.

Integral to paracletic proclamation are the components which make up the circuitry needed in order for this communication process to occur. First, there must be some source of communication. A speaker is necessary. Secondly, the speaker must have an idea, a message to convey and a plan or format for getting that message to its destination. Thirdly, there needs to be a second party, a receiver; someone who can get the message, take it in, and hear it. Fourthly, in order for the communication to be effective, the language, the code, the methodology of the transmission must
be suitable for the speaker, the message, the hearer, and the overall context of the moment. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate God's role in the process of paracletic proclamation.

**God as Speaker**

Speech is a characteristic of God. Having created the earth before anything was in existence, God was speaking. Though no one heard, His word was more than sound. It was action. What He said was what was done. "Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light" (Genesis 1:3). Even when His audience was not yet in existence, He effectively made nothing into something by calling into being that which had not yet been. He did so with His word.

By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.¹

Then with His word He calls the inanimate into animation and the animal kingdom comes into being. He speaks to His varied array of living creatures and blesses those with fins and feathers saying, "Be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:22). Hence, from the beginning, the word of God has been creative and inventive, powerful and effective.

From talking to nothing, to the inanimate, then to the existing animate creatures, God goes on to speak to Himself. The divine psychology of the pluralis majestatis (plural

¹Hebrews 11:3.
majesty) of God identifies one who is to be unique among the rest... man. "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" (Genesis 1:26). It is with the first man, Adam, that extensive conversation begins. God expands it to include the helper He makes for him, Eve, and their descendants--us. Since the beginning, God has been speaking and He keeps speaking through His word. Richard Caemmerer identifies God’s use of language as indicative of God in action.

The Word of God is God in action to give faith. Faith itself, faith in God as the rescuing and accepting God, is inextricably coupled with speaking; faith speaks to faith. God’s Word does not in the first place put a condition on man to react; it comes to man to quicken and stir to faith and to the profession of faith. God begins the chain reaction which is composed not merely of words beating on eardrums, but of the constructing of the entire situation in which men hear and believe on Him whom God sent to rescue and give life (Rom. 10:6-21). The Word of God is what it is not just when it is outwardly successful, when it produces the statistics of conversion--although even they are useful because they betoken an enlarging and amplifying of the thrust of the Word of God (e.g., Acts 12:24; 19:20). But the Word of God is always God in action, even if the end result is a judgment of rejection. (Rom. 10:21; 2 Cor. 2:14-17)

Karl Barth incorporates the understanding of God as Speaker in his "New Definition" of preaching. His definition is as follows:

1. Preaching is the Word of God which he himself speaks, claiming for the purpose the exposition of a biblical text in free human words that are relevant to contemporaries by those who are called to do this in the church that is obedient to its commission.

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2. Preaching is the attempt enjoined upon the church to serve God's own Word, through one who is called thereto, by expounding a biblical text in human words and making it relevant to contemporaries in intimation of what they have to hear from God himself.

God Asks

Interestingly, after the Fall into sin (the result of crafty and persuasively seductive words spoken by the devil . . . and then by Eve) God calls out and directly addresses first Adam and then Eve with questions. God was not far off but near and getting nearer to His fallen human beings. "And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden" (Genesis 3:8). But His nearness is now frightening to people because of their guilt. Therefore, God approaches with questions. God asks questions not because He does not know what has been going on or because He Himself is in need of help. God asks so that He can be of help; so that confession may begin (not the sewing together of verbal fig leaves which also wither, fall away, and expose) and forgiveness and salvation in the Person of a Savior may follow and be received. He basically asks rhetorical questions which effectively personalize the words being spoken in order to stimulate a response. This serves to engage the participation of the ones being addressed and involves them in the content of the message being conveyed.

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Scripture is replete with such questions from God. Questions that contain specific *parakaleo*/*paraklesis* terminology are few though. Generally, they represent indirect communication, that is, when God’s designated spokesman is speaking for Him. Nahum, for instance, delivers God’s alarming wake up call to the people of Nineveh. "Where will I seek comforters for you?" (Nahum 3:7), He asks. Through Isaiah, God asks Jerusalem, "How shall I comfort you?" (Isaiah 51:19). By way of Jeremiah the Lord puts forward the question, "To what shall I liken you as I comfort you, o virgin daughter of Zion?" (Lamentations 2:13).

The general principle of rhetorical questioning still applies, however. In reply to Job, for instance, God asks, "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" (Job 38:2). "Will you really annul My judgment? Will you condemn Me that you may be justified?" (Job 40:8). Cain, mistaken by Eve to be the One God has promised as the Savior and smoldering in dejection when God showed no regard for his offering, is asked by God, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?" (Genesis 4:6). To a determined and unbelieving leader of the opposition, the risen and glorified Jesus speaks saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" (Acts 9:4).

Of all places, even from the cross there is, perhaps, the most poignant question of all. "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46). But this is no rhetorical
question. This is, as Francis Rossow calls it, "The full literal Gospel" in the form of a question.

God the Paraclete

Before going further in dealing with God's role in paracletic proclamation, it is necessary to call attention to a distinctive title that God the Son and God the Holy Spirit share. They are each Παράκλητος, Paraclete. Johannes Behm underscores the difficulties that still exist in defining and translating this word that is not in the Septuagint and is unique to the Johannine writings of the New Testament.

In 1 John 2:1, Jesus Christ is Paraclete of sinful Christians before the Father. Here Jesus is in the role of the rescuing Advocate in the court of God. Jesus is the priestly speaker. The Father is the hearing Judge. Jesus the Paraclete confesses before the Father those who confess Jesus before the world (Matthew 10:32). He pleads the case of those who are His siblings by grace through faith like an older brother standing up on behalf of the younger. Paul puts it this way in Romans 8:34,

Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

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Jesus, as Paraclete, makes paracletic requests asking that the Father help by acquitting sinful people by taking only Jesus' righteousness into evidence and urging Him to disregard any evidence of unrighteousness on the part of those whose faith is in Him. This might be likened to the vertical dimension of paracletic proclamation.

There is "another Paraclete," too, as Jesus indicates in John 14:16. He is the Holy Spirit whom Jesus asked to be given to be with those who are His disciples. "He abides with ... and will be in " Jesus' followers (John 14:17). Jesus says, "He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you" (John 14:26). In John 15:26, Jesus says what the Holy Spirit will come to do. "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me." But the Holy Spirit's role as Paraclete is not as an Advocate, a defender of the faithful before the Father. The Holy Spirit is more the Counselor, the Helper, the Facilitator, the Enabler, the Comforter for Christians in relation to the rest of the world. The basis for this is Jesus' words in John 16:7-11.

But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgement; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you no longer behold Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.
In addition, He will glorify Jesus taking what is His and disclosing it to Jesus' disciples (John 16:14).

Through the Word of God the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, speaks to mankind. In 2 Thessalonians 2:14, the text reads, "He called you through our Gospel . . . ." Only because of Him does the Gospel get a hearing. " . . . no man can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:3). Only because of Him, when the Gospel needs to be spoken, and spoken in a certain way, can the right speaking be done. Even then the human speaker is only the vocal cords of the Lord.

But when they deliver you up, do not become anxious about how or what you will speak; for it shall be given you in that hour what you are to speak. For it is not you who speak, it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you."

This might be likened to the second and third dimensions of paracletic proclamation, the horizontal, and the depth. Here comfort and encouragement through the Gospel of salvation are the mainstay. And, rightly so. For creation creaks and groans as a consequence of sin. More significantly, Christians groan under the weight of hardships and weaknesses until glory. But help comes in the Person of the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, who assists Christians in the vertical dimension of prayer by stepping in on their behalf. Paul writes the following in Romans 8:26-27:

"Matthew 10:19-20."
And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

While no single word seems to serve as an adequate rendering for Paraclete, perhaps, it will have to be sufficient to identify the characteristics. It may be said that the Paraclete speaks paracletically, that is, asking, pleading, guiding, encouraging, and comforting. The Paraclete steps in and speaks up for others to the Father. He is sent in the name of Jesus. He has divine authority. He teaches the Gospel of salvation. One who is a Paraclete bears witness of Christ to others in the world.

God Exhorts and Encourages

Both by way of His presence and His Word, God exhorts and encourages His creatures. Even His silent presence speaks encouragement for those who believe in Him. He was (para) before He was calling (kalein). Now He is parakalein. The very fact that, as God, He is ready, willing, and able to help, save, comfort, and defend whoever and whatever is His, and that He has made that known, sends an urgent message. Usually He speaks the message directly to His spokesmen who in turn carry out their commission to tell others.

Though God's channels of communication are both indirect and direct methods of communication, the authority of His Word (oral or written) is not affected. God exhorts those whom He
enables to hear through His Spirit so that they may speak in His name and on His behalf. He says what He means. And He means what He says. There are teeth in His Law but healing in His Gospel. To a world full of people in need, God urges His spokesmen to say what He wants said and calls into effect.

"Comfort, O comfort My people," says your God. "Speak kindly to Jerusalem; and call out to her, that her warfare has ended, that her iniquity has been removed, that she has received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

Those who are not believers God urges to repent and be baptized. They are encouraged to receive that which they do not have, namely, the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). Salvation is an urgent matter (Acts 2:40). The effective means for urging is the Gospel of God (1 Thessalonians 2:2).

More exhortation and encouragement are said and done by God to those who believe in Him. There are many hardships that are faith related. Through His Word God encourages Christians, whether they be public ministers or laymen, to encourage one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11; 1 Timothy 2:1). He urges encouragement to be done as part of a Christian's sanctified behavior (Ephesians 4:1). His Word is written and spoken. So He urges people to read, speak, and hear it. Luther's explanation to the Third Commandment reflects this.

