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The University of Southern Mississippi

Structure's Impact on Homiletic Rhetoric: A Case Study of Melissa Scott's Preaching

by

Erik Nelson

A Thesis
Submitted to the Honors College of
The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree of
Bachelor of Arts
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Abstract

Though the connection between the study of rhetorical processes and the practice of expository preaching is obvious, academic cooperation between the two fields is lacking. This case study presents an example of the harmony achievable between the disciplines through the production of constructive criticism, a process known to communication scholars as rhetorical analysis, for a sample of sermons given by Pastor Melissa Scott in recent years. Scott, whose preaching style is uniquely centered on translation-based exposition, represents the modern pastor whose skill and technique might be improved upon with the implementation of recent and emerging communication theory. Specifically, this study demonstrates the ability of four theories known and taught by communication scholars to dissect the structure of an argument and detect its strengths and weaknesses. After analyzing the sample with the structural concepts behind the Toulmin Model, Monroe's Motivated Sequence, transformative explanation, and metanarration, the research becomes capable of identifying and correcting the common mistakes in Scott's sermons. The most prominent examples of these corrections included providing one's audience with a visualization of successful implementation of one's ideas and, when addressing a paradigm shift, acknowledging the merit of the popular opinion before demonstrating its inadequacy as thoroughly as possible. As a result, this study serves as a display of the usefulness of communication theory to those who preach, in hope that it will spur further interest in its dissemination to today's pastoral rhetors.

Key Words: rhetorical analysis, structure theory, Toulmin Model, Monroe's Motivated Sequence, transformative explanation, metanarration, expository preaching

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Chapter 1: Introduction

An obvious yet complex connection exists between the study of human communication and the practice of homiletic (sermon-giving) ministry—one which might be succinctly described by the word "rhetoric." Plato's own definition of a true rhetorician was to "be able to speak . . . so far as is possible, in a manner pleasing to the gods (Plato, trans. 1914, p. 559)." Johanessen (1962) confirms that religious references have historically always had a tendency to bolster the credibility of a speaker in an American audience. For whatever reason, it is easy to see how rhetoric and religion have experienced a long-lasting relationship.

Rhetoric is, of course, a type of human communication that a minister employs so that a sermon's message might be persuasive, convincing, and ultimately, actionable. The intrinsic nature of this relationship between communication research and ministerial performance, then, merits modern discussion. The present study aims to provide a specific case study of communication in the often-secluded sphere of ministry in the form of a rhetorical criticism of the pastoral conduit of public speaking: the sermon.

The subject of our study, Pastor Melissa Scott, has been the head pastor of Faith Center Church in Glendale, California since 2005. The widow and successor of the infamous Dr. Gene Scott, she is herself the topic of some controversy. The matter of Melissa Scott's ordination, as well as her fluency in twenty-five languages, appears to be verified only by Scott herself.[1] Nevertheless, her preaching style remains relevant to the purpose of this study, as it presents a unique form of homily which effortlessly

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[1] The only source of information found on the subject was available on Pastor Scott's website at <http://pastormelissascott.com/who-is.shtml>.

demonstrates the similarities between preaching practices and current communication theory. Amidst the well-known pastor/theologians of the current decade—John MacArthur, Francis Chan, and Mark Driscoll, to name a few—Scott stands out as one whose mission is to teach a greater understanding of the Bible, which she does by addressing the concepts in Scripture which are lost in translation. This method of teaching, while more common now than it was when Scott began nearly a decade ago, focuses on correcting the misconceptions of the church world at large today—which is no small feat, considering the amount of emotional investment contained therein. For this reason, any suggestions which can be made at the behest of today's communication theorists might improve not only Scott's but any pastor's chances of delivering a successfully impactful message.

Regardless of the veracity of her messages and her official status regarding the clergy, the application of Scott's style will accomplish this study's goal of proving the relevance of preaching in the broader field of public speaking and how its inclusion into scholarship can lead to its improvement as a modern form of rhetoric. It is this researcher's view that the efforts of communication scholars should include aiding these pastors through constructive criticism and rhetorical analysis of the meta-genre in order to improve the efficacy of their method of communication: the sermon. This study is a first step towards the actualization of such cooperation between pastors and communication scholars.

The art of giving sermons, or homiletics, contains many branches—one of those branches being expository preaching. Also known as "systematic exposition," expository preaching is the practice of clarifying or discussing the meaning of a particular passage of

Scripture, but in a more general way than exegesis. *Exegesis* could be defined as the critique of grammatical and syntactical structure of text in order to ascertain its exact meaning, which, in the case of the Bible, is specifically referred to as "biblical exegesis" (Thomas, 1990). Some exegesis can certainly encompass a major part of exposition, however—and it is perhaps this that Scott engages in more than simple exposition—so both concepts are important to have defined for the purpose of this study. Homiletic style, preaching style, and expository method are, in essence, synonymous and will be used interchangeably henceforth.

Naturally, this introduction would also be incomplete without a brief word about the ongoing and—seemingly—never-ending debate over free versus literal translation of the Bible. Robert Thomas (1990) has compiled a useful summary of the two different perspectives and offers an argument for literal translation. Literal translation is necessary, according to Thomas, in order for Scripture to not lose its meaning during translation. At the foundation of Pastor Scott's homiletic theme is the danger she perceives of allowing free translation—which allows the use of modern interpretation to reassign things like gendered pronouns, amounts, and titles found in the Bible—to dictate how the modern Church understands the Word. To avoid this problem, her sermons revolve entirely around her own translations of the original Greek or Hebrew, derived from her self-taught fluency in the languages.[2] With such a goal in mind—where a congregation's core beliefs could be challenged on the basis of faulty understanding of

2 Considering the amount of controversy surrounding Melissa Scott and the Faith Center (including that regarding her credibility as a linguist and theologian), suffice it to say that the focus of this study is merely the academic criticism of Scott's sermon structure, and will include no comment regarding the credibility of her educational background or the accuracy of her translations.

Scripture—Scott has a small margin of error due to the sensitive nature of the topic. Her messages must be communicated with expert precision and tact in order to not only avoid offending her audience, but indeed encourage them to reconsider the accuracy of some of their deepest, most protected personal convictions—and to determine whether she is successful in this aim or not requires the use of rhetorical criticism.

As far as modern rhetorical criticism is concerned, the consensus (Delia, 1987; King, 2006; Kuypers, 2009; Zarefsky, 2006) regarding the origin of the field is Herbert Wichelns' (1925) essay "The Literary Criticism of Oratory." Since then, the more notable scholars to engage rhetorical criticism and biblical studies have been James Muilenburg (1932, 1933, 1959, 1969), followed fifty years later by Phyllis Trible (1978, 1984, 1994). More recently, however, Matthew Schlimm (2007) has spoken for the need for "bridging the divide" between biblical studies and rhetorical criticism.[3] He states that while the discussion of the interaction between these two fields is nothing new—the earliest example being Augustine (who, according to Patton [1977], feared that rhetoric would dilute the sanctity of the pulpit, preventing any significantly deep inquiries from being made—a condition likely influenced by the mostly negative connotation of rhetoric in its infancy (not to mention its modern reputation as "empty, bombastic language" [Foss, 2008, p. 3] or even as language opposed to logical thinking [Haase, 2008, p. 1]), and one which has led to little progress in the way of understanding the role rhetorical structures play in influencing ministerial efficacy. This lack of constructive discussion is not only the case for rhetorical criticism of the biblical text itself, but for the actual rhetors that produce this criticism.

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3 See Appendix B on page 119 for a selected bibliography of recent work connecting rhetorical criticism and biblical studies.

Francis Bacon once said, “the duty and office of rhetoric is to apply reason to the imagination for the better moving of the will” (Bacon, trans. 2001), a sentiment (that rhetoric is a “transaction” and that the people involved in the sending and receiving are as important to the event as the content) that scholars such as John Bell can agree with; Bell (2012) makes the claim that the first instrument through which scripture is viewed is the imagination of the reader/listener, a long-ignored source of rhetorical information that demands to be acknowledged (p. 468). Clear discontent remains in the scholarly arena with the amount of attention this connection has received—one that has existed since at least the time of Bacon’s intellectual work, in the forty years between 1590 and 1630. The present study wishes to bolster the dissolution of this condition by demonstrating a small but important part of the relationship that biblical studies and rhetorical criticism share—as well as this relationship’s potential to contribute to a greater understanding of the communicative mechanisms that operate within modern-day ministry, reaching all the way up to the pulpit.

The essential tool for this research is the process known as rhetorical criticism—the systematic analysis of symbolic action for the understanding of rhetorical processes (Foss, 2008, p. 6). Seven aspects of the rhetorical act are generally chosen for consideration and criticism: purpose, audience, persona, tone, evidence, structure, and strategies; however, it is not necessary to evaluate *all* of these aspects, especially if one or two stand out as much more prominent or important than the others (Campbell & Huxman, 2009, p. 24). In Scott’s case, these two outliers appear to be structure and evidence. Establishing intent—once a neglected practice within rhetorical criticism (Morrison, 2003), as the desideratum of modern critics rested elsewhere—is another

potential element of the process, which has been simplified in this case as the changing of understanding, thus attitudes, toward biblical passages. Altering audience perceptions is one of the beginning stages of the persuasive continuum developed by Campbell (Campbell & Huxman, pp. 8-13), which will provide a lens through which to observe Scott's ability to imbue her audience with a new take on commonly misunderstood biblical concepts (coincidentally, a goal which is not-so-seldom the shared intent of pastors around the world—making Scott's approach especially worthy of interest in the preaching community). The persuasive continuum is one of many underpinning contemporary theories in the field of communication studies that this study relies upon in its aim to demonstrate the connection rhetorical criticism shares with expository preaching.

A second theory that will aid in the analysis of Scott's preaching is the concept of transformative explanation, a rhetorical technique for making complex ideas comprehensible for a general audience. Rowan (1991) describes the process, as does Gordon (2003), as a five-step rhetorical sequence that allows an audience to "transform" its incorrect understandings of or perceptions about a certain topic into the correct understanding or perception. Using the chronological formula for transformative explanation, a speaker should be able to circumvent even those situations which are most likely to result in total rejection and turn them into successful, perception-altering rhetorical acts; this method is especially useful (and, perhaps, necessary) when an audience is highly ego-involved in the subject—ego-involvement simply meaning an individual's perceived commitment to a particular attitude or belief, a contributing factor to an individual's perceived behavior control (a concept borrowed from communication's

theory of reasoned action; Gass & Seiter, 2007, pp. 50-52). Scott's use of these five steps (relying on a generous leniency vis a vis the explicit, exacting format, due to the reasonable assumption that Scott has no knowledge of the theory specifically) would serve to indicate the potential for direct application of communication theories, such as transformative explanation, to the art and practice of expository preaching.

Expository preaching is undoubtedly a challenging endeavor. To speak with authority about such a sensitive thing as the meaning of Scripture—to be effective rather than offensive—is without a doubt a difficult exigence to address. Nonetheless, Melissa Scott is clearly comfortable—in fact, thrives—in this environment. One can only hope that to understand her technique is to understand her success; if it works for her, perhaps it will work for others.

The nature of the relationship between ministry and communication is driven by the fact that the inherent mission of ministry is *to communicate* the gospel message. One might argue that the most basic criterion for successful ministry is a theological understanding of the tenants of the particular religion, as well as a genuine desire to share that understanding; however, one might also argue that the most immediate demand for such a task to be completed is the ability to effectively communicate, making communication one of the most basic skills necessary to achieve the goals of ministry. Unfortunately, so little research has been done that the debate over ministry's ultimate progenitor must be put aside until more work has been done. Aware of the shallow condition of scholarly insight regarding communication in ministry (e.g. sermons as rhetoric), it is the position of this researcher that the following analysis of Pastor Scott's rhetorical patterns and techniques will reveal a part of the larger picture that is

communication in ministry; then and only then can further, deeper questions—like those of the philosophy of origin—be discussed with anything near the finality that is so sought after in some parts of the academic arena.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

Basic Communication Theory

Interpersonal communication.

It seems fitting that the starting place for this review is indeed the starting place of many undergraduate interpersonal communication courses (including my own): an explanation of communication competence. As many communication scholars—including Bavelas (1990), Clevenger (1991), and Watzlawich, Beavin, and Jackson (1967)—posit that it is impossible to not communicate, it would seem ideal that each member of society possess the necessary skills to adequately communicate. Communication competence began with such scholars as Wiemann (1977), Spitzberg and Cupach (1984, 2002), and Wilson and Sabee (2003), and is generally considered a skill which allows a person to "achieve one's goals in a manner that maintains or enhances the relationship in which it occurs" (Adler, Proctor, & Town, 2005, p. 32). According to McCornack (2010, pp. 254-259), its three criteria are appropriateness (socially-acceptable), effectiveness (achieves desired interpersonal goal), and ethicality (treats people fairly and avoids intentionally hurting others). In essence, communication competence is the skill set of listening (see Brandenburg, 1953), empathizing (appropriately described as the use of a "dual perspective" by Wood; 2007, p. 37), adapting, displaying openness and sensitivity, having an "other-orientation" (showing interest and attentiveness in what the other person is saying), and so on, in order for communication to be possible in any given situation (DeVito, 2000; Floyd, 2009; Rothwell, 2007, pp. 16-29; West & Turner, 2012; Wiemann, Takai, Ota, & Wiemann,

1997). Self-perception as well as others' perceptions of individuals also routinely affect a person's communication competence (Arroyo & Segrin, 2011). Naturally, this concept is relevant to any study in communication, and this one is no exception. Lacking these basic skills would prevent anyone—certainly a pastor, whose job entails weekly public speaking—from getting a message across.

A second important theory developed by communication scholars which is especially relevant to this case study is that of Communication Accommodation Theory (also known as CAT). CAT is a general theory of interpersonal communication which posits that people tend to engage in communicative behaviors similar to that of the person to whom they are talking in order to develop a sense of similarity and cooperation. Things such as speech rate, balance of turn-taking, and language use (for example, the frequency of vulgar words) are commonly adjusted to accommodate (thus, communication *accommodation* theory) the style of the other person during interpersonal conversation (DeVito, 2000, p. 33). Accommodating to others serves to satisfy the human need for recognition and belonging (Nilsen, 1964) and is a simple way to gain social approval, establish and maintain positive relationships, and build better, more effective communicating skills (McCornack, 2010, p. 204). In group communication, accommodation can also mean behaviors such as yielding (appeasing the majority on unimportant issues), compromising, and withdrawing from competing communication in order to avoid conflict and maintain the group's efficacy for completing its task (Rothwell, 2007, pp. 344-356). This is especially noticeable as it applies to Pastor Scott's situation, in which she must accommodate the knowledge level—even the zealousness

level, occasionally—of her audience in order to maintain a positive relationship with them while communicating her message.