'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.'
What does this mean?
Answer: We should fear and love God, so that we do not

7 Isaiah 40:1-2.
despise his Word and the preaching of the same, but deem it holy and gladly hear and learn it."

But the motivating factor for speaking and showing encouragement is the Gospel of salvation. God’s Word that encourages believer and unbeliever alike is that by grace through faith in Jesus Christ a person’s sin is forgiven and eternal life is received. The gracious Word of God results in faith. "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17). Now able to hear, God urges and encourages hearers to be speakers; to speak to Him in prayer, and to speak to others, believers and unbelievers, with the Gospel.

God Comforts and Consoles

God speaks to the matter of human distress, affliction, and hurt with words that focus on salvation. He may speak in Person or through persons. Drawing near to those who are troubled because of their own sins within or because of the effects of sin from without, God stands by and with His people. Through Jeremiah, the Lord declares, "For I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and give them joy for their sorrow" (Jeremiah 31:13). The Lord’s covenant gives relief and reassurance.

"But this the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord, "I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each

man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, " declares the Lord, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."9

God speaks words of His supporting love in His incarnate Word, Jesus (2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; John 1:14). By way of the sufferings of Christ, God speaks in order to comfort. From the cross Jesus speaks to arrange care for His mother (John 19:26). Hanging next to a repentant criminal, Jesus speaks the comforting words of salvation. "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). What Jesus says at the brink of death gives comfort to every Christian. Mankind's redemption is complete. Jesus, the Son of God, says so. "It is finished" (John 19:30).

God's word of comfort is coupled with action both on the cross of Christ and in hearts of repentant people. In Christ, God's word of comfort is literally down to earth. Present human sadness, the sense of loss, and the dismay of hope crucified cannot withstand the comforting presence and words of the resurrected Lord. Hearts, like campfires that have been drenched, He sets aflame with His speaking (Luke 24:32). In the moment of human need, God speaks and gives eternal comfort.

It is interesting to note that God's audio communication is often accompanied by visual communication. Audible words on Mount Sinai are also carved in stone (Exodus 32:15-16).

*Jeremiah 31:33-34.*
God spoke to Jonah with His Word . . . and with His fish (Jonah 1:17). Ultimately, His Word became flesh, too (John 1:14). Jesus is God's premier audio-visual communication. God's graphic is Jesus' cross. The grace of God for the comfort of souls continues in that identical format. Both the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion involve Word and visible element(s). Jesus alludes to this in Luke 4:21-31 when He refers to God's grace to the widow of Zeraphath (1 Kings 13-17) and His provision of food, and to God's healing of Namaan (2 Kings 5:9-14) involving water. God's Word continues to be audio-visual whenever those whom He calls to speak His word of comfort do so in the presence of their fellow hearing creatures.

God's Message

Every speaker needs to have a message, something that is to be communicated in one form or another. The Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16). Like pens in His hand, God moved holy men to write His message of salvation with the ink of His thoughts and words that He had put within them. "For no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but by men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Peter 1:21). His message has a purpose and an effect.

... from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in
righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.\(^\text{10}\)

Basically, God's message can be divided into two parts: the Law and the Gospel. In the Law aspect of what God has to say, He gives directions as to how people are to be and not to be; what people are supposed to do and not supposed to do (Exodus 34:11). This prescription for holy living is the Ten Commandments. Originally woven into the fabric of the human heart by God (Romans 2:14-15), His Moral Law first addresses the relationship of human beings with Him (vertical). Jesus says,

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the great and foremost commandment.\(^\text{11}\)

Secondly, God's Law gives directions for relationships between people (horizontal). Again, Jesus says,

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."\(^\text{12}\)

Paul summarizes these summaries when he writes that "love is the fulfillment of the law" (Romans 13:10).

However, since people are sinful and are unable to keep the Law of God, "no man is justified by the Law before God" (Galatians 3:11). God, in His message of Law, does not ask, He tells. He urges people to live good lives and through the work of the Holy Spirit do the right things according to His

\(^{10}\)2 Timothy 3:15-17.

\(^{11}\)Matthew 22:37-38.

\(^{12}\)Matthew 22:39.
definition of "good" and "right" (1 Peter 5:12; Ephesians 4:1). But there is no comfort from God in the Law. His Law only guides, threatens, and condemns. Paul writes the following in Galatians 3:10:

For as many are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law to perform them."

The violation of God's Law results in sin (1 John 3:4). The devil introduced sin into the world (1 John 3:8) through the temptation he aimed at humanity. By giving in to that temptation, Adam and Eve allowed sin to become a factor of separation in the relationship between God and mankind as well as between people (Romans 5:12,19). Thus, the stage is set for the second part of God's message: the Gospel.

In the Gospel God offers the only solution to the human dilemma of sin and its consequences. The Gospel message tells of God's gracious forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus Christ. John 3:16 encapsulates that message.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

The Gospel, then, is God's power of salvation to and for all who believe (Romans 1:16). Jesus' total fulfillment of the Law, by way of His suffering, death, and resurrection in the place of each and every human being (Galatians 3:13), means rescue by redemption through faith rather than by the meritorious works of people (Romans 3:28). It is this Gospel of justification, not by works but by grace for Christ's sake.
through faith (Romans 3:22-24), which permeates God’s message and makes it distinct in the world. God’s message through the prophet Micah (7:18-20) is as follows:

Who is a God like Thee, who pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in unchanging love. He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities underfoot. Yes, Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt give truth to Jacob and unchanging love to Abraham, which Thou didst swear to our fore-fathers from the days of old.

It is with this Gospel message that God provides comfort to penitent sinners (Acts 16:30-31,34) both now and in the final judgment. But the message is not an abstract message or idea. The message is more than from God. The message is personified in the Son of God, Jesus Christ. In Him the message of words became a message of Word. John writes in his gospel (1:1,14),

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

God speaks His Word, enacts His Word, accomplishes His Word, even becomes His Word. In the God-man, Jesus Christ, salvation is personalized, purchased, and proclaimed and words take on the highest value as Word.

God as Hearer

An integral part of what God says in His Word is His indication of willingness and desire to hear from those who have heard Him. Luther refers to this in his explanation to the Second Commandment.
'You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.'

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God, and so we should not use His name to curse, swear, practice magic, lie, or deceive, but in every time of need call upon him, pray to him, praise him, and give him thanks.13

God, indeed, wants His people to ask for His help and with words of encouragement He tells why. The Psalmist writes, in 50:15, what the Lord has spoken.

And call on Me in the day of trouble; 
I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me.

Because God in grace listens to believers, Jesus teaches Christians to pray and gives a promise. Matthew records Jesus’ words in 7:7-8.

Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened.

Jesus, knowing that God listens like a dear Father, teaches His disciples to pray (Matthew 6:9-13). Likewise, at Gethsemane, grieved and distressed, Jesus turned to His Father asking for help (Matthew 26:36-44).

God does hear the prayers of those who are His through faith in Christ. In fact, Isaiah records that the Lord says, "before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear" (Isaiah 65:24). When Christians make a confession of sin to God, as He urges us to, He hears and acts accordingly with the comfort of absolution.

If we say, that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.\(^\text{14}\)

Likewise, God, in the midst of His people, is also listening to the proclamation of His preachers. They invoke His name in prayer (epiclesis) before ever getting near a pulpit. It is the better part of their preparation. They invoke His name again when they stand up to speak. When His people call upon Him, He is listening. When His preachers speak, as God Himself is speaking, He is listening.

**Summary**

This chapter serves to indicate that paracletic proclamation begins with God Himself. He is the initial and ultimate speaker in the communication of His Word. He may speak to people directly or indirectly; orally or in written form. When He questions, He does so in order to help. His presence and His Word serve to urge the unrepentant to turn to Him. He encourages the repentant to lead holy lives, look after one another, and to speak His Word, both the sternness of His Law and the comfort of His Gospel, to everyone.

Paracletic proclamation involves Paracletes. Jesus, the Paraclete, is the Advocate and Intercessor for those who believe in Him before the Father. The Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, is the Comforter. He is the active Helper sent for and given to Christians in ministry to people. He is the

\(^{14}\) John 1:8-9.
Helper when it comes to praying to God who hears the prayers of His children. Uniquely, in the divine dynamic of proclamation, God is simultaneously Speaker, Message, and Hearer.
CHAPTER IV
PARACLETIC PROCLAMATION AND
PUBLIC MINISTERS

The preceding chapter has identified God's primary role in every facet of proclamation. He is the Speaker, the Message, and the Hearer. It is also clear that while God certainly can directly communicate His Word and will to people, more often than not He speaks indirectly. God calls, authorizes, and enables individuals to speak the Gospel in His name to other people. In the Bible these were prophets, apostles, and evangelists. They were the initial receivers of His message, His paracletic proclamation. The purpose of this chapter is to indicate the continuation of paracletic proclamation by public ministers who are understood in this paper to be the same as those in "the pastoral office."

Those who are authorized to speak God's Word to assemblies of people today are usually identified as pastors, priests, or ministers. They occupy the Office of the Ministry and exercise the Office of the Keys, and Confession and Absolution. Part V in Luther's Small Catechism reads as follows:

Then the confessor shall say: "God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith. Amen."
Again he shall say: "Do you believe that this forgiveness is the forgiveness of God?"
Answer: "Yes, I do."
Then he shall say: "Be it done for you as you have believed. According to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Go in peace."

That liturgical form is presented catechetically in the Office of the Keys.

What is the Office of the Keys?
The Office of the Keys is that special authority which Christ has given to His church on earth to forgive the sins of repentant sinners, but to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant as long as they do not repent.