Other concepts and principles of interpersonal communication could be discussed here; however, the two concepts above are those which apply most directly to the thorough analysis of Scott's preaching. Other factors, such as emotion, power, conflict, and nonverbal communication—while certainly important to understand to the extent that they apply to all communication—are less important insofar as Pastor Scott is concerned. Moving on, relevant concepts from the facets of argumentation and persuasion are dealt with before moving on to a more advanced review of rhetorical criticism by itself, as well as the models of transformative explanation and metanarration.

Argumentation and structure in communication.

The goal of any course in argumentation and debate (once again, including my own) is to teach students the standards for logic and structure that create sound arguments (Dovre, 1971). The explanation of those standards include the use of deduction, types of propositions, types of counter-arguments, and methods of defining terms. The following are those concepts which might be expected to appear in Scott's preaching and—in the event that they do appear—would serve to indicate the inherent presence of communication theory in expository preaching.

The oldest convention which comes to mind is actually a philosophical one: the nature of deduction as a standard for logical arguments. This topic of discussion reaches as far back as Plato, who refused the validity of inductive reasoning (Hemant, Sinha, & Vitharana, 2011, p. 3); in fact, there are scholars today (Bennett, 1964; Thonssen & Baird, 1948) who view that logical proof is the only true type of rhetorical discourse.

Deduction refers to the use of logic to generate conclusions based on the validity or truth contained within certain premises (Evans, 2002, p. 1). Campbell (1972) is careful to add that argument is understood to mean *reasoning* as well as *contention* (p. 66), while Rowell (1934) argues that dividing conviction and persuasion, or reason and appeals, into two different parts is useless and redundant (p. 470). Before continuing, it might be profitable to mention that in everyday, non-philosophical conversation, arguments are evaluated less for their absolute validity than for the probability of their logical reasoning being true—the basic means of inductive reasoning (Johnson, 1973, p. 263; Kneupper, 1973; MacDonald, 2004).

Schechter (2010) points out the distinction between logic, which is "the abstract theory of the logical consequential relation . . . that specifies what follows from what," from deductive reasoning, which is a psychological process for forming beliefs (p. 3)—an aspect of speech Heraclitus later identified as *logos*, or the way to comprehend a message (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, §5, ¶6). Examples of this type of reasoning abound in the fields of "hard science" (e.g., psychology, biology, and astronomy) as well as the social sciences (of which history and communication studies are a part), possibly—as Campbell and Huxman (2009) posit—for the reason that it is perceived as honest and straightforward (p. 150). For a pastor, one might expect a great deal of inductive reasoning given the rather substantial *un*certainty contained within the Bible and the added element of the burden of proof (Cronkhite, 1966); however, this study hopes to show that Melissa Scott prefers a deductive style—a strategy which possibly not only gains interest for its relative novelty among the preaching community, but perhaps also

contributes a significant amount of persuasiveness for a more skeptical, logical group of people.

From deduction comes the device known as the syllogism, and from the syllogism comes the enthymeme. Aristotle (2000) defines a syllogism as “discourse in which, certain things being stated, something other than that what is stated follows from necessity of their being so” (p. 5); in other words, the final conclusion, is derived from two premises which, by virtue of their factuality, logically prove its validity. There have been several types of syllogisms identified by logicians—namely, categorical, conditional, and disjunctive syllogisms. The two of interest here are conditional and disjunctive syllogisms, due to their potential for application in homiletics. Conditional syllogisms, also called hypothetical syllogisms, use a hypothetical “antecedent” statement followed by a causal or “consequential” statement; for example, if a pastor were addressing the concept of salvation, he or she might make the antecedent statement, “Assuming you accept Christ as Lord and Savior,” followed by the consequential statement, “you shall receive eternal life in the Kingdom of God.” Disjunctive syllogisms address the “separation of alternatives” (Freeley &Steinberg, p. 134), where two mutually-exclusive situations are pitted against one another; for example, if a pastor were speaking about the laws of the Old Testament, he or she might say “The laws of the Old Testament are for the Jewish people. Christians do not partake in Jewish practices, otherwise they would be Jewish. Therefore, Christians do not follow the laws of the Old Testament.” Due to their logical nature, it is expected that when Scott implements logic in her style of preaching, syllogisms are sure to be present—if not syllogism, then enthymeme.

The enthymeme is quite simply a syllogism with a missing piece, which is filled in inside the mind of the hearer; in other words, any one of the three statements is implied, to be inferred by the audience to whom it is presented (Harper, 1973). For example, one might cite the biblical passage referring to homosexuality as a sin and, by inferring the Christian doctrine of hating sin as God hates sin, a hearer would come to the conclusion that he or she should hate homosexuality (admittedly as extreme example, but one used nonetheless). Unfortunately, whereas syllogisms are often explicit, enthymemes can be rather implicit and difficult to identify; as a result, a speech can often be over-analyzed and critics can easily slip into the age-old habit of "reading too far into things" (Harper, pp. 306-307). Armed with this knowledge, this study intends to examine Scott's speech only to the appropriately thorough extent, without crossing the line dividing criticism and conspiracy formation, by avoiding the tendency to strip down the text until a syllogistic device is found and instead allowing the text to speak for itself.

Another concept regarding deductive reasoning worth mentioning is the critical equation. Popularly summarized by the Toulmin Model (whose legitimacy is contested by a small part of the intellectual community; Lewis, 1972), named after philosopher Steven Toulmin, it is an alternative way of interpreting logical arguments where others fail (Palczewski, Ice, & Fritch, 2012, p. 99). In its most basic form, it follows the sequence of data→warrant→claim. Using this structure, a person is able to draw conclusions based on the reasoned interpretation of the evidence available to them; for example, to argue that the fishing industry is the leading cause of global warming due to over-fishing that throws the natural ecological system out of balance, in addition to the amount of uncontrolled pollution created by millions of boats, would require substantial

evidence, “warranted” with justifiable backing, in order to be a convincing argument. Similarly, many theological debates are riddled with overwhelmingly unjustifiable connections (see the example of syllogism above for an example) which could benefit from the implementation of the Toulmin Model. A proper argument would contain at the very least: a claim, which is the persuasive goal of the argument; data, which presents factual information about the phenomena surrounding the claim; and a warrant, which provides the reason that the data presented justifies the claim as the logical conclusion. Whether Scott’s structure suggests deduction via the Toulmin Model or some other method would contribute significant insight as to whether one might be preferred over the other.

A second concept central to the understanding of argumentation is that of types of propositions, or types of issues. Naturally, not all arguments originate from the same basic problem; some arguments attempt to establish what is true or verifiable, while others revolve around defining some thing, whereas others debate the worth of some other thing, and still others address the need for the addition or removal of a law or policy. These are termed propositions of fact, definition, value, and policy, respectively (Freeley & Steinberg, pp. 45-48; Palczewski, et al., pp. 100-106). Although all four are strong possibilities, one might expect that some fraction of Scott’s arguments are based on propositions of fact, which develop into propositions of policy—specifically, that a particular word or phrase has a *truer* meaning than the accepted English translation in contemporary Bibles, thus demanding a necessary change in belief, attitude, or behavior towards the idea that passage addresses.

A third aspect of argumentation refers to the ability to present an argument in the case that one argument (or more) has already been presented and evaluated—perhaps even accepted—by an audience: the counter-argument. Any of a multitude of ways in which to refute a pre-existing argument can be used, the majority of which fall under the format of creating doubt about the opposing position, followed by presenting evidence that refutes that position and the implications its refutation contributes to the greater understanding of the issue (Campbell & Huxman, pp. 151-153). Currently, the best communication theory that summarizes this process is that of transformative explanation, which involves not only refuting one idea, but replacing it with a better alternative. As this skill is one which is highly specific to this rhetorical analysis, the literature concerning transformative explanation is presented in isolation in a later section of this review.

A final discussion within the limits of argumentation is the art of defining terms. As Freeley and Steinberg (2000) explain, there are at least eight methods that can be implemented for the purpose of defining words and phrases that are central to an issue yet whose meaning is far from consensus (pp. 52-55). The more common, somewhat self-explanatory methods are the use of example (establish boundaries by introducing well-known instances which fall under the denotative meaning of the term), common usage (introducing an alternative, more commonly-recognizable term to stand in its place; for example, "unions" rather than the more ambiguous "labor organizations"), authority (providing the definition given by a widely-accepted source, such as the CDC's definition of a disease), and operation (using the term in a direct context—usually when proposing a plan involving complex subject matter. The less common, though equally useful,

methods include the use of negation (defining what something is by defining what it is not), comparison and contrast (defined in terms of synonyms or antonyms), derivation (establishing the contemporary meaning of a word by examining its origin and development), and finally, a combination of methods (where incomplete parts of several methods can be put together to create a whole). This concept is present at the heart of Scott's messages, as often her explicit goal is to discuss the definition of a Greek or Hebrew word in terms of its original meaning. For this reason, one might expect that a combination of derivation, comparison, negation, operation, and examples will be found in her sermons while discussing the Scripture. We move now to what is ultimately the object of desire in evaluating Scott's entire communicative style: persuasion.

Persuasion and structure in communication.

A primary motivation for the way people think and behave in response to persuasive messages is the psychological impact of ego involvement. Ego involvement can be defined as the importance of an issue to a person's identity or character, the strength of which predicting the response that person would enact in a given situation (Sherif & Sherif, 1967, pp. 176-177). Sereno (1969) contends that ego involvement is underrated in the effect it has on the persuasive message, and others attest that this concept is so pervasive that any discussion regarding the indicators of communicative success—whether operating within the context of interpersonal communication, nonverbal communication, etc.—should include mention of it (Mortensen & Sereno, 1970). Ego involvement has been shown to affect comprehension of new material by increasing or decreasing our motivation to learn (Graham & Golan, 1991)—a phenomenon coined "depth of processing" by researchers Craik and Lockhart in 1972—

as well as psychological processes like listening ability (Janusik, 2007), learning ability (Shedd & Angelino, 1952), argumentativeness (Dowling & Flint, 1990; Johnson, Becker, Wigley, Haigh, & Craig, 2007; Stewart & Roach, 1998), self-concept, and selective memory (Pomerantz, Chaiken, & Tordesillas, 1995, p. 416).

Ego involvement is closely tied to another concept in communication: social judgment theory. According to Sherif and Sherif (1967), "the approach is not merely concerned with how people behave when they experience tension, dissonance, incongruity, or imbalance but in specifying the conditions (variables) that will produce such experiences (pp.107-108)." As described by Gass and Seiter (2007), social judgment theory states that that there is a continuum of attitudinal positions a person holds concerning any given subject (e.g., political party affiliation, foreign policy, even as simple as a certain movie). Additionally, individuals' attitudes include the acceptance of ideas as well as the rejection of others; therefore, to understand a person's full attitude toward something is to know those positions which are acceptable and those which are not to the person. For each person, the point on which they are comfortable resting is called their anchor. Based on a person's anchor, a latitude of acceptance, which is the range within the options for agreement that the person could agree with, is derived.

To illustrate this continuum, consider the example of a student looking for classmates to proofread his 100-page research paper. Most people will decline this proposition, placing it firmly within their latitude of rejection. Others, however, may be more inclined to agree under certain circumstances, such as an indefinite amount of time to complete the task or freedom from any critical restraint. Then again, both latitudes (acceptance and rejection) are continuums, meaning that idea are placed on the

continuum by severity of agreement; in other words, one classmate from the example above may be unwaveringly opposed (high on the latitude of rejection), while another may refuse simply due to an already exhausting work load (low on the latitude of rejection). Conversely, one classmate may be opposed but agree to it anyway out of generosity (low on the latitude of acceptance) while another has a passion for correcting grammar and accepts eagerly (high on the latitude of acceptance).

Naturally, circumstances exist under which an inquiry would simply be unacceptable for most people to oblige, usually found on both extremes of an issue. Lastly, there might be a suggestion which the person has mixed feelings—or no feelings—about; those lie in the "latitude of noncommitment" (Gass & Seiter, 2007, pp. 105-108). The concept of social judgment theory will certainly come into play when examining the audience's potential responses to Scott's messages due to effects of ego involvement (Park, Levine, Westerman, Orfgen, & Foregger, 2007) and individual traits (Clark & Stewart, 1971) on argument quality and attitude change.

The aspect of human nature that is being describing is the attitude. Communication scholars have devoted much thought, alongside psychologists and even philosophers (for example, Boulding in 1956) towards defining the nature of human attitudes. In terms of speech structure, it is known that elaboration of the persuasive message early in the order of presentation contributes to primacy effect (the tendency to remember a message because it was the first thing heard), whereas refraining from elaboration until the conclusion of the presentation contributes to recency effect (the tendency to remember a message because it was the most recent thing that can be remembered; Haugtvedt & Wegener, 1994). In general, however, the way of

understanding *why* attitudes form the way they do is discussed less in the field of communication than is the substantial knowledge of *how* attitudes exist, change, and have influence in the human mind.

A modern conceptualization of attitudes is that of associative networks; in other words, the mind is a web, where every string is connected to every other string in varying degrees of separation (Gass & Seiter, p. 53). Due to this inter-connectedness, each individual attitude can have an enormous impact upon all the others—even the "image," or subjective understanding, of the situation in which an attitude occurs and can be affected—regardless of whether they have a direct connection or not (Boulding, pp. 5-7). The proverbial ripple effect is often used as an example of this phenomenon: once a single drop is changed or affected, all the others around it change, causing the drops around those drops to change, and so on. Cegala and Kibler (1973) offer the view that attitudes consist of two elements: commitment and importance (p. 115)—the sum of which seems to resemble the definitional elements of ego involvement. Of course, inter-connectedness is not the only peculiar aspect of attitudes that has been discovered in recent years; psychology has contributed two important puzzle pieces that help to explain how the inner workings of the brain itself plays a part in attitudes.

One way to partly explain this complex, chaotic system of creating and re-forming attitudes is to examine the effects of psychological consistency on the human mind. Psychological consistency is the idea that people experience comfort from consistency—or more specifically, experience *dis*comfort when appearing to be *in*consistent (Gass & Seiter, 56). This is why people get "set in their ways" and continue to take outdated actions and use obsolete instruments of daily life. When applied to

religion, it is easy to see how some stubbornly refuse to change (for example, the Greek Orthodox Church, which continues to conduct its worship services the same way it was done centuries ago); in fact, Rokeach (1960) has determined through his theory of belief structure that beliefs (especially religious beliefs) become extremely resistant to change when they contribute to the core of a person's belief structure. When faced with this kind of obstacle, pastors must use caution and finesse if they wish to deliver a message without threatening a person's perceived consistency regarding the topic. It is partly for this reason that Scott's preaching style is simultaneously so interesting and yet necessary for effectiveness.

A second psychological aspect of the mind that affects attitudes is Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance (1957), which explains the way in which humans tend to mull over our every decision and worry about whether it was the right one. The pressure of cognitive dissonance can be increased by free choice, belief disconfirmation (when information contradicts what is believed), being forced to do something, and the amount of effort sacrificed for something—all of which lead to a heavy dose of personal justifications for a person's actions. Free choice is especially interesting in Scott's case knowing that the more choice a person appears to have to make a decision, the more committed the person will be when and if they make that decision. For Scott's congregation, choice is a pre-determined factor; simply becoming a member of the selective, secluded church is a choice to listen to Scott speak. Additionally, when belief disconfirmation is presented, people show less commitment but more defensiveness when required to defend their beliefs, so it would seem that asking an audience to justify its beliefs is a risky strategy to implement as increased levels of cognitive dissonance create

decreased likelihood for attitude change (Jones & Dieker, 1968, p. 264). Goyer (1964) also tells us that the magnitude of dissonance encountered in a given situation is a function of these elements, which themselves operate within a complex system of determinants, or antecedents to communication events. Due to the fact that Scott's messages are essentially centered around providing belief disconfirmation to her audience so that they evaluate their previous beliefs as less accurate, Scott must juggle the potentially harmful effects of cognitive dissonance not only on her message, but to her credibility and reputation as well.

One major theory uses attitudes and intentions to evaluate and predict behaviors: the theory of reasoned action (TRA). Assuming people are rational and use all of the information available to them to make decisions, the TRA can describe how attitudes affect a listener's intentions upon hearing a persuasive message. Gass & Seiter (2007) believe the best way to understand this theory is by working backwards—starting from the end result and working back to the causes at the beginning. The end result is, of course, the actual action taken by an individual. Just before that, however, is behavioral intention—what the individual wanted to do (or not do). Influencing the individual's intention are two factors: subjective norms and attitudes toward the behavior. Subjective norms refer to the how other people (especially significant others in the individual's life) perceive the behavior and whether the individual's motivation to comply with the norm is greater than the desire to enact the behavior (Park, Levine, & Sharkey, 1998). Attitudes toward the behavior, however, are a different matter entirely, as they are personal and exist and operate within the self. Behind attitudes are the individual's beliefs about and evaluation of the outcome—whether the result of the action or inaction will bring about a

desirable change, thus whether it is a desirable outcome or not (making the consequence of a proposal a primary determinant of resultant attitudes towards it; Infante, 1972). Finally, the individual encounters his or her own perception of behavioral control—whether he or she would be able to enact the behavior—which can cause the individual to refrain from enacting a behavior, even if it was his or her intention to do so (Gass & Seiter, pp. 50-52); both ability to comply and willingness to comply are cited by Ifert and Roloff (1994) as the major obstacles to interpersonal influence. When Pastor Scott's audience (mostly members of her congregation) evaluates her message they form behavioral intent based on the subjective norms surrounding the subject and their own personal attitudes toward the subject. Whether they enact the behavior they intend for is, of course, never guaranteed due to psychological factors like perceived behavioral control.

Ego involvement is also said to play an influential role in one of the most important aspects of successful public speaking: credibility. Credibility is an audience's perception of a speaker's ability to speak on the topic at hand. It is generally accepted that there are both primary and secondary dimensions of credibility. The primary dimensions of credibility are expertise (which can work to one's advantage even if the expertise it outside the subject at hand—known as the halo effect), trustworthiness, and goodwill (whether the audience believes the speaker genuinely cares for its best interests). The secondary dimensions, which are slightly less powerful, are dynamism or charisma (something that Pastor Scott, as a televangelist, has plenty of), composure, and sociability or amiability. The more of these dimensions speakers have at their side, the better the audience's perception of their credibility will be (Gass & Seiter, pp. 78-81).

There is evidence to suggest that ego involvement can affect an audience's perception of the speaker's credibility more than the audience's perception of the source's credibility does; in other words, the speaker's credibility can have more influence over the persuasiveness of the message than the accuracy of the information being presented by the speaker (Johnson & Scileppi, 1969). Additionally, due to the fact that the more ego-involved a receiver is, the harder it is to persuade them to change their attitudes, highly ego-involved receivers of persuasive messages tend to scrutinize speaker credibility much more harshly than otherwise (Hample & Dallinger, 1987; Sereno, 1968).

Speakers also experience a phenomenon known as the sleeper effect, where speakers with low credibility have a persuasive advantage over time due to the fact that when their speeches are given, their audiences pay more attention to their arguments, whereas speakers with high credibility experience a disadvantage as time wears on and their arguments are forgotten (Gass & Seiter, pp. 84-85); interestingly, delaying an audience's identification with a topic follows the same pattern, where high credibility speakers lose their advantage by hesitating to demonstrate their credibility (O'Keefe, 1987). Naturally, there exist other factors that either directly or indirectly influence both ego-involvement and speaker credibility, such as nonverbal behavior (Arnold, 1973; Segrin, 1993), the way in which an argument is presented (once again, structure proves to be an influential player in the success or failure of persuasive communication) (Bodaken & Sereno, 1976), even speaker attractiveness (Donley & Allen, 1977), which is certainly an important point of discussion in the debate over Scott's credibility (interestingly, her attractiveness both contributes to and draws suspicion toward her credibility, possibly the

gender-related effect discussed by Bostrom and Kemp [1969]). In short, ego involvement is undoubtedly a major consideration in the evaluation of Pastor Scott's style.

As a final remark regarding persuasion and its general characteristics, one might be curious as to how the success of persuasive messages is assessed. As one might imagine, it is extremely difficult to create any type of scientific or algebraic system with which to rate persuasive messages for comparison. This is due to a researcher's inability to gauge every audience member's reaction to the message in terms of persuasiveness. A more specific communication theory which describes this phenomenon and can be used to measure "rhetorical success," as it were, is the persuasive continuum. One could look for the five criteria of persuasion put forth by Wallace (1966): interpersonal in nature, a specific goal (implicit or explicit), an important message (to make the goal exigent), the presence (or perceived presence) of a choice, and relevancy of effect (effects caused being relevant to the attempted goal). Due to the limits imposed upon persuasive messages by the audience, the topic, and even the speaker him or herself, attempts to persuade are rarely accepted or rejected completely. As a result, Campbell (1996) developed a graphical representation of the varying levels of persuasiveness a speaker can have (from planting an idea at the lowest level to maintaining desired action at the highest level) based on the idea of a continuum where each item is a necessary condition for the one following it.

The first item on the continuum is the creation of a virtual experience. As a rhetor, it is vital that one's audience can relate to the subject at hand on a personal level—much like how fiction writers must "paint a picture in the reader's mind." Once a virtual experience is achieved, a rhetor can begin to alter audience perceptions. Only after the

receiver of a persuasive message has a clear understanding of a situation can he or she begin to welcome perspectives which differentiate from their own; in other words, people have to see it before they can comprehend it. If the conditions allow it, a rhetor's next job would be to explain the reasoning behind the new perspective being introduced so that the listener might be informed well enough to gain the necessary motivation to enter a state of agreement with the speaker; in Scott's case, this means that in order for her audience to be persuaded to change their understanding of the Bible, she must provide the who, what, where, when, why, and how to effectively argue for *why* her perspective is the correct one. In many cases, rhetors are able to get only this far, as the next step is formulating belief.

At this point in the process, a new perspective about something has led to a search for explanations, and those explanations will naturally lead to the adoption or rejection of new and existing beliefs; in addition, when the decisions to accept or reject an idea are made internally, they become even stronger than the beliefs that preceded them (Bretl & Dillard, 1991). Reaching this precipitating moment, however, in which the audience is given such a good argument it simply must agree, as in "That has to be it. There is no other way," is not an exceptionally common occurrence for rhetors (Campbell, 1996, p. 12). The final two items are only relevant in the event that a speaker is attempting to provoke action among his or her audience (Palczewski et al., 2012, p. 18): initiating action and maintaining action. Experience shows that shared belief does not necessarily lead to action; people often need multiple sources of affirmation that a particular action is necessary to appropriately meet the need. Maintaining action, on the other hand, requires continued rhetorical action in order to fuel the momentum of the movement. Although

Pastor Scott's basic goal is to reform the beliefs of her listeners regarding the meaning of Scripture, she still returns to the pulpit every Sunday in order to maintain the congregation's decision to actively read the Bible and interpret its meaning week by week.

As can be seen by the lack of concrete measures, evaluating persuasive messages is by nature highly subjective and, as such, relies heavily upon the standards of rhetorical criticism to provide points of comparison equivalent to items of one such hypothetical system. The general communication concepts reviewed above provide a basis for using these points of comparison pertaining to rhetorical criticism by grounding observations in accepted communication theory and practice. As a result, the questions arising from the literature is not how the understandings of communication accommodation theory, syllogism, ego involvement, etc., can be applied to Scott's rhetorical method, but how these things can be applied to the criteria of rhetorical criticism, which in turn is applied to the aforementioned method. The next section of the literature review contains descriptions and explanations of these devices of criticism, as well as the specific research questions which are to be addressed by the results of the study in the discussion section. To summarize, however, the following questions demonstrate the relationship between the concepts discussed in this section with those discussed in the section below and, while not the specific questions this study will attempt to answer, are examples of the parts of rhetoric that can be and often are studied by other researchers in their many contexts:

- How does Communication Accommodation Theory explain the use of *strategies* involved in Pastor Scott's preaching?

- Does Pastor Scott use syllogism or enthymeme to present a *deductive argument* structure in her sermons?
- What *types of propositions* does Scott offer in her sermons?
- How does Pastor Scott *address the audience's desire* to remain psychologically consistent and avoid cognitive dissonance, if at all?
- What behaviors does Scott attempt to imbue in her audience and how likely is her audience to perceive that behavior as *within their behavioral control*?
- Which *dimensions of credibility* does Scott possess or not possess?
- Which step on the *persuasive continuum* does Scott seem to be aiming for?

Rhetorical Criticism and Structure

Rhetoric.

Since Lane Cooper's translation of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* was published in 1932, the universally-accepted, Aristotelian definition of rhetoric has been "the faculty of discovering in the particular case what are the available means of persuasion" (Cooper, 1932). Though this definition is what is still placed in the first chapter of rhetoric textbooks, plenty of other scholars have advanced their own ideas of a definition—the most notable, perhaps, being Kenneth Burke, who describes rhetoric as "the use of words by human agents to form attitudes or to induce actions in other human agents" (Burke, 1969, p. 41).

The foundations of rhetoric listed here are those which shape the modern view of rhetoric and its place in society. Klotsche (1952) has compiled a list of four primary pursuits of rhetoric in society: tyranny, deception, enlightenment, and truth. In response to the fourth and final use in this list, Scott (1967) agrees, stating, "rhetoric is responsible

for creating knowledge and truth (p. 17)." Building upon this notion of created truth is the assertion that there must be shared interpretation between the speaker and the audience (Brinton, 1985; Fulton, 1963, p. 247; Sharpam, Matter, & Brockriede, 1971), making the audience an active member of the persuasion process (Benoit, 2003). Herrick (1992) also argues that discovering truths which lead to productive decision making is among the inherent virtues of rhetoric (alongside creating a medium for advocacy and offering a way to process propositions of controversies in a manner which allows them to be settled).

According to Crick (2009), when shared meaning reaches such a stage that it can effect change in society, rhetorical singularities—unique discourse that seeks to inspire excellence in character en masse—begin to appear and take advantage of the shared meaning, which Hauser and Whalen (1997) contend is the beginning of the viability and eventual creation of social movements. Berthold (1966) postulates that "fear and hate are the prime movers of mankind" (p. 91), and when those emotions are appealed to, anything can happen. There is a "closure rule," however, which refers to the maximum amount of factors an individual will consider when making a behavioral decision in a situation (options, past decisions, etc.; Cox, 1981, p. 199). Cooper, however, makes the point that rhetoric itself is to be consider an event based on Foucault's theory of discursive action (Cooper, 1988; Foss & Foss, 1987), whereas McGee (1982) calls rhetoric the "social equivalent of a verb in a sentence" (p. 27). In this way, rhetoric differs slightly from communication which is said to be a process, as events occur and processes are continuous (Hauser, 1986, p. 4, 7); then again, one might contend that both

communication and rhetoric can be seen as events or processes. This idea of rhetoric as an event closely resembles the communication concept known as the rhetorical act.

The rhetorical act.

Rhetorical acts refer to instances of speaking which take place within a rhetorical situation—what Bitzer (1968) defines as “a natural context of persons, events, objects, relations, and an exigence which strongly invites utterance” (p. 5)—or, to be concise, when exigence, audience, and constraints come together to form either a fitting response or non-fitting (or inadequate) response (Palczewski et al., pp. 202-210). Exigence is that condition which demands a rhetorical response; as Bitzer (1968) defines it, exigence is “an imperfection marked by urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be” (p. 6). The audience—or, more appropriately, the *rhetorical* audience—consists of “those persons capable of being influenced by discourse and of being mediators of change” (Bitzer, p. 7). In Scott’s case, the exigence is created by the social norm of pastors preaching every Sunday, while her rhetorical audience is her congregation, both physical and virtual. Constraints are conditions which “have the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence (Bitzer, p. 8).” Finally, a fitting response is one in which the expectations arising from the situations are met and properly dealt with. There are an infinite number of possible constraints in a rhetorical situation and fitting responses can usually only be evaluated subjectively.

The seven elements of a rhetorical act are purpose, audience, persona, tone, evidence, structure, and strategies. A few special considerations from recent research are

discussed here. Crocker (1959) addresses the pastor's need to invoke emotion or passion into sermons, as logic alone can weaken credibility; Crocker's observations are based on the importance of persona as being created by both the rhetor and the receiver (Campbell, P., p. 248). As far as evidence is concerned, statistics tend to increase positive judgment of an argument, but examples are needed as well in order to positively affect attitude change (Boster, Cameron, Campo, Link Lilie, Baker, & Yun, 2000). Strategies like figurative language use and self-deprecation have been shown to increase speaker credibility (Sharkey, Park, & Kim, 2004); for example, metaphor, although context-specific and not a guarantee to provide clarity (Owen, 1990), adds a factor of persuasiveness which simply cannot be achieved through the use of literal language use (Sopory, 2008). Structure has also been shown to have immediate ideological impact on an audience (Oravec, 1991). Each of these findings lead to the pivotal question: How does Melissa Scott strategically create the most effective message possible?

Perhaps the most talked-about element of the rhetorical act is the audience. Audience adaptation continues to be one of the most necessary components to a successful speech—Kully and Brockriede (1963) go so far as to say the audience is the most fundamental speaking element. Henry Wichelns (1925) states, "Rhetorical criticism focuses on discovering and appreciating how speakers adapt their ideas to particular audiences" (p. 212). Another tool for adapting to an audience is appeals; appealing to basic human emotion such as fear or pride can be incredibly effective for a certain audience, while not so much for others. One important aspect of audience adaptation is the creation of identification, or unification through common interests or characteristics

(Palczewski et al., 181). Specific strategies can be adapted as well, such as the vocal elements of oral performance (Hargis, 1960) and summarization (Turner, 1970).

In this case, the element of the rhetorical act which is most important is structure. The next section discusses some key findings in communication studies concerning rhetorical structure in comparison and contrast to some types of evidence.

Structure as evidence/Structure vs. evidence.