Where is this written?
This is what St. John the Evangelist writes in chapter twenty: The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive then, they are not forgiven." [John 20:22-23]

What do you believe according to the words?
I believe that when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command, in particular when they exclude openly unrepentant sinners from the Christian congregation and absolve those who repent of their sins and want to do better, this is just as valid and certain, even in heaven, as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us Himself.

Public ministers are also part of the spiritual priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:9). But they must be personally qualified for public ministry according to the criteria outlined in Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-11). Public ministers fill positions which are divinely established (Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Timothy 3:1; 5:17). They

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1Tappert, The Book of Concord, p.351.

are to be honored for their speaking God's Word (Hebrews 13:7). Public ministers are "stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Corinthians 4:1), namely, they are to preach the Gospel, administer the Sacraments, and forgive sins. Public ministers are men not women (1 Timothy 2:12; 1 Corinthians 14:34).

**Public Ministers as Hearers**

The role of a public minister, a preacher, does not begin with a minister's public proclamation. It begins by his listening to what God has to say as a dear child listens to his father. But herein lies the dilemma. Because of the Fall into sin, human hearing is not what it used to be. This includes public ministers. In Eden Eve listened to the devil. Then Adam listened to Eve. Ever since, humanity has had Old Adam's ears with audio reception that is faulty, inoperative, jammed, and even dangerous. After having miraculously fed thousands, Jesus says to His disciples who are concerned about what they are going to do for lunch, "And having ears, do you not hear?" (Mark 8:18).

The work of the Holy Spirit is to enable individuals to hear God's Word. He breaks through the primordial silence as well as the static caused by sin. Luther's explanation to The Third Article of the Creed indicates this.

I believe that by my own reason or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in true faith, just as he calls, gathers, enlightens, and
sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith."

First, the Holy Spirit enables hearing through the Gospel. Then He enables the speaking of the Gospel. Speaking of the Gospel follows hearing through the Gospel. Why? Because "faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17). Once hearing has happened, speaking can happen.

So public ministers are more than speakers. Preachers are hearers; hearers of God. God’s spokesmen begin like the boy Samuel. God calls. Maybe He even calls more than once. The first and proper response after having heard God is, "Speak, for Thy servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:10). Catherine Ziel bears this out when she writes,

Only when we preachers have heard can we begin to think about speaking. Indeed, it is probably fair to say that preaching’s aim is to enable the congregation to share in the preacher’s experience of hearing the text. Nor is this a question of content only. Hearing gives us not only something to say but at least hints about how it should be said.

Gospel hearing is the start of Gospel speaking. In Ezekiel’s visions of God "the word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel" (Ezekiel 1:3) and He says to him,

Son of man, take into your heart all My words which I shall speak to you, and listen closely."

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5Ezekiel 3:10.
How can preachers expect people to listen to the Word of God unless they themselves listen to it? On the mountain where Jesus was transfigured, God the Father does the talking and says to Peter, James, and John, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; hear Him" (Matthew 17:5)! In order to be a good preacher, the one who is to be speaking needs to be a good listener. Harold Brack underscores the point by writing,

We now come face to face with the question of whether the aim of preaching is good speaking or good listening. The answer, of course, is that the aim of preaching is to facilitate good listening to the gospel. A key question to be asked about any preaching event is not how well the preacher is speaking but how well the people are listening to the gospel. Are they where hearing the preached word as a potential revelation of God’s redeeming love for them? Is there an awareness of the emerging voice of God?

Now if preaching is going to encourage more active listening to the gospel, then that preaching needs to suggest that it has been motivated and inspired by what the preacher has been sharing, is hearing, and expects to hear in the gospel. If preaching is to become a genuine gospel listening experience for the congregation, then it must first become a genuine gospel listening experience for the preacher.

Worshipers soon recognize that this immediate experience of listening to the gospel emerges from earlier listening experiences of the preacher which have occurred in a broader context of listening to the gospel, the liturgical season, and life in the parish.6

This is not to say that the hearing ends once the speaking begins. Public ministers keep listening and learning right along with others even as the speaking is happening. As a hearer, the one who is speaking stands to be comforted by the same Gospel with which comfort is extended to others.

Paracletic listening precedes paracletic speaking. Harold Brack reiterates the point as follows:

This pastoral character of the listening continues in the preaching event itself and is accompanied with a prayerful petition that the Lord will so help us to hear the good news that it will become for us, now, the very word of life.

So, one might say that as we listen to the gospel with the congregation, even as we are preaching it, that we are engaged in a kind of intercessory or advocacy listening. Our intention in listening with them to the gospel is, for love’s sake, to assist them in entering into a right relationship with God and with their neighbors. So we are talking about an active, faithful, loving, hopeful, empathic listening to the Lord, through God’s Word, in the full expectation that God will come and save us. In addition, we are talking about an openness to the presence of the Spirit which recognizes that when we are gathered in worshipful listening to God’s Word the Spirit may come among us freeing tongues to speak and ears to hear. God may choose to bless our listening to the divine Word with divine presence.7

A proper homily by a public minister depends on and reflects one’s hearing. It begins with listening to Him who is the only Deity; to what He has said, what He now, says and the historical-grammatical way in which He says it. Therefore, public ministers listen to the liturgy which is Gottesdienst. It is God’s service to His people. He also listens to the hymnody. Therein, what God has said is repeated once more. Public ministers do well to also "listen" to the artistry (or lack of it) in the visible setting in which they preach. Public ministers cannot help but "listen" to the humanity which is before them and of which they are a part. Facial expressions and body language are there for the

7Ibid., pp.90-91.
seeing and the hearing. The more public ministers are listening, the more likely that the worship will be more meaningful for everyone concerned. Good comprehensive listening opens the way to good comprehensive speaking.

Public Ministers as Speakers

Only after having heard God does a public minister have something to say to others. After years of teaching His disciples, the risen Jesus stands before them and says, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you" (John 20:21). Public ministers are "earthen vessels" (2 Corinthians 4:7) with the treasure of the Gospel to pour out for others. In John 17, Jesus' paracletic prayer to the Father is on behalf of those whom He has chosen to carry on with His public preaching. Public ministers, like Paul, are each as Jesus says "a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name" (Acts 9:15).

Enthusiasm over God's selection as to whom His public ministers are is not always overwhelming. Even those chosen to be God's public speakers are sometimes reluctant. Moses is a case in point. On Mount Sinai, God spoke directly with Moses, identified Himself by name, and told Moses what he was to do and say. Moses' hesitancy and God's resolve are evident in the verbal exchange in Exodus 4:10-16.

Then Moses said to the Lord, "Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in time past, nor since Thou hast spoken to Thy servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." And the Lord said to him,
"Who has made man’s mouth? O who makes him dumb or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now then go, and I, even I, will be your mouth, and teach you what you are to say," But he said, "Please, Lord, now send the message by whomever Thou wilt." Then the anger of the Lord burned against Moses, and He said, "Is there not your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he speaks fluently. And moreover, behold, he is coming out to meet you; when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. And you are to speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I, even I, will be with your mouth and his mouth, and I will teach you what you are to do. Moreover, he shall speak for you to the people; and it shall come about that he shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be as God to him."

Isaiah regarded himself as doubly ruined when he saw the vision of God on His throne. He confesses that he is "a man of unclean lips . . . among a people of unclean lips" (Isaiah 6:5). God takes iniquity away from the prophet’s mouth, however (Isaiah 6:6), so that he may speak His Word.

Jeremiah thinks he is ineligible to be a public minister for two reasons. "Behold, I do not know how to speak, because I am a youth" (Jeremiah 1:6). But his plea for exemption or of disqualification carries no weight.

Then the Lord stretched out His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me, "Behold I have put My words in your mouth."

God’s action with Jeremiah corresponds to 2 Peter 1:21.

Peter writes,

For no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but by men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

Jonah, of course, had his own idea. When God tells him to go preach in the east, Jonah goes west. If Jonah would not open his mouth, God would appoint a larger mouth. Though the

"Jeremiah 1:9."
fish's mouth is immediately more responsive than Jonah's, it does serve to effect Jonah's coming around.

Public Ministers: Prayer Before Preaching

Public ministers, whose preaching is paracletic, ask God for help. Jonah (just mentioned above) did so from the stomach of a fish. In Jonah 2:2 and 9, he writes,

I called out of my distress to the Lord, and He answered me. I cried for help from the depth of sheol; Thou didst hear my voice. . . . . Salvation is from the Lord.

He listened more closely to the Lord the second time.

Fritz indicates the importance of preachers turning to the Lord in prayer when he says,

A preacher who teaches others to pray ought himself to make diligent use of prayer. If he realizes his own human insufficiency and God's willingness and promise to supply his needs, he will not neglect to ask God to grant His divine blessing upon the work of preaching. As a Christian the preacher is not essentially different from other Christians. He needs the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit for the right understanding and application of the Word of God; he must also battle against temptation on the part of his flesh, the world, and the devil and can resist only through the power of God.9

He concludes by saying,

Before the preacher enters the pulpit, he should offer a silent prayer, asking the Lord to put His Word into the preacher's own heart and upon his lips and open both the ears and the heart of the hearers. After leaving the pulpit, the preacher should thank the Lord for His divine assistance and pray that the Word which has been preached may bring forth much fruit in the life of those who heard it.10


10Ibid., p.11.
St. Augustine (354-430 A.D.), the Bishop of Hippo, makes note of the importance of prayer in his *De doctrina christiana*. In this manual on preaching, he indicates how public ministers must rely on prayer.