Harte (1976) describes the use of evidence in persuasive speeches as a "game." It has relatively unreliable effects as context changes. Perhaps it is for this reason that Scott's preaching instead once utilized such a noticeable structure pattern—a much more reliable method for decreasing contextual restraints (Fulton, 1963) and increasing audience comprehension (Johnson, 1970). Turner (1970), as well as Parrish (1923), note that the sign of a well-delivered speech is at the very least a loose plan. The demands of formal public speaking bring about many challenges—specifically, those seven elements to the rhetorical situation, which must be dealt with simultaneously and all but entirely.

Rhetorical criticism.

The exact purpose of rhetorical criticism is a bit of a controversy. Some claim that the essence of rhetorical criticism is comparing the actual with the potential (Smith, 1976) while others contend that rhetorical criticism is much more serious and metaphysical—to the point of being a moral action (Brummett, 1984; Klumpp, 1989). Ewbank and Ewbank (1976) state that the purpose of rhetorical criticism is "to enhance the understanding and appreciation of the components, techniques, strategies, and achievements of the art and the artist in order to sustain and to enhance standards of rhetorical performance and acceptance (p. 285)," whereas Smith and Streifford (1976)

maintain that the most important part of rhetoric to consider in criticism in the underlying set of values (based on Bryant's assertion that rhetoric is merely the adjustment of ideas, or value alteration [Bryant, 1954]).

The Committee on Rhetorical Criticism at the National Conference on Rhetoric (1971) argues that any person becomes a critic at the moment he or she focuses on "persuasive effects and their source, nature, operation, and consequences (p. 221)"—which was rebuked by Fisher (1974) for lacking the essence of rhetorical criticism, which for him is the presence of a "qualitative judgment" (p. 75). Kathryn Campbell (1972) believes criticism is completed in four stages, while Arnold (1974) does it in three, and Foss (1989) needs only three questions answered (the relationship between the rhetor and the context, how the message constructs a specific reality for the rhetor and audience, and what the rhetoric suggests about the rhetor). Although many of these are quite similar, pragmatically speaking, this author prefers the analytic method offered by the Committee on Rhetorical Criticism, whereby after a device is discovered its source in communication theory, its nature, its operation in the speech, and its consequence in the overall persuasive schema, reveal the total impact of a rhetorical device in a speech.

There are more than a handful of methods currently being implemented in the practice of rhetorical criticism. Kenneth Burke has authored several methods of his own, from the cluster-agon method of identifying the use of persuasive language such as "God" and "Devil" terms (Weaver, 1953) to reveal the possibilities of the speaker's intent (Berthold, 1976), to the generative method of criticism, which allows for a certain amount of speculation in order to gain insight into the speaker's motivations through the process of re-writing the speech in an attempt to take part in the speaker's mindset while

writing and preparing a speech (Burke, 1957; Hagan, 1971). Dell (1966) must certainly be in favor of these methods as they account for what he sees as a lack of criticism towards an orator's word choice and linguistic phrasing to reveal a speaker's line of thought.

Other notable contenders methods are the message-centered approach described by Chesebro and Hamsher (1973, 1975), the agency-centered dramatism of Foss (1990), the conceptually-oriented method of Grey (Kuypers, 2009), and the phenomenologically-oriented approach from Gregg (1966). One argument which impacts *any* method of rhetorical criticism is Tomkins's (1962) assertion that rhetorical criticism can only be done visually. As rhetoric is verbal in nature and written language is not representative enough of speech (a notion Quirk (1955) would agree with, as he contends that the sentence and paragraph are strictly written language tools and are not used in verbal speech), any analysis of speech must be done through seeing and hearing the person speaking. Though the theories compete, this study will be using Tomkins's view and using video to analyze the rhetor about whom this study is being made and Burke's view of generative criticism by re-writing her sermons in order to tap into the thought process behind them and find as many communication devices as possible.

At the behest of Maloney (1953), who argues that new methods should continue to be developed using "new tools to . . . understand speech phenomena" (p.2)—a sentiment shared by Littlejohn (1978, pp. 161-162)—this study has chosen relatively new structure concepts to use as "tools" for analyzing Pastor Scott's preaching style, and reassured that human intellect does indeed possess the ability to "derive meaningful inferences" from a work of art (Larson, 1976, p. 276)—which Kuyper and D'Angelo

(2009) contend that criticism is—this study will implement several forms of structure analysis in order to provide a thorough description of Pastor Scott's rhetoric from which to draw conclusions. Each of the four models for structure analysis is detailed below, especially in terms of the aspects involved for use.

Structure Theories

The Toulmin model.

Briefly mentioned above in the section regarding structure in argumentation, the Toulmin model is a method for diagramming the specific elements of an argument in order to assess its validity in each phase of transfer—from data to warrant and warrant to claim. In short, the major premise, or claim, of an argument is made based on the justification of relevant information or "truth." The most basic unit of an argument is data—the information which creates the case for the argument; however, data alone is not enough. Each piece of information presented leads into a warrant, which is the justification for the use of that information in the formation of the claim. Warrants introduce the relationship that connects the chain of reasoning from data to claim. The six common forms warrants present themselves as are generalization, analogy, signs or clues (e.g., smoke is a sign of fire), causality, authority, and principle (Werry, 2003). Assessment of arguments often requires the recognition of use and validity of these forms of warrants.

There is also the possibility that a qualifier for the claim and a rebuttal for that qualifier are given. These are conditions which place the claim in larger context; a qualifier stipulates under which conditions the claim is valid, whereas the rebuttal describes the possible conditions which negate the qualifier. The presence of these two

elements can be the difference between an argument that appears dogmatic and creates defensiveness and one that appears objective and stimulates thought, which will have a higher likelihood of success.

Ultimately, the Toulmin model is useful for reducing complex arguments into decipherable, logical connections. If Scott happens to use a complex argument, it will be a matter of simple observation to break it down and observe the types of logic she uses. Since one could argue that any situation involving advocacy (especially as it applies to homiletics) inherently contains an argument, it can simply be assumed that, at the very least, Scott's sermons can be recognized and identified by the elements of the Toulmin model. As the Toulmin model is one of four theories being utilized to determine the structure patterns in Scott's style, the more poignant question this research is intended to answer is:

RQ 1: How does Pastor Scott's use of Toulmin's structure positively affect the likelihood of her intended message's acceptance?

Monroe's Motivated Sequence.

Alan Monroe is another scholar to have had his name attached to an organizational model for persuasion (Monroe, 1975). Although Monroe's Motivated Sequence is actually devised as a guide for making persuasive speeches, it can still be used as a critical tool. Because this study is an application of communication theory to a rhetor whose expertise lies in theology rather than public speaking, if some semblance of

the sequence is found in her speeches, it could be argued that communication theory is not only implicit but naturally occurring in ministry.

The sequence itself consists of five steps: gaining attention, identifying the need, proposing a solution, visualizing the results, and recommending action. Overcoming apathy is the most immediate demand for any persuasive message—which is why it is the first thing Monroe advises a speaker to do. Making an unusual or even startling statement or simply injecting enough energy into one's delivery should be enough. Once the audience is interested in hearing more, the introduction of the need for change or presence of a problem is necessary. This must be done in such a way that the audience registers on a personal level and begins to search for a resolution—which is then offered to them by the speaker. A solution to the problem must be given that satisfies the audience's now concerned minds about the aforementioned need, which includes the rebuttal of any possible objections, making it appear both feasible and effective. After proposing a solution, Monroe suggests that a speaker provide the audience with a way to visualize the future of the problem—either in a positive way, where the solution has eradicated the problem, or in a negative way, where inaction has led to further grief. Finally, the last step in the sequence is a call to action. After having been convinced that there is a problem and a way to solve it, an audience needs to know what to do when they leave the building in order to turn their agreement into positive action and enact the goals set forth by the speaker; for a pastor, this might be a call to do more, such as pray more or give to those in need more, or it might be a challenge to not do something, such as think sinful thoughts or detract from the glory of God. In addition to a challenge or appeal, the call to action could be in the form of a powerful illustration, such as a narrative

displaying the virtue of the action, or a statement of personal intention, whereby the speaker's credibility is transferred into popularity. Monroe's sequence is simply another one of Scott's options and, while she may use some or none (certainly not all) of these persuasive strategies, this researcher suspects that her arguments will necessarily follow, to some degree of closeness, this sequence of events—the question being, to what extent:

RQ 2: How does Pastor Scott's use of Monroe's Motivated Sequence positively affect the likelihood of her intended message's acceptance?

Transformative explanation.

Understanding the way in which people may use the English language to methodically alter an audience's perceptions of a subject through education has become something of a science. As Rowan (1995) makes clear, exposition is not simply the arrangement of speech but requires a planned strategy based on the discursive aims put forth by Kinneavy (1971). When a speaker's goal is to transform the audience's understanding—especially in the case of high ego-involvement on both sides, as is often the case within the public sphere of theology—unique obstacles must be managed.

What makes altering perceptions difficult is that these perceptions guide action though they are mostly tacit in nature (Whaley, 1999). To counteract our inability to know what perceptions and attitudes an audience holds, the model of transformative explanation allows a speaker to refute a commonly held belief about a subject, then advocate for a more accurate belief. As with Monroe's Motivated Sequence, there are five steps: stating the lay theory, acknowledging the lay theory's apparent plausibility,

demonstrating the lay theory's inadequacy, conveying greater understanding of the issue, and suggesting the more adequate theory.

Before attempting to motivate an audience to rethink a belief or attitude they have, allowing for time to acknowledge what it is that the audience members actually believe is necessary. This first step is especially helpful when referring to something abstract or something which is implicitly understood, which would require the first step to both prepare the audience for instruction as well as overcome apathy towards the topic. In order to appear unbiased and objective, the second step requires an explanation of the strength of the lay theory in a way that a proponent of the theory would agree with. This reduces defensiveness in addition to providing specific points for refutation, which is the third step. In order for an audience to abandon a lay theory, they must become dissatisfied with its inability to explain important phenomena and agree that promoting the theory is counterproductive. The penultimate step is to bring the audience's knowledge to an appropriate level with which to make a judgment in favor of the theory soon to be proposed; this can be in the form of factual knowledge, scientific or otherwise, the nature of the situation, or the practical use of logic. Only after all of this is done can a new theory be submitted to the minds of the audience for approval. Using the information from the previous step to prove the adequacy of the new theory, the odds of audience perception should be in favor of the speaker. As Pastor Scott attempts to redefine her audience's perception of biblical information, it will be valuable to determine whether she uses any of the parts of this model; in addition, if her sermons show a close relationship with this structure, the implications for the interrelatedness of communication and ministry could become too significant to ignore.

RQ 3: How does Pastor Scott's use of transformative explanation positively affect the likelihood of her intended message's acceptance?

Metanarration.

One of the most prevalent vehicles of communication on a societal level is the narrative. Narratives—stories that transfer meaning—serve to create public memory that makes sense of the past, present, and future, and to create culture by teaching cultural values, providing a notion of causality in a community, and intensifying feelings of identity and belonging by allowing an outlet for emotional investment in a community or culture (Palczewski et al., pp. 117-128).

Perhaps it is best to view metanarration as a step-wise process, as in the flowchart illustrated below, which is an adaptation of that outlined by Venette (2003); however, it is important to note that the original use of this concept is applied to crisis communication in organizations. In order to make a comment about the collective narrative about a situation, there must simply first be a primary narrative which contains errors—an actual, literary narrative in the case of theology: English translations of the Bible. According to Benoit's typology (first presented as a theory of image restoration in 1995; Benoit, 1995a), there are five ways to respond to primary narration: denial, evasion of responsibility, reducing the offensiveness of the act, correcting the wrong, and mortification.[4]

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[4] For further reading, see Benoit's numerous case studies regarding post-crisis image restoration: Benoit, 1995b, 1997, 2011; Benoit & Czerwinski, 1997; Benoit & Hanczor, 1994; Blaney, Benoit, & Brazeal, 2002; Brinson & Benoit, 1996.

While churches do occasionally need to employ these strategies (Courtright & Hearit, 2002), there are other uses for metanarration than image restoration specifically, such as dissociating appearance from reality (not actual reality, however, but the reality that is socially constructed [a school of thought in sociology known as "social constructionism"]; Hearit, 1995, pp. 122-124), whether between opinion and fact, individuals and groups, or act and essence, which often results in passing the blame to some other entity (Hearit, 1994, p. 119; Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969, pp. 411-459); however, for the purpose of this study, metanarration is not meant in any of the above senses of word (e.g., as applied to crisis communication), which is indeed a specific rhetorical strategy for a specific rhetorical situation—it is simply not the way metanarration pertains to Pastor Scott's sermons.

The application of metanarration to be used here is the technique for resignifying public perception about a primary narrative. The best criterion for determining whether metanarration is being used is whether a primary and secondary narrative can be identified, where the secondary or reconstructed narrative serves to correct a common misconception based on the primary narrative. For example, large organizations often employ metanarration to maintain company image after a crisis has occurred by reshaping the public's interpretation of the primary narrative which is usually overwhelmingly negative (Coombs, 1999). In the context of the sample used in this study, the primary narratives are the biblical passages from the English-language Bible and the secondary narratives are Pastor Scott's retellings of those passages based on a more in-depth understanding of the Scripture as it was written in its original language.

As the graph below demonstrates, a response to a primary narrative leads to the creation and reiteration of a secondary narrative, which serves to establish and maintain a positive reaction to a particular event—which, in Scott's case, is the revelation of potentially offensive theology. Pastor Scott could easily use metanarration to accomplish her goal of reshaping her audience's misconceptions about the meaning of biblical passages while avoiding a negative reaction, as well as creating a group of people who are able to spread the information to affirm the secondary narrative and gain acceptance among those who are invested in the primary narrative.

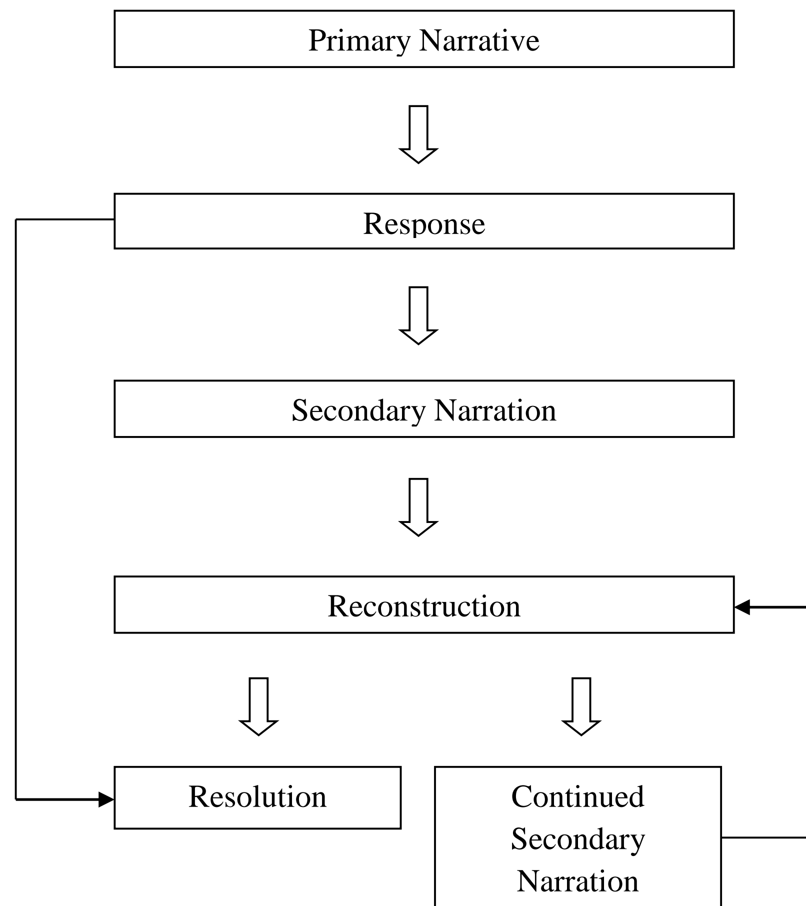

Illustration 1: The Step-wise Progression of Metanarration

This simplified chart shows the progression of the process of achieving narrative shift through metanarration. Once a target narrative is identified, a response must be given in a way that is contextually appropriate to explain the events detailed in said narrative. Upon receiving a more accurate secondary narrative, the process must be continued by those who have heard the response and new narrative spreading the information—in most cases. Through the increased credibility gained from multiple sources providing the information of the secondary narrative, an organization or individual person can create a reconstruction of the events that demanded the response in the minds of its audience, which is typically the public in general. If resolution is not achieved, reiteration of the new narrative must continue to provide this reconstruction until the narrative is accepted and the situation is resolved.

Unfortunately for congregational pastors, the modern format for spiritual instruction does not usually allow for elaboration beyond the individual sermon given for each narrative that is addressed, forcing pastors to provide all the necessary steps to reconstructing opinions about a Scriptural passage in a single speech. For this reason, it is logical that those who preach ensure they have every available tool which will help them achieve their goals. For pastors like Scott, whose goal is often reshaping entire congregations' understanding of the Holy Scripture, the knowledge and use of the procedure for metanarration could be drastically helpful.

RQ 4: How does Pastor Scott's use of metanarration positively affect the likelihood of her intended message's acceptance?

Chapter Three: Methods

Boundaries

Pastor Melissa Scott has been selected as the subject of analysis for her unique style of persuasion and ability to control her use of language. To appropriately limit the amount of material that must be analyzed, three texts have been selected (recordings of Scott's sermons that have been posted on Youtube) which amount to just under eighteen minutes in total length. In order to ensure a thorough analysis, the focus of the criticism will be centered around a specific element of the rhetorical act—namely, structure (as driven by purpose)—as it applies to the persuasiveness of her message (after all, apparent persuasiveness will be the arbitrary measure of effectiveness for her style of expository preaching).

All three of the videos in the sample come from a channel devoted to clips of Pastor Scott's teaching.[5] The first of the three videos is titled "Forgiveness (Ephesians 4) by Pastor Melissa Scott", was uploaded April 14th, 2012, and is four minutes and fifty-five seconds (4:55) long. The second video is titled "The Call of God by Pastor Melissa Scott", was uploaded October 21st, 2009, and is eight minutes and twenty-seven seconds (8:27) long. The final video is titled "Pastor Melissa Scott teaching on [sic] Guilt and Sin", was uploaded February 22nd, 2008, and is four minutes and twenty-one seconds (4:21) long. These videos were chosen based on their inclusion of the unique style of preaching that is of interest in this study.[6]

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[5] The name of the Youtube channel is "Inthebrokenplaces".

[6] This style has since been largely abandoned by Scott for a more contemporary one, but as the style in these videos is the one that originally gained Scott her popularity and contains the uniqueness that may or

Analysis

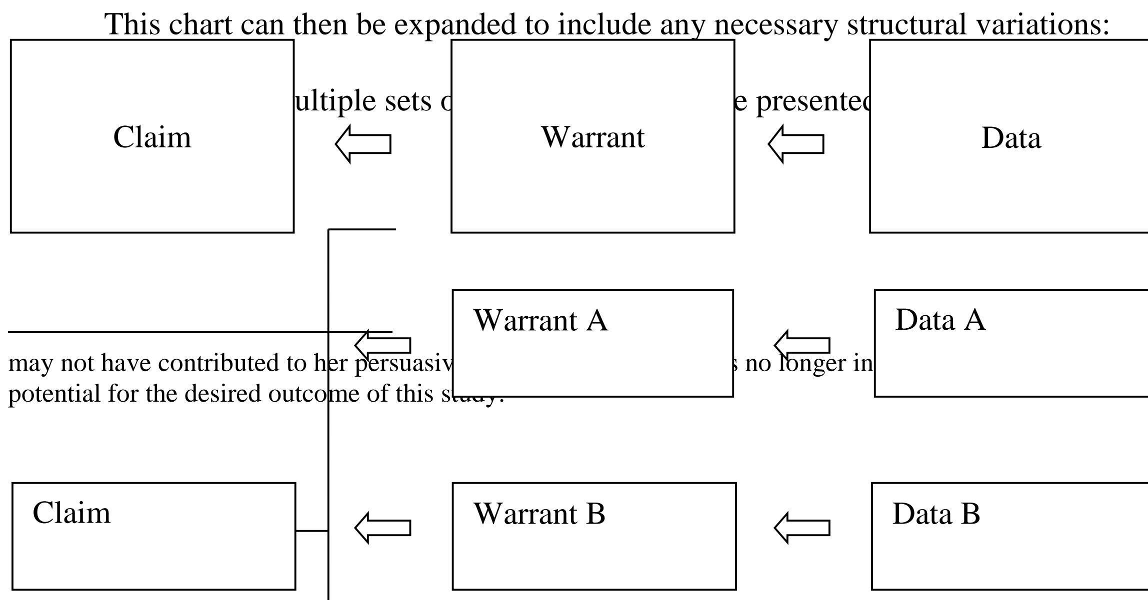
After first being summarized, each of the three videos—which could also be referred to as the texts, or units of analysis—will be broken down on the basis of the role any instances of strategies (e.g., metaphor, enthymeme, appeal) play in the structure of the speech. The purpose of the summary is to ensure that all cases of the general use of relevant communication concepts are reported so that secondary concepts such as frequency and density (not just how often, but *how many* and how often) of the devices might be revealed. The purpose of breaking the analysis down into parts is to effectively categorize the amounts of the specific communication techniques Scott uses, especially in relation to each other—perhaps she uses equal portions of all four, or (more likely) uses one quite heavily and the remaining three to support the one. Once this has been done, it will be possible to ascertain exactly how—if at all—Pastor Scott implements these techniques in order to strengthen the structure (thus, the persuasiveness) of her sermons.

Toulmin model.

The template for the graphical representation of the Toulmin model is constructed in many ways, but this study will borrow from Hart (1973), which presents the claim first, followed by the warrant (justification for the date, or evidence, provided), then data, as follows:

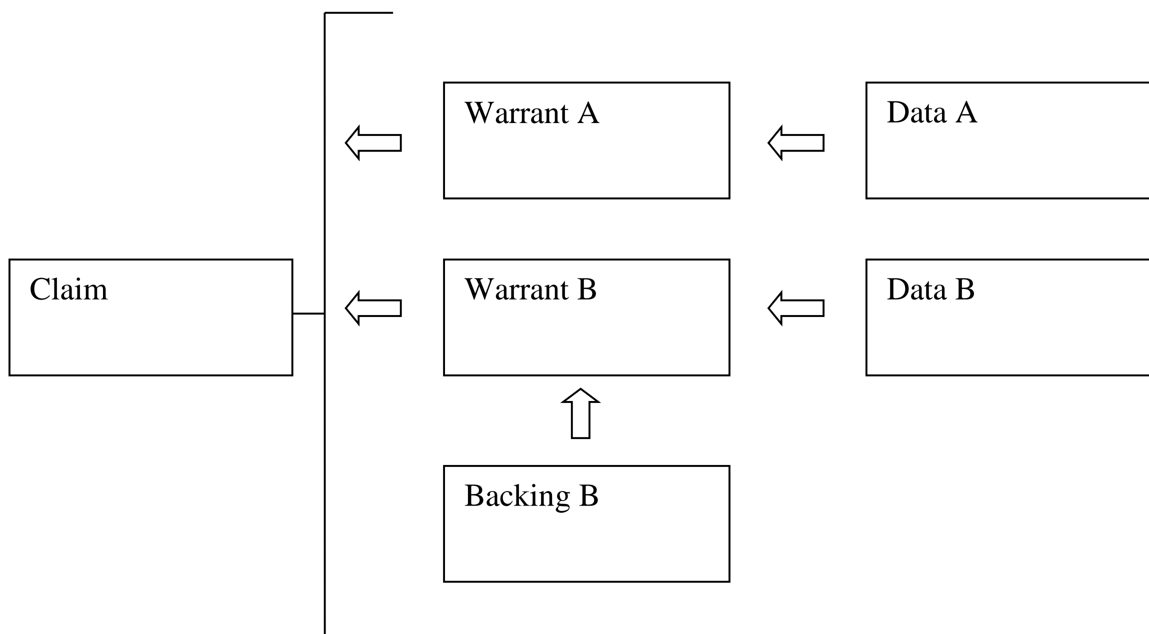
This chart can then be expanded to include any necessary structural variations:

ultiple sets o e presented

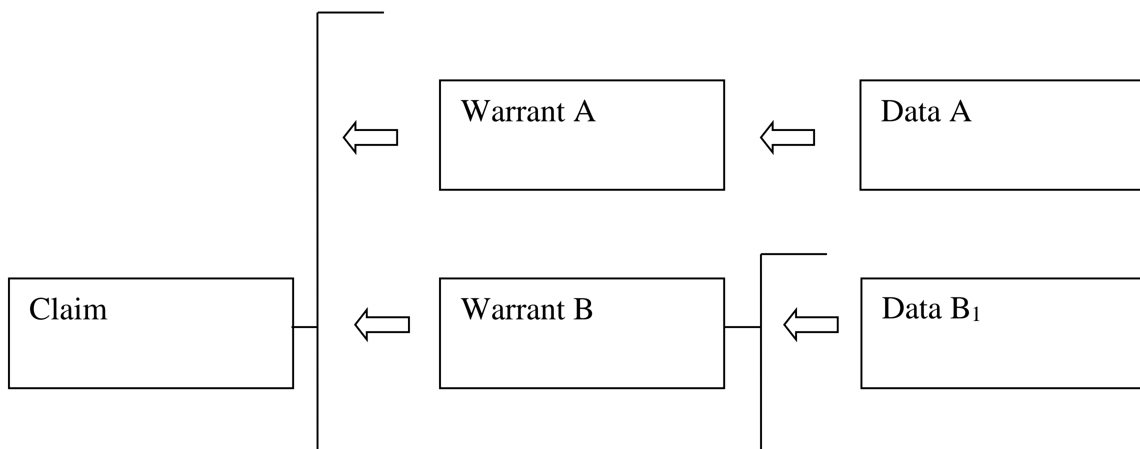


may not have contributed to her persuasiv no longer in
potential for the desired outcome of this study.

- In the event that backing is provided for a warrant, a space is provided:



- In the event that multiple points of data are used for a single warrant, a bracket is added:



- In the event multiple claims are made, more than one bracket is used:

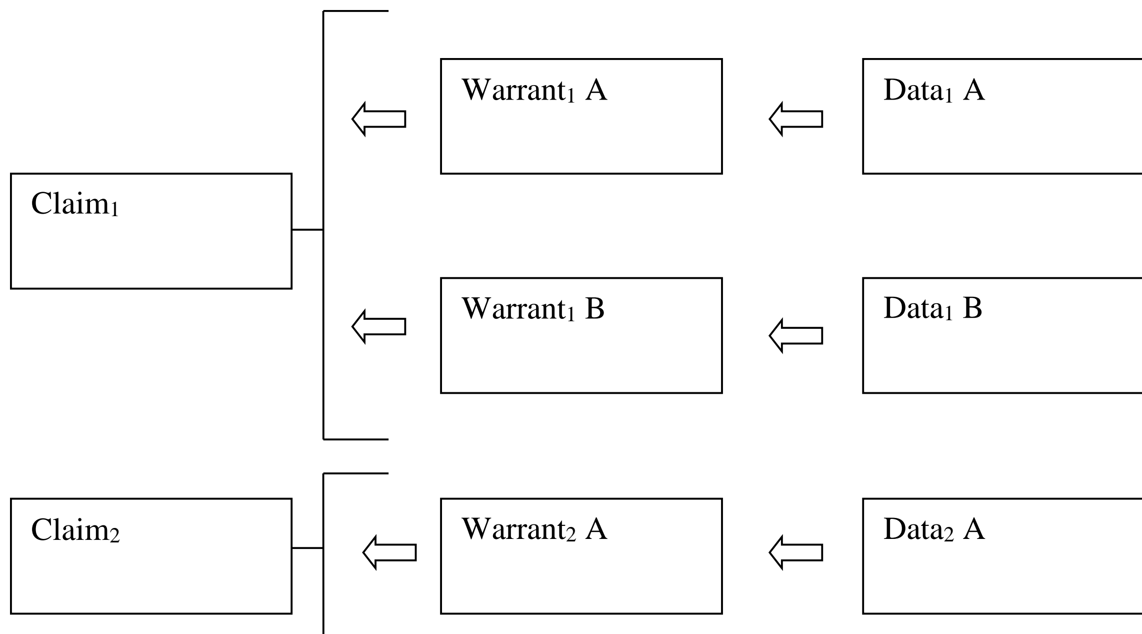


Illustration 2: Forms of the Toulmin Model

Two additional possibilities are that a qualifier for the claim and a rebuttal for that qualifier are given; however, in the event that this happens, they will simply be included in the claim statement to avoid further complicating the diagram. For each sermon, the elements of the argument will be presented in a diagram first, followed by an identical diagram with the quotations that demonstrate each element in their respective places.

Monroe's Motivated Sequence.

Without a diagram with simple inputs, the next best way to graphically represent a speaker's use of the various parts of persuasive guides is perhaps a table containing a column for reporting whether a certain part is presented or not and, in the case that it is, which statement in the speech demonstrates the device. For Monroe's motivational sequence, the table would be as follows:

	Presence	Example of use
Gaining attention		
Identifying need/problem		
Proposition of solution		
Visualization of participating successfully		
Call to action		

Table 1: Monroe's Motivated Sequence

The column labeled "Presence" will contain one of three qualifiers: "Strong," "Weak," or "Missing." If the step is represented in the text, the following column will contain the quotation of the statement made in Scott's sermon which demonstrates the use of that step.

Transformative explanation.