And so our Christian orator, while he says what is just, and holy, and good, does all he can to be heard with intelligence, with pleasure, and with obedience; and he need not doubt that if he succeed in this object, and so far as he succeeds, he will succeed more by piety in prayer than by gifts of oratory, and so ought to pray for himself, and for those he is about to address, before he attempts to speak.\(^{11}\)

Luther's sacristy prayer illustrates his perspective on prayer and himself as a public minister. It also serves as a model prayer for preachers today.

\[\text{O Lord God, dear Father in heaven, I am indeed unworthy of the office and ministry in which I am to make known thy glory and to nurture and to serve this congregation. But since thou hast appointed me to be a pastor and teacher, and the people are in need of the teaching and the instruction, O be thou my helper and let thy holy angels attend me. Then if thou art pleased to accomplish anything through me, to thy glory and not to mine or to the praise of men, grant me, out of thy pure grace and mercy, a right understanding of thy Word and that I may also diligently perform it.}^{12}\]

\[\text{O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, thou shepherd and bishop of our souls, send thy Holy Spirit that he may work with me, yea, that he may work in me to will and to do through thy divine strength according to thy good pleasure. Amen.}^{12}\]


Public ministers need to find out what to say (inventio). Prayer is essential to that end. Jesus encourages His disciples to pray in His farewell address when He says,

And whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.\(^1^3\)

Therefore, public ministers do well to pray that both they and their listeners will have understanding hearts and be able to discern both Law and Gospel. Along this line, 1 John 5:14 is reassuring. "And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."

Public Ministers as Paracletes

The previous chapter indicated the connection between paracletic proclamation and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, each as a Paraclete. Jesus, the Paraclete, is portrayed as the interceding Advocate for God’s people. He is the legal assistance for Christians in God the Father’s court of Law. There He is pleading the cases of those whose faith is in Him. The Holy Spirit is identified as the One sent to help Christians. He establishes faith, comforts with the Gospel, and helps Christians in relation to the rest of the world.

\(^1^3\text{John 14:13-14.}\)
Public ministers function as paracletes (small "p"), too. In their paracletic proclamation they

a. ask God the Father to send the Holy Spirit to
provide leadership and guidance as they keep
studying His Word for their own sake and for the
sake of the disciples (John 14:16);

b. are with those whom Christ has called (John 14:16);

c. having the Spirit of truth, also proclaim the truth
(John 14:17): "Jesus said, 'I am . . . the truth'
(John 14:6);

d. are sent from God by virtue of His divine call (John
14:26);

e. teach the full counsel of God (John 14:26);

f. remind Christians of what Jesus has said (John
14:26);

g. bear witness of Jesus Christ (John 15:26);

h. serve to the advantage of God's people (John 16:7);

i. preach sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8-
11);

j. guide disciples in the truth (John 16:13);

k. glorify Christ (John 16:14);

l. disclose what is of Christ to His followers (John
16:14);

m. prayerfully intercede on behalf of Christians to God
(1 John 2:1).
Public Ministers Exhort and Encourage

The preaching of public ministers is paracletic when their proclamation exhorts and encourages those being spoken to. Even by just "being there," whether at a person's bedside or in the sanctuary of the church, being there "for them" makes a difference if not for them then for their loved ones; if not for their loved ones then to the Lord. He calls His public ministers to be there (para) for His people like a shepherd is there for the sheep. Being there, public ministers recall (kalein) for people how God was there for them at Calvary and how the Lord still does not forsake His own on account of Christ. The commission and vocation of public ministers are to be on hand speaking the Word of God. Public ministers are the viva vox (living voice) of God for those who hear.

Public ministers need to be conscious of whom they are speaking to as they proclaim the Law of God and the Gospel of God. Are the people he is in the midst of believers in Christ or not? What are their needs? Are there any particular cultural or ethnic factors that need to be considered? Are the people young, old, married, single, male, female, clergy, laymen? Are they white collar, blue collar, the social upper crust, middle class, low income, professionals, students? Is this a particularly difficult time for someone right now? How can people practically apply what is going to be said? Will saying what must be said be enough, or will it help to put it
down in writing, too? Who is being addressed needs to be taken into account. It is, after all, for their benefit that public ministers speak. Who they speak for, in whose Name they speak, is constant. Who public ministers speak to is variable.

In Acts 2:14-42, Peter is speaking to an international audience of unbelievers. He is the indirect spokesman for God speaking directly to people for Him. The Holy Spirit paves the way for His Word to be understood. He works in the disciples. Then He temporarily eliminates the language barrier in effect since the tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9). Peter is not vague about to whom he is talking. More than half a dozen times he lets the people know at just whom he is leveling his double-barreled proclamation. It is to "you" he says with a raised voice. Without pulling any punches, Peter delivers Law-Gospel combinations. Three times he quotes from the Scriptures (Joel 2:28-32; Psalm 16:8-11; Psalm 110:1). After each quotation, the focus of attention is Jesus, God's attestation of Him, Jesus' death, and the responsibility of the people for what happened to Him. Ultimately, Peter says, their only hope is God's promise in the Gospel. The exhortation continues as Peter urges them to escape from those who are perverse and be saved. The result was the conversion of about 3,000 people.

Public ministers involved in mission work with paracletic proclamation are also in evidence in Acts 13:13-42.
The public minister in this instance is Paul. His audience consists of those assembled in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch on the Sabbath. The setting is more formal than the previous situation involving Peter. Paul begins by recounting the heritage of the people: Egypt, deliverance, conquest. Key figures are identified by name: Samuel, Saul, and David. David's descendant is Jesus whom John proclaimed but their rulers condemned. Jesus died, was buried, but God raised Him. Paul gives textual support, then, from Psalm 2:7, Isaiah 55:3, and Psalm 16:10. Then he is explicit and personal with the Gospel. He preaches, saying,

... that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.14

He concludes his proclamation by exhorting them with Scripture, this time Habakkuk 1:5.

Even though many more are present one week later with Gentiles there and both Paul and Barnabas preaching, the Jews repudiate the Gospel but many Gentiles are converted. The new believers celebrate while the paracletes are run out of town. But the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, was with all the ones who believed.

Much more is made of public ministers exhorting and encouraging believers than unbelievers in the Bible. The letter to the Hebrews is a case in point. Although its

authorship is indefinite, it seems highly unlikely that anyone other than a public minister would be so familiar with the details that are presented. More importantly, he writes as one doing what he urges. He is maintaining watch over the souls of those to whom he writes to keep them faithful in their faith. Basically, the entire letter is aimed at exhorting and encouraging fellow Christians. Hebrews 13:22 reads, "But I urge you, brethren, bear with this word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly." The apostle Peter writes that his first epistle is to serve the same purpose—the exhortation of Christians to remain faithful. In 1 Peter 5:12, he says, "I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!" Likewise, Jude says to those called and kept for Christ, "I felt it necessary to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith" (verse 3).

In fact, the ability to exhort and encourage is not an option for public ministers to consider. Rather, it is a qualification for the office. It is essential because it is linked to the central doctrine of salvation. Paul writes the following to Titus in 1:7-9:

For the overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.
When Paul writes his first letter to the Corinthians, in 14:3, he associates prophetic proclamation in the church with exhortation saying, "But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation." Public ministers, says Paul (including himself), speak to exhort.

For our exhortation does not come from error or impurity or by way of deceit; but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who examines our hearts.¹⁵

Purposes for public ministers exhorting and encouraging fellow believers in God’s gracious salvation in Christ through the Holy Spirit may be identified as falling into at least four different categories. First, public ministers speak to encourage Christians to keep growing in, standing firm, and contending for their faith. This is especially important when people are struggling, dispirited, and beginning to be lax. Often this is due to some sort of crisis, controversy, persecution, and/or threat. When Christians are troubled they need words of encouragement from public ministers (Hebrews, 1 Peter, Jude, and Acts 14:22). But public ministers can also do considerable good by following Barnabas’ example of paracletic preaching. When he saw how the congregation in Antioch was thriving and active with the means of grace, he began to encourage them without waiting for a crisis (Acts 11:23). Secondly, public ministers exhort Christians to simply get along with one another in their own congregation.

¹⁵¹ Thessalonians 2:3-4.
Unity and harmony in a congregation indicate Christian love, mutual concern, and a common purpose in Christ. This exhortation to get along with one another may be addressed to the whole congregation as well as to individuals like Paul does in his letter to the Philippians. Thirdly, public ministers are to exhort and encourage Christians with regard to their behavior. This applies to people's worship service (Romans 12:1) and a Christian's day-to-day living (Ephesians 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:1). Fourthly, public ministers are to exhort and encourage other public ministers in the area of spirituality (1 Timothy 2:1) and with regard to the shepherding of one's congregation.

Recognizing that there is not always a sharp distinction between exhorting/encouraging and comforting, it is interesting to note two things. The number of texts and the overall volume of those texts aimed at public ministers exhorting and encouraging Christians indicates how important it is. Also, written and oral exhortation and encouragement by public ministers are effective in generating more of the same.

Public Ministers Comfort

Public ministers, through paracletic proclamation, comfort God's people with God's news of salvation. Again, the ultimate source of the comfort is none other than God Himself (Isaiah 57:18). As Jesus says, "For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you"
Isaiah comforts the afflicted through proclamation (Isaiah 61:2). In the Septuagint version of Isaiah 40:1-2a, it is the priests, the public ministers, who are specifically addressed by the Lord to speak and comfort His people with the message of His forgiveness. Their proclamation carries the authority of God. Public ministers comfort God's people because that is precisely what God says His public ministers are to do.

If it may be said that words to exhort and encourage are aimed at people's minds, paracletic proclamation to comfort is directed to people's hearts. When a parishioner's feelings have been hurt, when a loved one or a close friend has died, when loneliness is closing in and a person is beginning to withdraw, when the shadow of death is seen as relentlessly closing in, not just any verbal Band-Aid will do. Public ministers, speaking from the heart to the heart with the personalized message of God's love in Christ, will be able to comfort and strengthen the broken and wounded hearts (2 Thessalonians 2:16-17) of God's people. The Scriptures, after all, were written by God's public ministers for the comfort of those whose hope is in God. His Word in the flesh is Jesus. His Word in print is a means through which the Holy Spirit works to convey and establish comfort.