In order to establish whether Scott is in fact using transformative explanation or not, her arguments will be applied to the five-step structure of the explanation process. Quite simply, if it is possible to prove that her argument follows the pattern set forth by Rowan, then it will be possible to claim that Scott uses the method of transformative explanation in her sermons. The chart will then be constructed in this way, with columns identical in function to that for Monroe's Motivated Sequence above:

	Presence	Example of use
State common theory		
Acknowledge common theory's plausibility		
Demonstrate common theory's inadequacy		
Convey greater understanding of the issue		
Propose more adequate theory based on new understanding		

Table 2: Transformative Explanation

Metanarration.

Following the causal connection display model used to visually reproduce the Toulmin model, a simplified version of the metanarration flowchart presented in the literature review (p. 42) will be used to label the basic elements of the metanarration

process: the primary narrative, the response, and the secondary narrative. The resulting figure will serve to demonstrate whether Pastor Scott uses an argument to construct a secondary narrative that corrects the error of a primary narrative; for example, arguing for different meanings of words in a biblical passage to produce a more correct translation than the standard, flawed translation. The relevant content of each sermon will be displayed as follows:

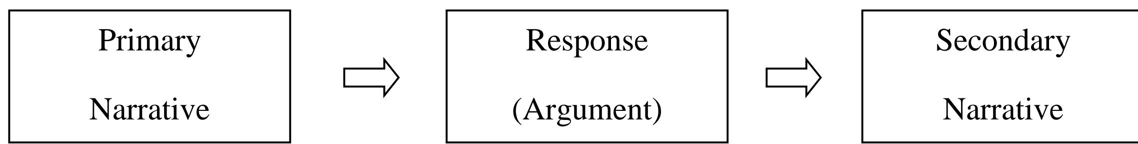


Illustration 3: Simplified Model of Metanarration

In the event that the argument and/or secondary narrative are absent, an "X" will fill its place. Otherwise, the statements which represent these criteria will be placed in the appropriate part of the figure.

Summary of Methods

Thus far, four key concepts in the field of communication studies that are indicative of persuasive speeches have been identified. Realizing that sermons are in essence persuasive speeches, the selected texts will be scoured for examples of these concepts in order to determine whether Scott uses these strategies for enhanced communication in her treatment of biblical translation and the impact more accurate translations can have on the meaning of biblical text. The next step of this research is the search for examples in the videos for these concepts in order to allow for a judgment to be made based on the evidence that is found. Following the reporting of the results, the current and potential impact for the overlap between communication studies (rhetorical

criticism) and biblical studies (expository preaching) will be discussed, not only in terms of Scott's preaching, but for the greater preaching community as a whole.

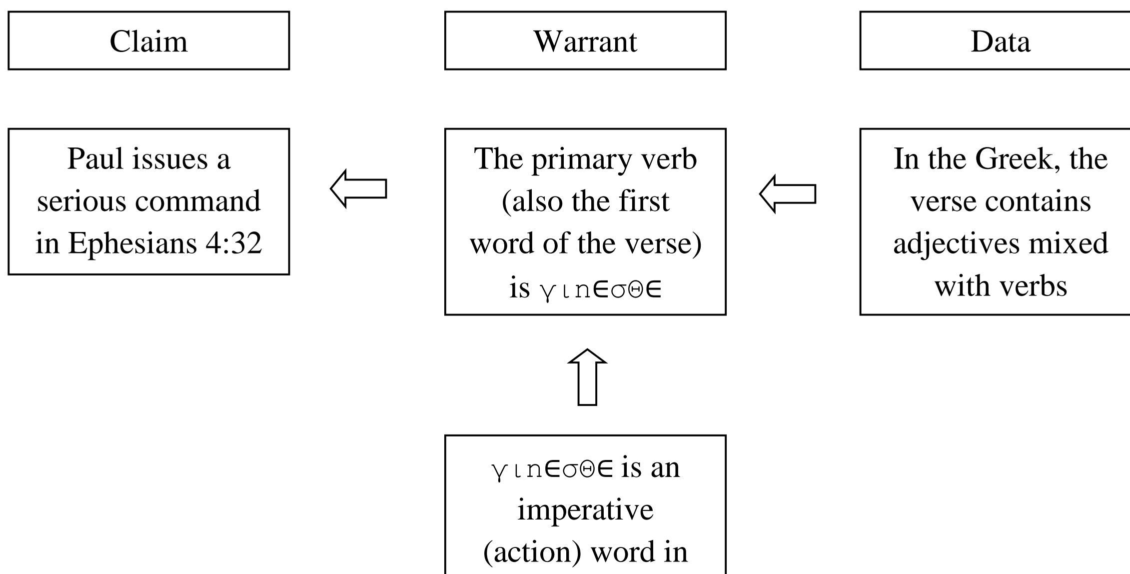
Chapter Four: Results

Approximate transcripts for each sermon, as called for by Burke's method of generative criticism, have been made into an appendix which can be found on page 111.

Analysis of "Forgiveness (Ephesians 4) by Pastor Melissa Scott"

This video shows Pastor Scott's instruction about the true meaning of Ephesians 4:32 in regard to the command to "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (New International Version). By observing the nature of the original Greek, she argues that this verse issues a strong command: to become the type of person who freely forgives. True to form, she bases her argument around the fact that modern translations make ambiguous the parts of speech which particularly important words in the text belong to that collectively make these verses an imperative statement.

Argument structure using the Toulmin model.



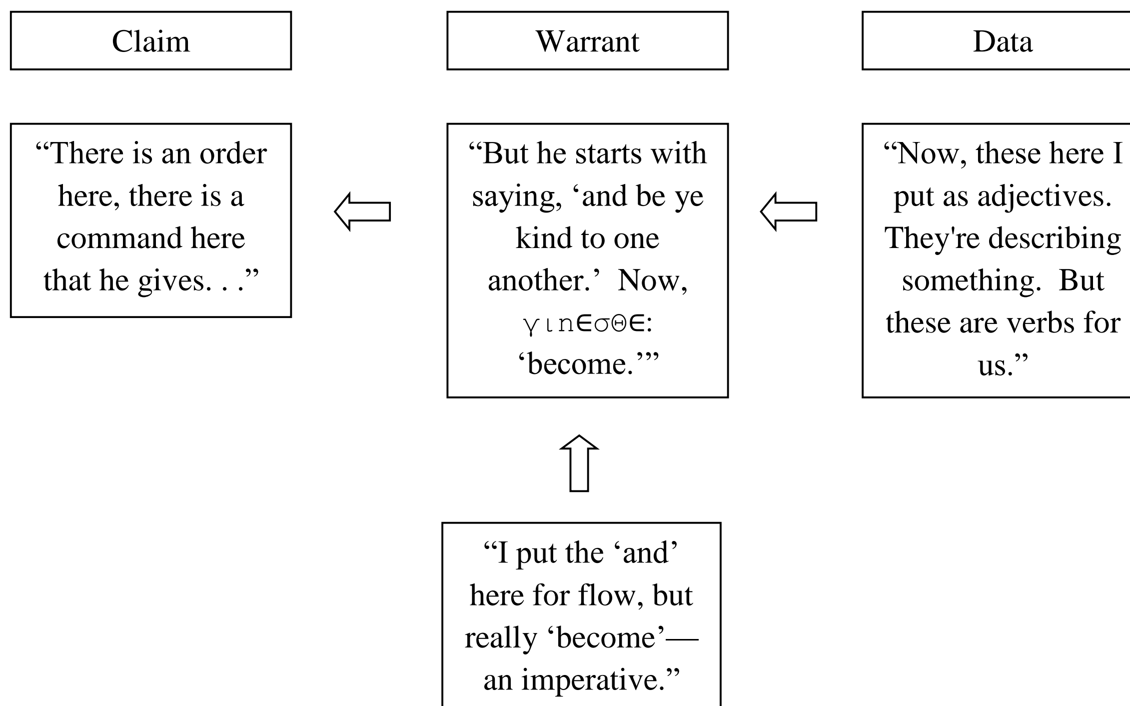


Illustration 4: Toulmin Model in "Forgiveness" Sermon

The topic at hand in this sermon is the true nature of what Paul is instructing the congregation at Ephesus to do. Pastor Scott points out that in the English translation, words that appear to be adjectives should actually be interpreted as verbs, thus changing the purpose of Paul's message. Rather than simply listing best practices for Christians, as it appears he is doing ("Be renewed in the spirit of your mind," "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath," Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth," "Be ye kind, one to another," etc.), Paul is actually challenging the church in Ephesus to transform into a certain kind of person that does these things—not simply doing them due to supposed obligation, but to actually become the type of person to willingly and happily do them.

While any given speech may contain any number of claims, the purpose of the Toulmin model is to display the central argument running through the dialogue and is usually seen as an overarching theme within the speech or text. For Pastor Scott, this should usually be warranted data that supports a claim involving an alternate interpretation of Scripture; in this case, it is that Ephesians 4:32 is an active command to change rather than a passive list of admirable character traits for Christians to strive towards. Thus, we arrive at the claim being that Paul is issuing a command in the selected passage. The evidence (data) presented is that the original Greek passage contains a different mix of nouns and adjectives than the English translation. This evidence is qualified by the specific example of the Greek word "γιn∈σΘ∈," which is an action verb in the Greek as opposed to a helping or linking verb in English. This changes the verse's emphasis from being kind (the assumed verb in the English translation) to actually becoming (the verb in the Greek) a kind person.

While the purpose of any argument can be—and inevitably will be, on occasion—misinterpreted, we can be confident in setting the elements of this sermon in their above places by acknowledging the pattern of progression found in Pastor Scott's sermons. As was commonly Scott's style, the entire argument presented through this sermon revolves around new information in the form of a lesson in linguistics. As such, the claim is that statement which indicates new meaning of some text; in this case, that a passage found in the book of Ephesians is an imperative statement and nothing less. The data for Scott's arguments will more often than not be a presentation of a word or group of words which are not entirely accurate within the English-translation Bible. Indeed, in this sermon, she focuses on the intended meaning of the word "become" as it is presented in Ephesians

4:32. To justify the correlation between the difference in meaning for this word and the difference in meaning for the entire passage, she explains that the word as we find it in English and the word as it is written in the original Greek are classified as different parts of speech (i.e., one is a helping verb, the other an action verb). Viewing the progression of her argument with its purpose in mind, there is little room for disagreement over the labeling of the claim, warrant, and data.

Argument structure using Monroe's Motivated Sequence.

This sermon appears to follow the steps laid out by Monroe rather well, with the exception of a missing piece. As is common practice for homily, the Scriptural passage is read in its entirety before Scott makes any comments. In the two minutes between gaining attention and stating the problem, Scott is reading the ten verses from Ephesians. Then, after another minute and one half of translating the passage as it is written in Greek word by word, she restates the problem with the side by side comparison of the two translations. By making note of the differences the words have in part of speech, she is able to draw the conclusion that different words in the verses have different purposes—namely, that the verbs are commands. Armed with this knowledge, she presents a resolution to the discrepancy between the two languages: that the emphasis is upon the verb "become," making that command the true intent of Paul's message to the Ephesians.

Where the sermon deviates from the course of the Motivated Sequence is when Scott leaps from her proposal of a solution to the call for action. By neglecting to address the future of the issue, Scott's audience is not given the time to imagine the consequence—good or bad—of implementing her solution of becoming forgiving. Instead, Scott reiterates her point that the verse is a command and, in doing so, implies

	Presence	Example of use
Gaining attention	Strong	"We are in Ephesians today . . . so we know what we're talking about." [0:10]
Identifying need/problem	Strong	"There is a command here, that he gives, and this is what I want to look at very quickly." [1:30] ; "I wanted to make this correction, because it's [the translation] very misleading." [3:10] ; (After reading King James Version translation) "No. . . I mean, it sounds very nice and poetic, but no. Not so." [3:20]
Proposition of solution	Strong	"He's saying, '[*You*] *Become. . ."* [3:20] ; "You'd be surprised how many people ask me, 'Well, how do I do it?' And I'll go back to Paul, where he says, 'Become. *Become.*'" [3:45-3:55]
Visualization of participating successfully	Missing	
Call to action	Weak	"Not just, 'I'm asking you to.' This is one place where he tells us to." [4:00] ; "Forgiving is [a verb], which means it is an action. And it's an action which you—*you,* by the power of the Holy Spirit say, 'I'm forgiving.' We're not asked in any capacity to do anything beyond what we're told here."

Table 3: Monroe's Motivated Sequence in "Forgiveness" Sermon

that action is required in order to put the passage into practice. She does not, however, provide a description of this action in any of its many forms. Perhaps it could be said that she finds Paul's own call to action sufficient for the purposes of motivated her audience—and if so, that would not be an outlandish decision considering the religious context in which she is speaking. All in all, this sermon offers good examples for the majority of the parts of Monroe's Motivated Sequence, with the exception of

visualization of future success and a strong call to action in the end, and does so in the chronological order called for by Monroe.

Argument structure using the theory of transformative explanation.

	Presence	Example of use
State common theory	Strong	"It says, 'Even—in your King James, it says—even as God hath for Christ's sake forgiven you.'" [3:15]
Acknowledge common theory's plausibility	Missing	
Demonstrate common theory's inadequacy	Weak	"No. . . I mean, it sounds very nice and poetic, but no. Not so." [3:20]
Convey greater understanding of the issue	Strong	(All of the translating) [1:45-3:10]
Propose more adequate theory based on new understanding	Strong	"I'll come back to what Paul says when he says, 'Become.' Become. Not just, 'I'm asking you to.' This is one place where he tells us to become kind—and . . . forgiving is [a verb], which means it's an action—and it's an action which you, *you*, by the power of the Holy Spirit say, 'I'm forgiving.'" [3:50-4:20]

Table 4: Transformative Explanation in "Forgiveness" Sermon

One must first consider the unique context in which the theory of transformative explanation is being applied here in order to assign values to the text's apparent use of its elements: in ministry (and especially with Scott's specific interest in translation of Scripture), stating the common theory is often little more than recitation of a passage, as is the case in this sermon. Acknowledging the plausibility of that belief is also usually unnecessary, considering that most members of a congregation operate on the assumption that what is written in the Bible is true—it is, in fact, an essential characteristic of faith in many denominations of Christianity; therefore, where acknowledgement would normally

require little more than a nod toward the source of the information, its absence would not necessarily be surprising, nor would it necessarily detract from the perceived effectiveness or completeness of any argument which follows.

With that in mind, demonstrating an inadequacy in a biblical passage is a treacherous endeavor—one that requires tact and finesse if it is to succeed and not offend. Whereas Scott does not offer the strongest of such demonstrations in this sermon, she is able to politely remark at the passage's pleasing aesthetic while making it clear that she disagrees with the message being conveyed by the King James translation. In this particular situation, however, inadequacy equates to inaccuracy, as Scott aims to redefine meaning in a passage by redefining the words it contains. Scott certainly achieves this goal by elucidating the difference in parts of speech between the Greek and the English versions, for even though her only explicit reference to the connection is a simple denial, it is substantially supported by the previous lesson in translation. Her strongest suit, of course, is conveying a greater understanding of the issue; in fact, it could be argued that her translation-based method is the quintessence of exposition, offering the most accurate insight into the interpretation of Scripture by teaching the text in its original language. Having offered the information her audience needs to make a more informed decision about the meaning of the passage, Scott then lays out the new understanding gleaned from the knowledge of the parts of speech the words in Ephesians 4:32 belong to, allowing her audience to interpret the passage as the command it truly is. While this sermon does not include acknowledgement of the plausibility of the common theory and only weakly demonstrates its inadequacy, it has a strong start and a strong finish, earning solid backing from the theory of transformative explanation.