Paul's paracletic proclamation to the Christians of Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) serves to effect and detail God's comfort. Paul's subject is the status of those
who have died in Christ. Jesus' death and resurrection are central. What He says is "by the word of the Lord" (verse 15). The Lord will return and all the faithful, both those having died already as well as those still living, will personally and eternally "be with the Lord" (verse 17). "Therefore comfort one another with these words," proclaims the apostle (verse 18). This comfort is both a present reality and a future hope because of faith.

In 2 Corinthians 1:3-7, Paul sets "affliction" and "comfort" in opposition to one another. The congregation had been rocked by crisis on top of crisis and by Paul's bone-jarring first letter. Paul is the apostle to the Corinthian church "by the will of God" (verse 1). Qualified to speak about affliction and comfort, even as God comforts him, he comforts the Corinthians so they can comfort each other with the comfort that "is abundant through Christ" (verse 5). Public ministers convey divine comfort through the proclamation of Christ and His sufferings (verse 5) and the comfort of a certain resurrection (verse 9).

Public Ministers' Message

Public ministers speak not on their own accord but in the name of the Lord. Public ministers are not free to preach whatever and however they like. Luther boiled it down to this: Nihil nisi Christi praedicantur (Nothing except Christ's is to be preached.).
Richard Caemmerer gives a more detailed recipe of what a public minister is to proclaim.

Jesus’ words (Luke 24:46-47) are a mandate to His disciples for all time, and they answer the perennial question of the preacher: "What must I say in order to preach the Gospel?" Note the list of ingredients:

1. Jesus of Nazareth, born in Bethlehem, a teacher in Galilee and Judea, crucified in Jerusalem, is the Messiah planned by God to redeem His people.

2. According to that same plan, announced in the Old Testament Scriptures, He rose from the dead and thus still lives and rules.

3. The story of His life, death, and resurrection is a message which His followers proclaimed to their world and to each other.

4. This message has turning and changing power, bringing the thrust of God’s own life to bear on those who hear it.

5. It has this power because it conveys the forgiveness of sins, which is the purpose of Christ’s death and resurrection.

Two other ingredients were explicit in the message already in the days of the apostles: this Christ is at once the man Jesus and the Son of the living God; and He will return in glory to reign forever.16

In the specific context of paracletic preaching, perhaps, Roger Humann’s synopsis is even more helpful.

To a large extent "exhortation" (παράκλησις/παρακάλεσις, Cp. Kittle, TDNT, V:179ff.) is the Biblical term which describes that pastoral admonition and consolation of the believer with which the FC deals in Art. VI as it speaks of the proper application of both Law and Gospel to the child of God. There is a twofold character to Biblical exhortation in which the imperative element ("to admonish"-Law) is always more or less plainly accompanied by the indicative ("to console"-Gospel), which corresponds to the twofold character of the believer who

is sinner and saint. Thus exhortation is distinguished from a mere moral appeal by a reference back to God's work of salvation as its presupposition and basis (Rom.12:1; 15:30; II Cor.10:1; Eph.4:1; I Thess.4:1). In a supreme sense exhortation means calling the Lord to the believer's side for his consolation and help (Rom.15:4; Col.2:2; II Thess.2:16f.; Heb.6:18).

Thus exhortation is speech (Law and Gospel) addressed to the believer (simul justus et peccator) which is intended to help him live out his Christian life in conformity to God's expressed will (10 Commandments). As such it recognizes that the real hearer is the new man (This is what sets preaching to a Christian congregation apart from missionary preaching where the real hearer is unregenerate!) - the true self (ἐγώ) - as a result of the new birth which God has effected, but that this hearer still has the old nature clinging to him. The Holy Spirit uses the Law to accuse and condemn, and to instruct; He uses the Gospel to renew the heart and to give the power which enables the believer to begin to do God's will and to walk in the new life. (FC VI:10-13!)

In summary: exhortation is not simply urging, "Let us try harder to be better Christians!" Rather it roots this urging in the fact that we are Christian, and this as a result of God's gracious action in Christ. At the same time it recognizes the need of such urging because of the Old Adam. Through exhortation the Holy Spirit puts down the old man and builds up and enables the new.17

Summary

In summation, the observation made in this chapter is that public ministers proclaim the Word of God by virtue of divine call into the Office of the Ministry. Public ministers begin by carefully listening to and searching the Word of God rather than preaching it. Their paracletic speaking is first to God in prayer asking for understanding and discernment for themselves and for whoever hears them. Though public ministers are not expressly referred to as paracletes in

Scripture, they do function in many respects like Christ and the Holy Spirit in their proclamation. Paracletic proclamation by public ministers entails their exhortation and encouragement of unbelievers and believers, and words of comfort for the penitent. The message of public ministers which does this is the Gospel of the forgiveness of sins and salvation as God's gift in Christ Jesus, crucified, risen, and received through faith.
CHAPTER V
PARACLETIC PROCLAMATION AND THE
LAY PEOPLE OF A CONGREGATION

Chapter Four emphasized the function of public ministers, those in "the pastoral office," in the proclamation process. Public ministers have the authority to proclaim in public because of the Office of the Ministry which they have by way of a divine call through the Church. Their initial and on-going role is to serve as humble hearers of God. They need the ongoing help of the Holy Spirit in order to proceed. They also listen circumspectly. They listen to Deity (text), liturgy, hymnody, artistry, and humanity (context). Public ministers begin by talking with God before they talk with people. It is a running conversation with both, however. As such, their paracletic proclamation serves to put them in positions of paracletes. They plead their people's case to the Lord (vertical). They exhort and encourage whoever is listening to them (horizontal) as the *viva vox*, the living voice, of God. With paracletic proclamation, they comfort Christians with a heart to heart (depth) personalized message. That message is the consoling help of the Gospel of the crucified and risen Jesus Christ.
The communication process, which God initiates, is God's sin-grace, Law-Gospel oriented message of His Word. On the receiving end of that message is His targeted audience... the human race. God's ordinary means for getting His message to people is to speak His Word through people. Public ministers are to carry out that function. But the sequence of paracletic proclamation begun by God is not over when the preacher says, "Amen!" The proclamation is to be continued by those who have heard it. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the role of the congregation in paracletic proclamation.

The local congregation is understood here as being a gathering of Christians who live in a given place. They assemble around the Gospel of God, including the Sacraments, in the exercise of the Office of the Keys. As already indicated in Chapter Four, the basis for assembly is John 20:20-23. Accordingly, the purpose of local congregations is the proclamation of the Gospel which includes the administration of the Sacraments.

The Lay People of a Congregation as Hearers

The initial role of the people in a congregation is the same as that of their public minister. A congregation of Christians is a congregation of hearers. They are people who have heard and continue to hear. "Faith comes from hearing," writes St. Paul, "and hearing by the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17). The common bond of the members of a Christian
congregation is faith in the Lord. Fearing and loving Him, the people of Christian congregations do their best to remember and live by "The Hearer's Commandment," and Lutherans recall Luther's explanation.

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."
What does this mean?
Answer: We should fear and love God, and so we should not despise his Word and the preaching of the same, but deem it holy and gladly hear and learn it.1

At the foot of Mt. Sinai God congregates His people for a purpose. Exodus 19:9 reads as follows:

And the Lord also said to Moses, "Behold I shall come to you in a thick cloud, in order that the people may hear when I speak with you, . . .

Four decades later as they listen to Moses speaking for the Lord, they are reminded of the role God called them to fill.

Remember the day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb, when the Lord said to me, "Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children."2

At Mount Sinai the congregation was in part hearing God speak directly. "He let you hear His voice," Moses points out to them, "to discipline you" (Deuteronomy 4:36). But more often than not, God's people were hearing indirectly, that is, listening to Him through His public ministers, His prophets.

People were to hear God directly, again, however. At the age of twelve, Jesus is in the temple. "And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers" (Luke

2Deuteronomy 4:10.
2:47). In Luke 4:16-30, the assembly in the synagogue hears Jesus read and explain Isaiah 61:1. They did not like what they heard. But at least they heard. From large outdoor gatherings by the sea (Luke 5:1-3) to small familial settings such as the home of Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42), people paused so that they could be "listening to the Lord's word" (Luke 10:39). As Jesus explains to Martha, doing so is really the only thing that is really necessary (verse 42). In fact, listening to the Word of God is a characteristic of God's people. Jesus says in John 8:47, "He who is of God hears the words of God." The Good Shepherd who stands near by and watches over His flock says of them, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10:27).

For the time being, the hearing done by Christian congregations is indirect hearing. God's direct revelation of His New Testament to apostles and evangelists is read and proclaimed by His public ministers for people to hear. This does not alter the fact what a congregation hears when the proclamation is "right" is no less in its content and effectiveness than if they had heard it directly from God Himself. Paul acknowledges that to the congregation of the Thessalonians in 2:13 when he writes,

And for this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received from us the word of God's message, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.
Luther’s explanation of John 20:22-23 in conjunction with the Office of the Keys bears this out, too. As presented in the previous chapter, when public ministers exclude or absolve members of their congregations what the congregation hears "is just as valid and certain . . . as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us Himself." Hearing Christ indirectly through His public ministers is a common and continuous format for communication within congregations. Christian congregations can rightly expect this type of speaking and hearing to keep happening until the Son of Man returns in full glory. Then all people will hear from Him in person (Matthew 25:31-46).

Just like with public ministers, the hearing of people in Christian congregations is not always what it should be. Whose ears do not have Old Adam’s fingers in them? The Lord tells Isaiah to indicate to people that their hearing is hardening. His words in Isaiah 6:9-10 are as follows:

> And He said, "Go, and tell this people: Keep on listening, but do not perceive, keep on looking, but do not understand. Render the hearts of this people insensitive, their ears dull, and eyes dim, lest they see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and repent and be healed."

The Lord repeats what He says to and through Isaiah to His own disciples in Matthew 13:13-15. Jesus had just spoken the "Parable of the Sower" to large crowds. His explanation of the parable for His disciples and those with them according to

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³Small Catechism, p.220.
the subsequent verses reveals three things that are constant: a Sower who is generous, Seed that is potent and in abundance, and hearers who all have dirty ears. Paul’s preaching experience with the Jews in Rome leads him to quote the same Isaiah 6 passage when those present do not agree with one another after Paul speaks to them concerning Jesus (Acts 28:23-28). The writer to the Hebrews sums it up when he says in 5:11, "Concerning Him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing." Again, however, while people may turn a deaf ear to the Word of the Lord now, eventually, ultimately, on Judgment Day they will hear when the Lord speaks.

There are certainly other factors that affect congregations’ hearing. The crying baby, the circling wasp, the previous late night outing, or the entrance of the big unfamiliar man with the beard and the black leather jacket, pants, and boots. He arrived on his Harley with his girlfriend ten minutes after the service started and is about to sit in the third pew from the front just beside the elderly, and soon-to-be-fainting, Mrs. Steif. These types of things may not immediately contribute to a congregation’s effective hearing of anything. These, and countless other such things, serve as distractions to hearing for public ministers and congregations alike. Indeed, such diversions must be recognized instead of ignored because a congregation’s role begins with their hearing.
The Lay People of a Congregation as Speakers

It would not be too surprising, perhaps, to find proclamation to be perceived as something that preachers do while congregations passively sit by. Whether the Church at large or the world needs more unassertive and unresponsive Christians is doubtful, however. Having heard, and continuing to hear the proclaimed Word of God, His people now have something, Someone, to talk to and to talk about.

When Moses went up onto Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:3-8) God told him what to say to His people as they assembled at the foot of the mountain. Moses went down and relayed the message. “And all the people answered together and said, ‘All that the Lord has spoken we will do!’” (verse 8). When Moses recounts God’s words to the people again, they reply again, "All the words which the Lord has spoken we will do!" (Exodus 24:3). Having heard the Word of God, the people of God respond with words of their own. The pages that follow will bear this our further.

The Lay People of a Congregation Pray for Help

Because the Lord is God and because of what He can do, people who believe in Him pray to Him. Their "Hosanna!" is directed to Him. The Lord has the ability to save and His people know it. What God has initiated, as it turns out, is a dialogue. He speaks. People listen. In faith, people speak back to Him. Then He listens to them. Perpetual
paracletic prayer is persistently part of paracletic proclamation. God’s invitation and promise are clear. "And call on Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me" (Psalm 50:15). People in congregations call on Him because they believe in the One whom public ministers proclaim (Romans 10:13-14). Part of the proclamation they hear is the urging for them to pray (1 Timothy 2:1).

A portion of proclamation is the paracletic prayer of those who believe in Jesus. In Capernaum a centurion urges Jesus to help his suffering servant (Matthew 8:5). A leper in Galilee pleads for his own healing (Mark 1:40). In the region of Decapolis, the friends of a deaf man ask Jesus what their speech-impeded companion cannot say for himself (Mark 7:31-32). Others bring a blind man to Jesus urging Him to heal him (Mark 8:22).

When Christians perceive themselves or others to be in danger, at risk, or in need of help, paracletic proclamation in the form of prayer is a real way for them to be of assistance. Luther’s "Morning Prayer" conveys a sense of appreciation for divine help already rendered as well as the ongoing need for it.

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy
angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen."

A prayer "FOR THE AFFLICTED AND DISTRESSED" is one among many for Christians to take advantage of as they remember others in need.

Almighty and everlasting God, the consolation of the sorrowful and the strength of the weak, may the prayers of those who in any tribulation or distress cry to you graciously come before you, so that in all their necessities they may mark and receive your manifold help and comfort; through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

"The Litany" is a series of supplications and responses and is an example of paracletic proclamation as prayer that is intended for corporate worship. The people pray for mercy, to be heard, to be spared, to be delivered, and to be helped. The litany of concerns is extensive. The dangers include spiritual, physical, political, and natural disasters. God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are addressed. Prayer is for the overall welfare and victory of the Church. Pastors, ministers, and the erring are included. Specific request is made "To raise those that fall and to strengthen those that stand; and to comfort and help the weakhearted and the distressed: . . . To watch over and help all who are in danger, necessity, and tribulation."

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"Ibid., pp.30-31.


"Ibid., pp.279-287.

"Ibid., pp.281-282.
The Lay People of a Congregation as Paracletes

If public ministers of congregations may function as small "p" paracletes, is it possible that the others in the congregation may be paracletes, too? The answer is "yes" but in a somewhat different sense. Whereas public ministers serve in a public capacity on behalf of a congregation in the application of the Office of the Ministry, lay members of a congregation serve in a more individual, personal, and private way. Still, members of the laity are no more independent from the rest of the congregation than public ministers. The members of a congregation are diverse yet are commonly united; united but individually diverse (1 Corinthians 12:12).

It may be said that while lay people are never specifically referred to as "paracletes" in Scripture, they may basically perform similar functions as members of the universal priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:9). They properly function as extensions of the Office of the Ministry even though they themselves are not in that office. Still, in their paracletic proclamation they

a. may pray that God sends the Holy Spirit for the sake of the disciples to lead and guide both public ministers and lay people alike in studying the Word (John 14:16);

b. may certainly be with and stand by those whom Christ has called to help and comfort them (John 14:16);

c. may proclaim God's truth in Jesus (John 14:17);
d. are also called by God (John 14:26);

e. may teach (again, noting the limitations indicated earlier) (John 14:26);

f. remind one another of Jesus' words (John 14:26);

g. rightly bear witness of Jesus Christ (John 15:26);

h. serve to benefit other Christians (John 16:7);

i. rightly talk about sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8-11);

j. guide other believers in the truth (John 16:13);

k. glorify Christ (John 16:14);

l. tell of Christ to other Christians (John 16:14);

m. pray on behalf of others (1 John 2:1).

The lay people of a congregation do effective paracletic proclamation when they serve as advocates for and helpers of other Christians, especially those within the same congregation.

The Lay People of a Congregation Exhort and Encourage

Paracletic proclamation by the lay people of a congregation continues as they express words of exhortation and encouragement. Laymen "being there" for others is equally as important as the presence of public ministers. Public ministers may genuinely want to "be there" for people. But they are also supposed to "be there" because they are public ministers. The presence of lay people may be perceived differently. Presumably they do not have to "be there." Therefore, they must "be there" because they want to "be
there." Indeed, God does call on His people to "be there" (para) for one another in order to show support and to say (kalein) things that urge and encourage with a perspective on the cross of Jesus Christ. God can just as readily communicate through the voices of lay people in more private settings as He can through the voices of public ministers in corporate, public settings.

Lay people, in fact, may well have certain advantages that public ministers may not always have. Lay people, more often than not, are speaking to individuals one to one or to a few people at a time. This significantly reduces the breadth of diversity among hearers that public ministers must deal with. All hearers are still unique with their own background, concerns, and needs which every speaker does well to try to identify. But the sheer lack of great numbers at one time allows for an even more personal paracletic proclamation. What is heard from the pulpit, the altar, and the baptismal font may now be spoken over the phone, at a kitchen table, and in a letter. Believing in Him who has been and continues to be proclaimed to them, lay people have Someone to talk about . . . and to talk for. Martin Marty writes,

The test of the message and the "Amen!" is in the lives lived. The people who heard and believed did not thereby stop being sinners. They did not get a lifetime dose of gospel. They did not now have all the facts on which to act. They had instead been fed for this day, this week. They have had the chance to participate in recognizing the presence of God in the Word of divine presence. There has
been enough nurture to carry them, fallible mortals, until the next announcement of grace.8

Paracletic proclamation by the lay people of a congregation focuses on others already within the congregation. That is certainly not to say that lay people are not to be speaking of Jesus to those who are not Christians. Proclamation by lay people to unbelievers is not paracletic in the sense of parakaleō/paraklēsis being directly associated in Scripture with proclamation by lay people to unbelievers. Lay people, in fact, may be more effective than public ministers in speaking with unbelievers. Such proclamation can be described as paracletic since this proclamation by lay people is the work of the Holy Spirit (the Paraclete).

According to 1 Thessalonians 4:18, the paracletic proclamation by lay people is to be to "one another." Paul reiterates the point again in 5:1, saying, "Therefore encourage one another, and build up on another, just as you also are doing." Paracletic proclamation by lay people within their own congregation is as necessary on an on-going daily basis as one spouse's, "I love you," is to the other. In Hebrews 3:13, the Author says, "But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called 'Today,' lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." That encouragement may especially focus on worship (Hebrews 10:25)

as well as other aspects of Christian living (Romans 12:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:1; Ephesians 4:1) with the aim of preserving spiritual unity (Ephesians 4:3; Philippians 2:1-2). It is also a matter of earnestly contending for the faith (Jude 3). Paracletic proclamation is inseparably linked to salvation by grace through faith. The objective of such proclamation by the lay people of a congregation is to build up one another and, in effect, build up the congregation in Christ (Philippians 2:1). Richard Caemmerer makes the following contribution:

There is one thing in the world that contributes to that building up: the remembrance, applied and real, of Jesus Christ suffering, dying, and rising so that the listener be rescued from death and sent out on the tasks that God gives him. As the hearer sits in the pew, he is already engaged in such a task, namely, of sharing the Word of God to the end of common energy and consecration. As the preacher preaches to the congregation, he is not simply sowing the seed of the Gospel on the soil of the human heart, but he is filling seedbags and overseeing many sowers at work. The more the better.9

The Lay People of a Congregation Comfort

When the lay people of a congregation express sympathy, compassion, show kindness, and comfort one another in Christ, paracletic proclamation is taking place. Paul writes in Romans 2:13, "For not the hearers of the Law are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified." James says, "But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves" (James 1:22) . . . "not having

become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer" (James 1:25). God’s comfort has taken definitive form in Jesus Christ crucified, risen, and proclaimed to lay people for their comfort. Having the comfort of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their veins, the lay people are the universal donors to the spiritually weak and anemic. Will they share? Oh, positive!