Argument structure using the theory of metanarration.

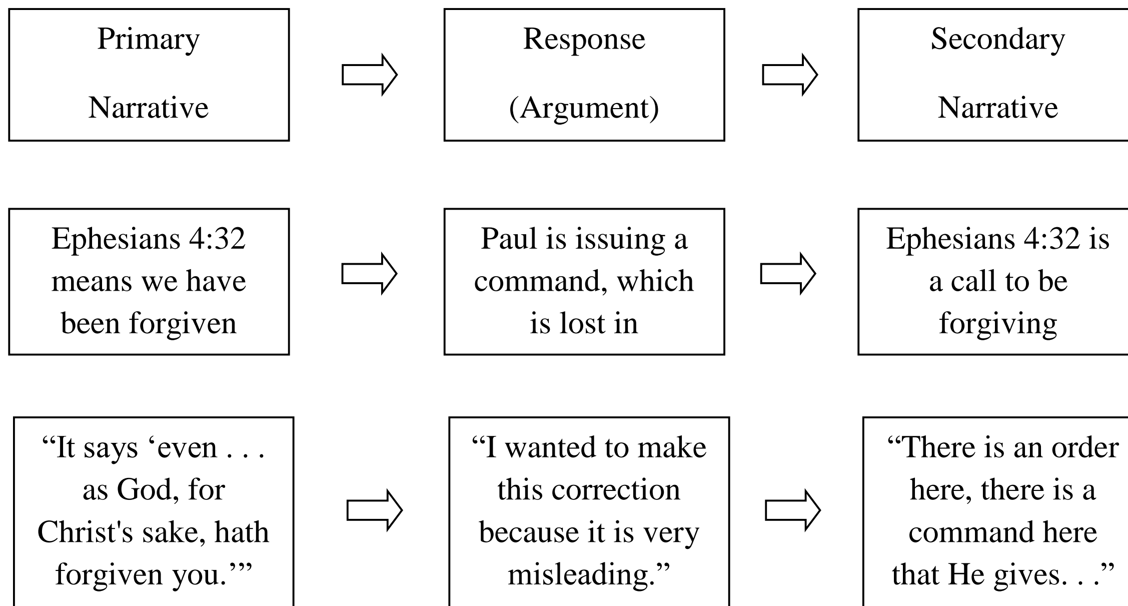


Illustration 5: Metanarration in "Forgiveness" Sermon

This format will likely represent any sermon—whether by Scott or any other preacher—in which the meaning of biblical text through translation analysis is the theme, for these arguments use translation as a bridge between a primary and secondary narrative. In this case, the primary narrative is the common interpretation of the verse at hand, where the emphasis lies upon having been forgiven. The response to this interpretation is a word-by-word re-translation showing the difference in connotation from the original passage. The secondary narrative is the new interpretation of the verse: that it commands us to be forgiving. This sermon structure is a clear example of metanarration.

Analysis of "The Call of God by Pastor Melissa Scott"

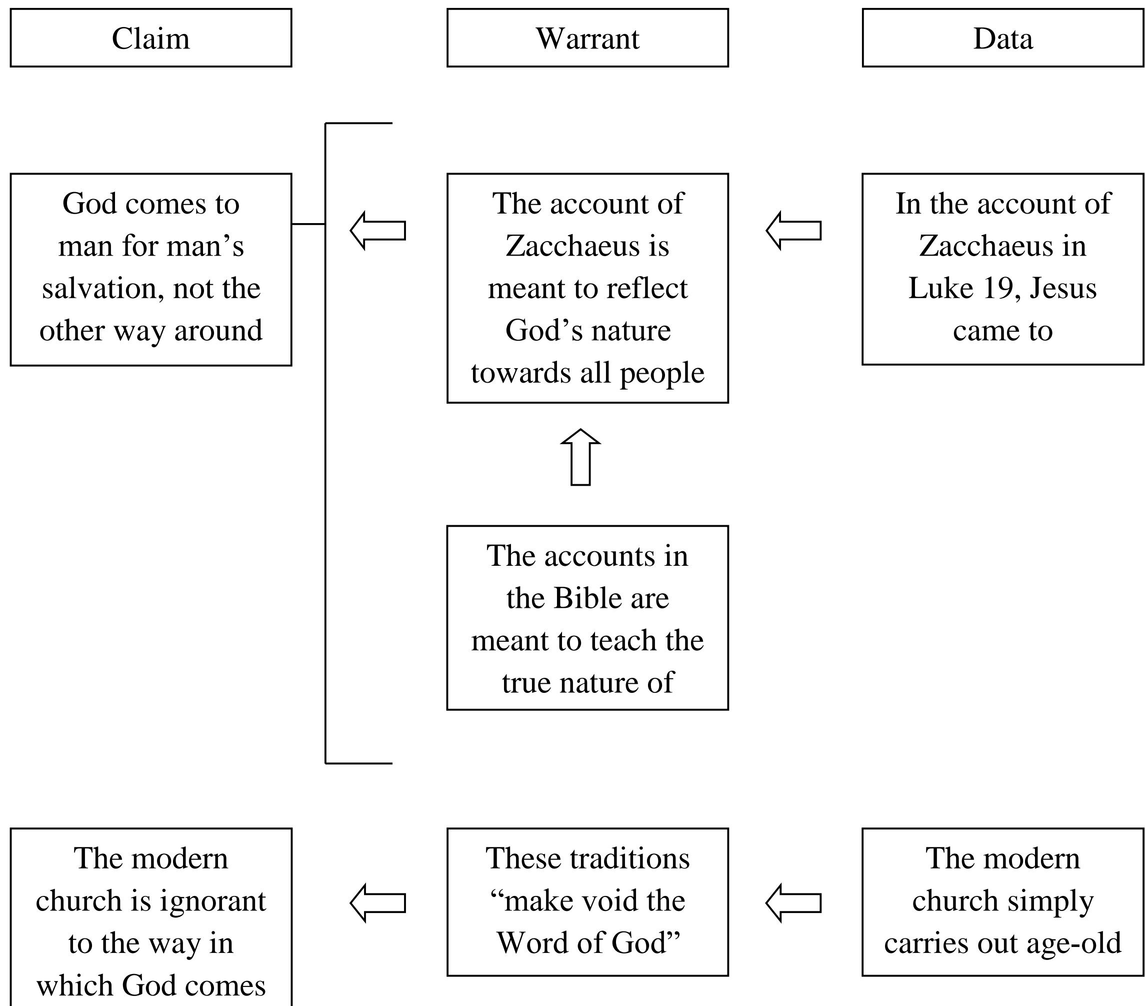
Though this video is the longest in the sample, the argument does not appear until the five-minute mark. The first five minutes are a combination of the reading of the text

(Luke 19) and providing elaborate imagery for the audience in order to describe the scene in the passage (the pericope of Zacchaeus and the sycamore tree). As soon as this is done, Scott comes right out and says, "This is the way salvation comes to man. I think it's a terrible shame—and forgive the simplicity of this message—but it's a terrible shame that the body of Christ, the church world at large today, is not showing people *this is how it happens.*" In order to substantiate her claim, she suggests the way Jesus approached Zacchaeus to stay in his house is the way He approaches each of us—an example of enthymeme, where the stated premise is that Zacchaeus was summoned by God in the Bible, the unstated premise is that the accounts in the Bible are meant to be applied to the modern reader, and the stated conclusion is that God summons man for his salvation.

Argument structure using the Toulmin model.

In order to demonstrate the mechanics of salvation, Scott uses the account of Zacchaeus in the nineteenth chapter of the Gospel of Luke as an illustration of the process in which man is saved from damnation. Ironically, Scott employs the reverse of the process that would be expected of her: rather than make an argument to provide a better interpretation of Scripture, she uses the interpretation of Scripture to provide a better understanding of a topic of theology. Her assertion in this sermon is that the modern Church has lost sight of the true way in which salvation occurs ("this is such a foreign message to the rest of the church world"), making her intention to correct the misconception. She attempts to accomplish this task by interpreting the sequence of events of Luke 19 as directly applicable to all people—in other words, that God seeks all people for their salvation just as he sought Zacchaeus for his.

This time, two major claims are made: the first is a theological one, with a



similarly theological warrant, whereas the second is a statement about the condition of the modern Church. The first and dominant claim in the sermon is that the process of salvation is the opposite of what much of the modern Church thinks it to be. Of course, the position that Scripture is directly applicable to modern life, while popular, is a controversial one; for this reason, Scott must be prepared to provide compelling reason(s)

for her audience to accept her message. Due to the fact that simply quoting Scripture as evidence is assuredly insufficient for some of her listeners, Scott follows the presentation of Scripture with a warrant that is all but implied until she makes a comment about

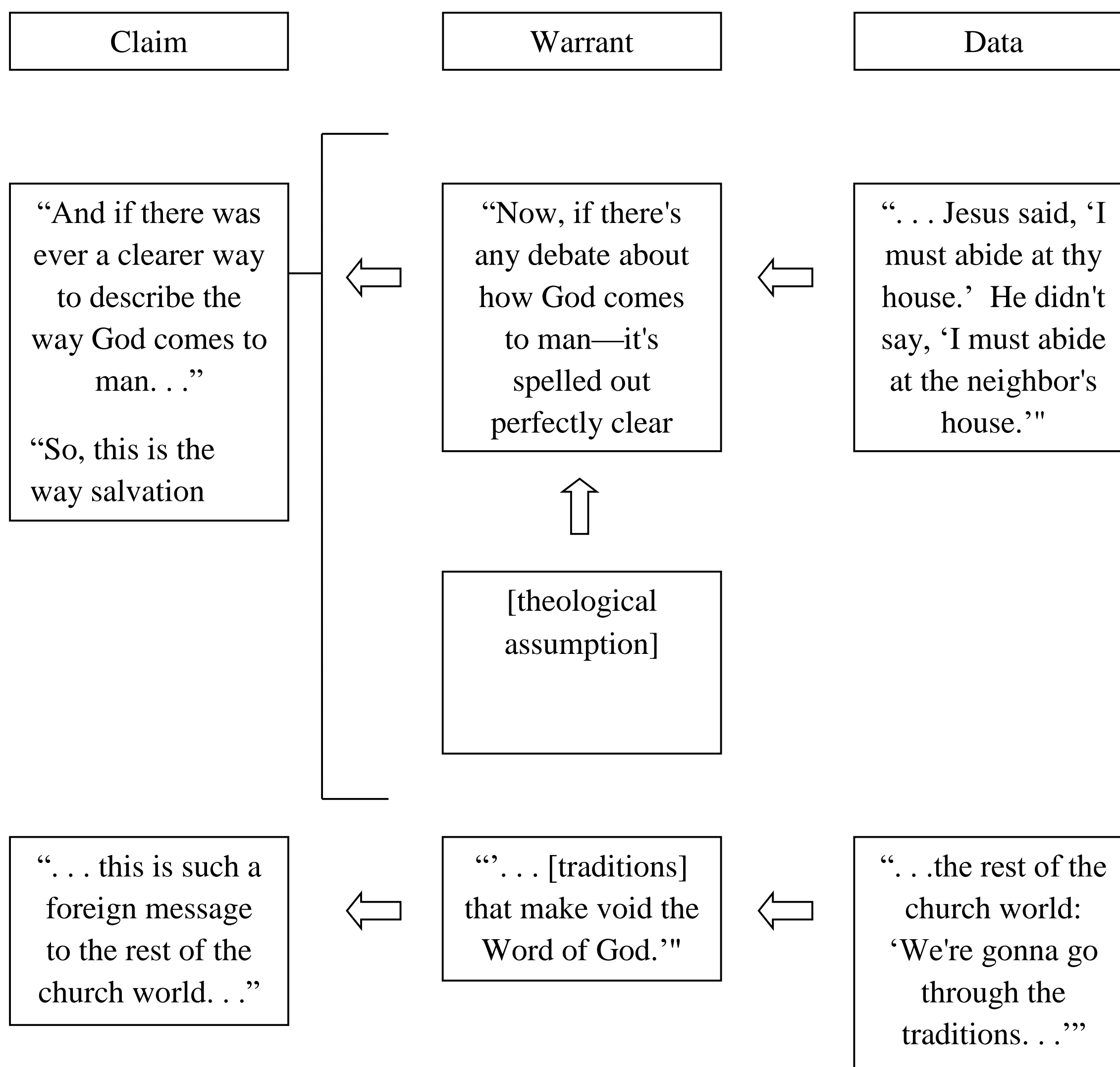


Illustration 6: Toulmin Model in "The Call of God" Sermon

feeling like she is the only one reading the Bible [5:40], which serves to express her position that those who wish to reveal the true nature of the world must read the Bible and apply its teachings to their lives. While this may not be the most "intellectual" (for lack of a better term) way to argue the connection between this ancient text and modern

American life, she cleverly alludes to the fact that whether these narratives actually occurred or not is irrelevant, as both sides of that debate agree that we are meant to learn particular lessons from the stories that the Bible contains.

Immediately after making her first claim, she makes a related, secondary claim to support the first: that the modern Church does not truly understand Scripture, essentially because it is too busy following age-old traditions to commit energy to reading and comprehending the Bible. This secondary claim is of note because Scott is able to demonstrate one of the various other capabilities of her style by using her usual resignification of Scripture to provide commentary on the modern Church's misunderstanding of essential Christian doctrine. In addition, it is worth mentioning that this argument is also an aside and, as such, received very little time for serious support from warranted data—Scott even says, "[F]orgive the simplicity of this message." She does, however, provide the reciting of ancient prayers as an example of a mostly hollow practice which exists solely for the reason of following tradition. In using that example to show how such traditions "make void the Word of God" (that is, cause the true meanings of Scripture to pass their adherents by), Scott attempts to make an argument for the nescience of the modern Church.

Finally, near the end of her sermon, Scott adds, "From this Word, two things are sure: God's grace is sufficient for Zacchaeus or for you or for me and that whatever was discussed in that house—whatever was said, Zacchaeus came out absolutely changed." The reason these things are not presented as major claims in the sermon, although they are certainly claims made based on Scripture, is that Scott had a different reason for drawing these conclusions than to prove that God's grace is sufficient—it is more likely

that she wanted to validate the solution she proposed based on that information: that (through God's sufficient grace) a close relationship with God is ready and waiting—but, more importantly, that God is actively anticipating and seeking out that relationship.

Argument structure using Monroe's Motivated Sequence.