"'Comfort, o comfort My people,' says your God. 'Speak kindly’" (Isaiah 40:1). To the elderly, the anxious, the troubled, the traumatized, God’s people can "comfort all who mourn" (Isaiah 61:2) with paracletic proclamation. Based on 2 Corinthians 1:3-7, lay people have affliction in common and comfort from God in common. He comforts "so that we may be able to comfort . . . ."

It may be that some lay people are afraid to express themselves through paracletic proclamation. They may remember those who, in trying to "help" Job, did more harm than good. So, perhaps, they are timorous because of the Temanite, do not want to come up short because of the Shuhite, and would just as soon pass on saying much because of the Naamathite. But a congregation is a communion of saints, a mutual support network of believers. Though not to be taken in a sense of isolationism or narrow sectarianism, the lay people of a congregation are together in a congregation for the sake of reassuring one another. A congregation is ekklēsia (ekklēsia) so that it may convey paraklēsis (para-klēsis). Richard Caemmerer puts it this way,
A major gift of the Holy spirit, whose παράκλησις, or "oncalling," is the Spirit's nurture of the church, to His people is that some of them—and all of them should earnestly desire the gift—have the gift of "speaking out" or prophecy (1 Cor.14.39), and St. Paul regards this the great purpose of the Spirit's παράκλησις that we might convey that παράκλησις also to others—but it is always παράκλησις, oncalling, in Christ (2 Cor.1).10

The Message of the Lay People of a Congregation

The message of lay people is also the message of public ministers which is also the message of God. The breath of God that fills the sails of public ministers is the same breath that moves lay people. Paul expresses it to the Thessalonians in 4:13-18 of his first letter to them. Much of it is a paracletic paradox. The message is a life and death message. It is about the living and the dead, the believing and the unbelieving, hope and grief (verse 13). The message focuses on Jesus, divine and human, crucified, risen, returning, and faith in Him (verse 14). The words are spoken by people. But the basis for what is said is "word of the Lord" that touches our past, present, and future (verse 15). The message of the laity is about a glorious resurrection reveille for those asleep in Christ (verse 16). The message is of the getting back together of all believers, leaving this world for good, and being with the Lord always (verse 17).

Summary

This chapter emphasizes the involvement of lay people in paracletic proclamation. Like public ministers, lay people are hearers of God's Word. Their paracletic proclamation begins with prayer for help from God on behalf of any and all in need including public ministers as well as themselves. This paracletic proclamation in prayer may be either in a corporate or an individual setting. Though lay people may not be referred to as paracletes in Scripture, lay people may be thought of as such since they function as advocates and helpers for members of a congregation and others. While lay people do not occupy the Office of the Ministry for individual paracletic proclamation in formal, official, and public settings, God does urge lay people to exhort, encourage, and comfort others within the congregation informally, casually, and privately. Paracletic proclamation for lay people means "being there" for one another with the Word of God focusing on who Jesus is, what He has done, and is going to do, and what that means for them and for every Christian.
CHAPTER VI
LANGUAGE AND PARACLETIC PROCLAMATION

The previous chapter took note of the role that the lay people of a congregation have in paracletic proclamation. Prayer plays an integral part in both their corporate and individual proclamation. Lay people function like paracletes specializing in individual and informal service. "Being there" for others of the congregation when needed with God's Word in Jesus Christ and His salvation is typical paracletic proclamation by lay people.

This chapter deals with the language of what has been identified as paracletic proclamation. The aim is to show the nature and characteristics of the paracletic proclamation of the Gospel.

Language for Proclamation

Language is a body of words. Their forms, their sounds, and their structures are what combine to make speech what it is. Words are to language what notes are to music. Language has purpose and intention. One way or another, language affects people. Much of language has to do with perception. We hear. Then, we attach meaning to what we hear. Language is sensory perception by the ear that is interpreted by a
person's heart, soul, and mind. The message that comes in is filtered and colored according to perception. Perception influences language and language influences perception. When language changes, it needs to be learned over again. The currency of language is words, words that differ in value and in meaning from person to person. The language of proclamation is this kind of language. Buttrick writes,

Sermons intend to do. Preaching never talks about things in a flat, detached, nothing-is-at-stake manner. No, the language of preaching, like the language of scripture (much of which is also preaching), is performative; it is a language intending to do. Of course, sermons can be designed to do many things . . . Every, sermon will be doing something in congregational consciousness . . . we must ask of each particular sermon, What is the language trying to do?1

A paracletic style of proclamation involves language that communicates what parakaleō/paraklesis mean. This type of language asks to/for help, exhorts and encourages, and gives comfort.

Language that Asks for Help

Paracletic proclamation is made up, in part, of language that asks for help and asks to help. This is language that invites a response. When the response happens as oral communication, dialogue occurs and the language takes on the character of a litany. The asking of questions does not have to be for the purpose of gaining information. Asking for help can allow for joint participation in the proclamation. So,

asking for help can be, in effect, asking that gives help. Asking for help and asking to help encourages response, dialogue, discussion, and conversation involving who is known and what is understood: Jesus Christ and salvation. Floyd Bresee writes,

> We learn most and come closest through dialogue. Communication research persistently teaches that there must be two-way communication—feedback—if there is to be maximum comprehension, acceptance, and internalization. But not only does dialogue improve our comprehension of content; we understand others and even ourselves better after we have shared our ideas and feelings.

Preaching must always use the dialogic principle. Dialogue occurs when each participant both talks and listens. Dialogic preaching occurs when preachers talk to their people only after they have listened to them. When they have heard their hurts, felt their frustrations, and attempted to walk in their shoes, then their sermons ask those questions and seek those answers that meet their listener’s needs.²

Paracletic proclamation involves the language of prayer as well as prayer-like and prayerful language. It is not language that demands. It is language that appeals. This is a language of devout spiritual communion. It is the language of a centurion with a paralysed servant (Matthew 8:5). It is the earnest pleading of a father concerned about his dying child (Mark 5:23). This is language that asks for help from Christ and eagerly listens for what He has to say.

Christ also asks questions of people. (At the same time, He is the answer.) But God’s Word of salvation goes beyond the form of language to take on human form. He effects

salvation through incarnation. As God and man, He makes Himself available to be talked to, talked with, and talked over.

Language that Exhorts and Encourages

Language that exhorts and encourages is also an aspect of paracletic proclamation. The Holy Spirit uses this language through the Word to persuade, to urge on, to hearten, and to inspire. This is diplomatic (though not in a negative political sense) language (2 Corinthians 5:20). Therefore as ambassadorial language, it is authoritative language (Titus 2:15) of the highest order. This is the language of the apostles that is centered on Jesus Christ while oriented around and sensitive to whoever is listening. This is the bold language of Paul (1 Thessalonians 2:2-3), Peter (Acts 2:38-39), and John the Baptist (Luke 3:18). It is a language suited for conveying the grace of God (1 Peter 5:12). Paracletic language that exhorts and encourages has the effect of inspiring morale and drawing the faithful together in Christ (Philippians 2:1-2).

The language of paracletic proclamation need not be wearisome. It can be borne with because it is tolerable and admissible (Hebrews 13:22). Paracletic proclamation involves a fashion of language that clothes the message with appropriate words (Elocutio); words that people can grasp, hold on to, and understand even when the text seems beyond
grasp. Francis Rossow denotes this when he speaks in terms of a "Gospel-handle."

What is a "Gospel-handle"? A "Gospel-handle" involves the selection from a Biblical sermon text of a word (or words) which in itself contains no Gospel but which is used as an approach, transition, or handle to an account of the Gospel outside the text. Often the Gospel-handle is a prominent expression in the Biblical sermon text which stands out in the listener’s memory, perhaps because of its unusualness or repetition. The preacher, then, exploits that word, using the listener’s consciousness of the word and nudging him toward the Gospel. He takes the listener "where he’s at" to get at the Gospel. Thus the use of a Gospel-handle need not be contrived; if anything, it is a "natural" transition to the Gospel in that it gets to the Gospel via a bridge already built into the listener’s mind. Insofar as the word or words used are from the text, the practice is textual, but insofar as an account of the Gospel employed is outside the text, the practice is non-textual.

Paracletic language that exhorts and encourages is next of kin kind of language (1 Timothy 5:1-2), fatherly language (1 Thessalonians 2:11-12). It is patient and instructive (2 Timothy 4:12), practical and advisory (Titus 2:15). Exhortive and encouraging language involves talking about what is sensible (Titus 2:6), mutually edifying (1 Thessalonians 5:11; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4), and is done on a regular and frequent basis (Hebrews 3:13). This is the language of worship (Hebrews 10:25), gift-giving (Romans 12:6-8), and prophecy (1 Corinthians 14:3). It is the need-meeting, relevant language of faith (Acts 11:23-24). Such proclamation as this effects rejoicing by giving people something, Someone, to rejoice about (Acts 15:31). To quote Adolf von Schlatter again,

"there is nothing sharp, polemical, or critical" in paracletic language.

**Language that Comforts**

The language of paracletic proclamation also serves to comfort. This is the kind of language that is used in establishing, maintaining, and building up relationships. Paracletic proclamation is a kind of speech where the words carry emotional significance; the advantages of being in one another's company are brought out; and, guidelines and freedoms are clearly stated and mutually understood. It is familial (Genesis 24:67), brotherly (Genesis 50:21), spousal (2 Samuel 12:24), friendly (Job 42:11), servant-like (Isaiah 61:1), and parental (Hebrews 12:5) language. Paracletic proclamation that comforts has heart. It is sincere. Paracletic proclamation can be a heart to heart talk with God. Or, it can be a heart to heart talk with people. The heart of God is the heart of the text and so seeks to be in human hearts. Thus, those who want to speak in order to comfort must have their hearts in it. Paracletic proclamation is kindly proclamation that touches the heart (Genesis 50:21). It is treatment for the heartsick and the broken-hearted (Psalm 69:20). This language that comforts Christian hearts.
is the language of Christ as God's promised comfort (Isaiah 57:18; 51:12) and salvation for them.

Paracletic proclamation that comforts involves "being there" and saying the right thing in a meaningful way. It can even mean being there and sympathetically listening (Job 21:2), understanding, and remembering. Paracletic proclamation is comforting because it is the language of the Good Shepherd who walks alongside. He is close and He has shared the same experiences as those whom He escorts (Psalm 23:4). These two things, closeness and shared experiences, factor into what Fred Craddock calls "overhearing."

. . . my present proposal is that there is a method of appropriating and communicating Scripture that preserves the distance from the text necessary to its own integrity as an historical document and the participation in the text necessary to its faith and life function as the Scripture of the Church today. That method is overhearing. Overhearing Scripture, as with music or drama or a good book, owes most of its power to these two factors: distance (I am an anonymous listener, reader, viewer, unrelated to the event) and participation (I am drawn in by identification with persons and conditions within the event). He explains what he means by distance as follows:

Because the term and idea of distance may need rehabilitation I have urged that we think of distance as that quality in a communicative event that preserves invaluable benefits for the message and for the listener. For the message, distance preserves its integrity as a word that has experience prior to and apart from me as a listener. In other words, the distance between the message and the listener conveys the sense of the substantive nature and independence of the message

qualities that add to rather than detract from the persuasive and attention-drawing power of the message.6

Participation, to Craddock is

... free participation on the part of the hearer in the issues, the crises, the decisions, the judgment, and the promise of the message. Participation means the listener overcomes the distance, not because the speaker 'applied' everything, but because the listener identified with experiences and thoughts related in the message that were analogous to his own. The fundamental presupposition operative here is the general similarity of human experiences.7

Comforting paracletic proclamation is sensitive and sensory. It is audio when it employs spoken words (Psalm 119:52). It is visual when it picks up on body language, gives consideration to one's presentation of one's self to others, and takes into account circumstances and setting. It may also utilize taste, smell, and touch by using other means such as gifts of food and drink (Genesis 14:17-20) in order to make the most of the opportunity at hand. In this way, it is proclamation that anticipates as well as responds. An ounce of congratulatory comfort, one might say, is worth a pound of sympathy after the fact.

Language in paracletic proclamation that comforts is the language of hope (Psalm 71:21), reassurance (Psalm 86:17), and calming (Isaiah 54:11). This language has strength (Hebrews 6:18) while it is also loving and gracious (1 Thessalonians 2:16-17).

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6Ibid., p.121.
7Ibid., p.123.
Summary

The "what" of paracletic proclamation (asking for help, exhorting and encouraging, comforting) influences the "how" of paracletic proclamation (language). Paracletic proclamation, both in content and form, is part of the language of God and therefore His people. Because paracletic proclamation is God's Word it is effective. It poses questions, gives answers, and opens the way for dialogue as it stimulates and engages participation. This is also priestly language, intercessory language, and confessional (also Confessional) language. It teaches and informs about Christ and His salvation. Whether direct or indirect, written or oral, this language speaks kindly with a reason. It gives forgiveness of sins from God. It is understandable, impressive, memorable, respectable, supportive, caring, and incarnationally down to earth.

Paracletic proclamation is an official language of God. It interacts and is compatible with people, music, liturgy, and art. It is fixed in its content of Law and Gospel. Yet it is fluid to the circumstances of the moment. Relying on Scripture, it is heart rending and heart mending. It is specific language. It is faith language. It is anticipative and responsive language. It is language for use in private. It is language for use in public. It is language for individuals. It is language for groups. It is language for pastors. It is language for lay people. The language of
paracletic proclamation is language for the Church; and, a language of the Church.
CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study has been to address the question, What is the nature of parakaleō/paraklēsis in proclamation? The thesis is that these terms, in part, define and describe proclamation.

First of all, proclamation is defined in this study in the following way. It consists of

a. the divinely authorized expression of Scripture;
b. the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins;
c. being directed to one or more people;
d. pure, plain, and understandable language;
e. coming directly from God (extraordinary) or indirectly from God by way of means and conveyed by His designated representatives (ordinary) who, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, give careful study to and base what they say on Scripture;
f. emphasizing faith and the living of that faith.

A closer look at parakaleō/paraklēsis (hence, paracletic) as proclamation reveals that these involve a meaning that is three dimensional. Paracletic proclamation has to do with asking to/for help (height), extending exhortation and encouragement (breadth), as well as giving comfort (depth).

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Paracletic proclamation is inseparably connected to Jesus Christ and the salvation He has earned and gives. This proclamation involves God, public ministers, and lay people in an elementary communication triad of speaker, hearer, and message.

The study of the nature of paracletic proclamation and God serves to identify Him as uniquely being the Speaker, the Hearer, and the Message. He is Source, Object, and Content. He is the Beginning, the End, and the Middle. Jesus is the Alpha, the Omega, and the Xi of paracletic proclamation. When God speaks paracletically, even when He asks questions, His intention is to help. This is further evidenced by the title "Paraclete" ascribed to Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Jesus, the Paraclete, is the Advocate of believers before the heavenly Father. The Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, is the Comforter who helps people in regard to prayer, the correct understanding of Scripture, and dealing with the world by calling their attention to sin, and Jesus and the Gospel of forgiveness. God urges unbelievers to repent and encourages believers to keep being faithful. He offers, gives, and is the ultimate comfort for people. That comfort is His Word in the flesh. It is Himself and and His Gospel of forgiveness.

The nature of paracletic proclamation is also demonstrated in its relationship to the public minister. Paracletic proclamation in public service is dependent upon divine call into the Office of the Ministry. But public
ministers are careful hearers of God's proclamation first. The Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, initially and continually enables the hearing to happen through the Gospel. Paracletic proclamation by public ministers includes prayer. Paracletic prayer is initial evidence that public ministers may be considered as paracletes. Their ongoing proclamation in Jesus' name bears that out. Paracletic proclamation by public ministers involves both missions and nurture. But the bulk of paracletic freight weighs in on the side of proclamation that exhorts and encourages those who already are believers in Christ on the basis of given Scriptural text(s). A public minister must be able to encourage and comfort as a function of this office since paracletic proclamation emphasizes salvation by grace through faith in Christ. Hence, paracletic proclamation by public ministers looks at the past, the present, and the future in the light of Jesus Christ, salvation, and faith within the total context of Scripture. That forms the message which is then tailored to suit the audience at hand.

The nature of paracletic proclamation continues to be borne out in its connection with the lay people of a Christian congregation. Lay people begin as hearers of God's proclamation just like public ministers. Both lay people and public ministers share the common ground of being part of the universal priesthood of believers that comes from hearing the Gospel of Christ. Prayer is a basic part of paracletic
proclamation by lay people, too. Paracletic proclamation by lay people allows for lay people to be considered as paracletes as much as public ministers. But the nature of such proclamation by lay people is distinctly more private, casual, and informal than the generally public nature of the Office of the Ministry. Paracletic proclamation by lay people is exhortation, encouragement, and comfort in Christ from one Christian to another. It involves lay people "being there" as support for one another with words that center on Jesus Christ, who He is, what He has done, what He will do, and what that means for them then and there.

The nature of the language of paracletic proclamation is influenced by what paracletic proclamation intends to do. Its three dimensional purpose is to ask to/for help, to exhort and encourage, and to comfort. It may be described as language that is fixed in context and fluid in form. It is effective because it is God’s Word. Paracletic language is the language of prayerful appeal. It is based on a closeness in relationship that encourages participation and dialogue. So, it can be said that there is even such a thing as paracletic listening; listening that the Holy Spirit makes possible. The language of paracletic proclamation is pastoral. It is a caring shepherder’s kind of language. It is the language of a loving parent to a newborn baby or infant child. Paracletic proclamation involves speaking kindly yet with authority, understandably yet skillfully, personally yet corporately with
the objective of encouraging and comforting. It must be this type of language because of the Gospel. The language of paracletic proclamation is as down to earth as Jesus Christ. In fact, paracletic proclamation is the language of Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is also a language for Christians to hear, learn, and speak themselves. Paracletic proclamation is primarily a language to be used by the Church in speaking first with God and then also with others in the Church.

Parakaleó/paraklēsis do describe and help define what proclamation is. They are critical aspects of proclamation because they are geared mostly toward believers. Obviously, there is more to proclamation than parakaleó/paraklēsis. But this study does serve to reemphasize the value of prayer, the thorough involvement of God, pastoral sensitivity to the audience, the important role of lay people in on-going proclamation, and an awareness of how language is used in proclamation. Central to parakaleó/paraklēsis proclamation is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore as proclamation of the Word of God, paracletic proclamation is the Word of God.
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