	Presence	Example of use
Gaining attention	Strong	"I want you to picture this: there are thousands of people coming into Jericho—in that direction—heading towards Jerusalem, and here comes Jesus. . ." [0:10-0:20]
Identifying need/problem	Strong	"It's a terrible shame . . . that the body of Christ . . . is not showing people this is how it happens." [5:05-5:15]
Proposition of solution	Strong	"[Being] fixed on the Kingdom of God [is] the starting point of having a right relationship with Him and relating to Him." [7:50]
Visualization of participating successfully	Weak	"Again, it comes back to a recognition of who owns what in your life, who's the owner, who's the boss, who is calling the shots." [7:55]
Call to action	Strong	". . . have faith in God. Trusting Him who called you and brought you here, and has not set you up to fail but has given you the steps, ordered them and put you on a path to His Kingdom. Follow it. Stay on the course, would you?' [8:05-8:20]

Table 5: Monroe's Motivated Sequence in "The Call of God" Sermon

This sermon clearly follows the progression of the Motivated Sequence. Having spent nearly five minutes introducing the topic, reading the Scripture, and creating a detailed narrative of the events in the passage, Scott presents the problem: the Church is not demonstrating the process of salvation to the outside world. Taking several more minutes to emphasize key points in the Scripture, Scott provides a more personal solution

to this generalized problem: with God's sufficient grace, it is possible to be in the World but not of it, finding peace, mercy, and above all, salvation, through a relationship with the God. With a hint of metaphor to visualize this life of faith, Scott concludes with a series of instructions for her listeners: have faith, trust God, follow the path, stay on the course. Although the problem Scott identified was widespread, she was able to provide a personal resolution for her audience, along with a vivid list of positive action to reach it. Additionally, Scott suggests that after these actions have taken place and the Church begins to demonstrate the necessity of having a relationship with God (through fixing one's life upon the Kingdom of God), the outside world will begin to see the way God seeks man more accurately. This sermon appeared to follow the Motivated Sequence quite well.

Argument structure using the theory of transformative explanation.

In this sermon, Pastor Scott neglects to address the lay theory she is attempting to correct and provide explicit refutation of the misconception, including labeling the misconception itself. Instead, Scott presents a passage with extensive imagery and immediately begins detailed her interpretation. After six minutes, the issue presented in the events of the passage were clear—that the people misunderstood Jesus's actions, failing to realize he was reaching out to Zacchaeus for Zacchaeus's own salvation—but nowhere in the remaining two minutes does Pastor Scott clearly state what the new theory should be (that God seeks man for man's salvation)—except to say that salvation cannot be a coercive act. A more complete discussion would have included acknowledgement and refutation of the misconception she believes the Church possesses regarding the

process of salvation, as well as a clear delineation of the process she considers to be the correct one.

	Presence	Example of use
State common theory	Missing	
Acknowledge common theory's plausibility	Missing	
Demonstrate common theory's inadequacy	Missing	
Convey greater understanding of the issue	Strong	"Jesus didn't say, 'Hey, can you make room available for me? Hey, Zaccheus, can you spare a room for me? I'm knocking at the door, please let me in. It's cold outside. Let me in.'. . . Jesus said, 'I must abide at thy house.' He didn't say, 'I must abide at the neighbor's house.' He said, 'I must abide at *your* house.'" [5:15-5:50] "He [Jesus] didn't say to Zacchaeus, 'Look: before you get down from that tree there, I want you to say "My name is Zacchaeus. I am a sinner…I repent of my sins." Now, you cannot come down until you've said that a couple of times [and] until you believe it.'" [6:00-6:20]
Propose more adequate theory based on new understanding	Weak	"It [salvation] cannot come by coercion. There was something Zacchaeus was searching for—just like you and just like me. . ." [6:25-6:30]

Table 6: Transformative Explanation in "The Call of God" Sermon

Argument structure using the theory of metanarration.

The message of this sermon is not an entirely uncommon one in evangelical ministry: that God is "reaching out His hand" in order to establish an intimate

relationship with each of us, essentially taking all of the heavy lifting out of becoming a believer. The primary narrative involved is actually rather assumed—namely, that conventional wisdom states that it is quite difficult to enter into a relationship with God. Pastor Scott responds with the account of Zacchaeus and the sycamore tree, in which

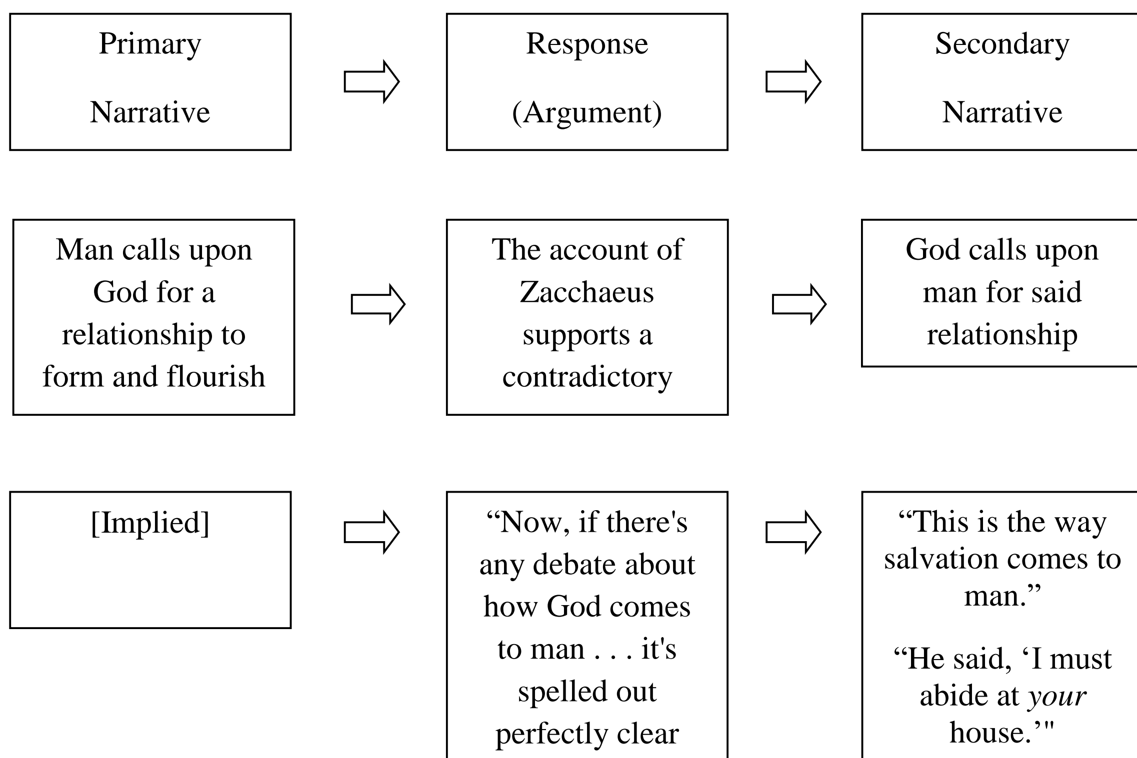


Illustration 7: Metanarration in "The Call of God" Sermon

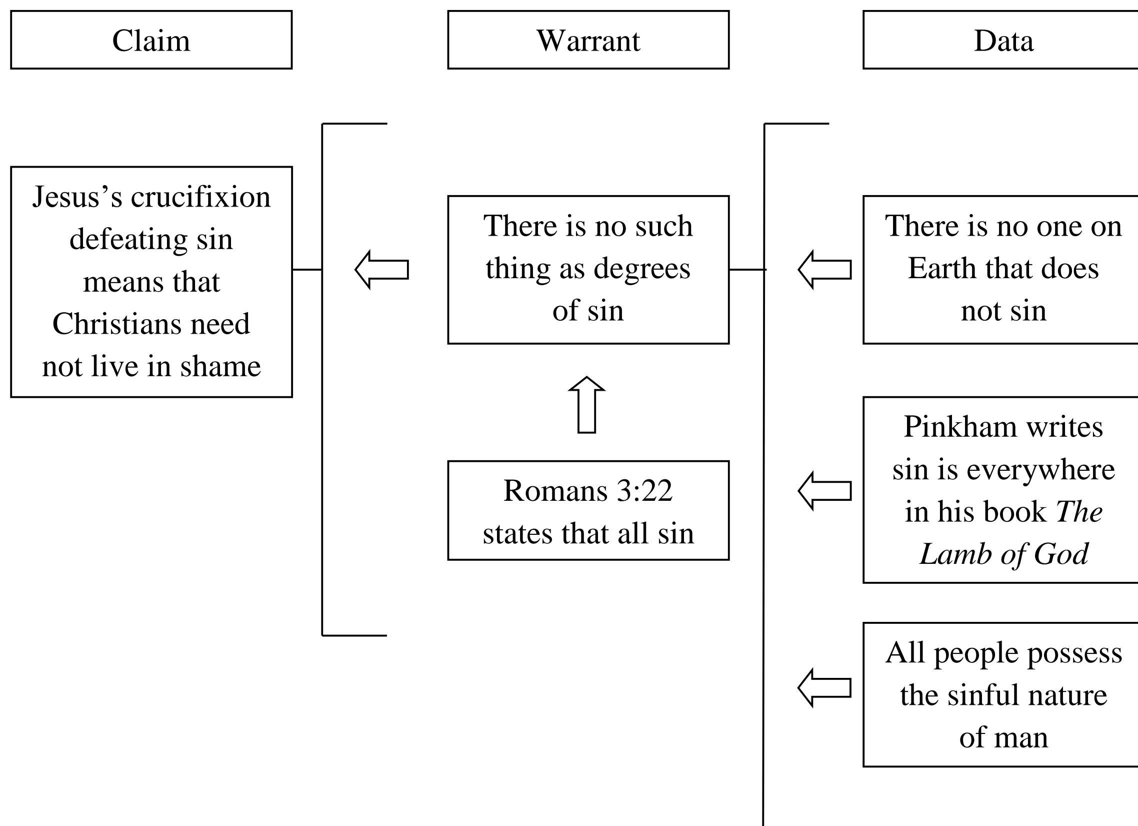
Jesus directly seeks out Zacchaeus of all people, a man hated within his own community for his greed and selfishness, and requests to stay the night in his home. The secondary narrative, then, is the complete opposite of the primary and is one in which God actively seeks each of us, requesting for us to allow Him into our lives. Once again, Scott's argument is a Scriptural one—though, this time, on the basis of interpretation error rather than translation error—and although the primary narrative is not explicitly defined in this

situation, the commonality of the theme allows for the successful implementation of metanarration.

Analysis of "Pastor Melissa Scott teaching on Guilt and Sin"

This video shows Pastor Scott presenting the basic message of the Gospel: that we live in a fallen world filled with sin, but have been redeemed by the death of Jesus Christ. Though there is little to no translation being done in the sermon, Scott does choose to discuss the meaning of the word choice in the passage from Romans 3—essentially, that sin is universal and unequivocally a part of our lives. The reason for highlighted this fact of Scripture is to demonstrate that all men and women, of every creed and nationality, received salvation through Jesus's crucifixion. Further, as the title of the video implies, the sermon serves to remind those who hear it that guilt and shame, along with our sins, were crucified on the cross and have no place in the life of the Christian.

Argument structure using the Toulmin model.



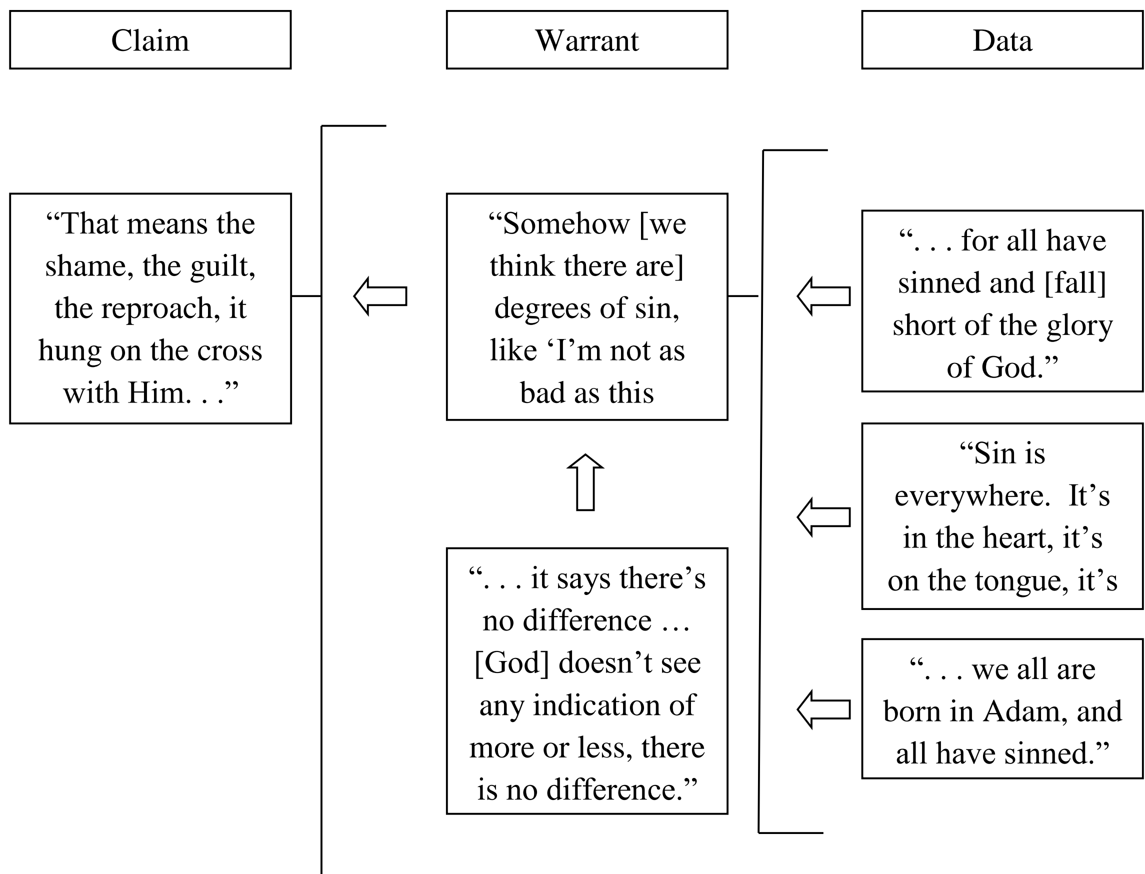


Illustration 8: Toulmin Model in “Guilt and Sin” Sermon

The benefit of diagramming arguments using the Toulmin model is that complex arguments can occasionally be reduced into a simpler, more understandable format. In the case of this sermon, it can be seen that several types of information were implemented, all to be substantiated by a single warrant, leading to a single claim. While

information was presented from several sources (e.g., Scripture from the Bible, anecdotal evidence from an author's book, and a hypothetical conversation from Scott's point of view), they all converged under a single biblical principle to prove a single point about Christian life. After jumping from one type of evidence to the next (to the next) the sermon ends just over one minute later, providing little time for the audience to process it. Fortunately, this is one message the Christian congregation has most likely heard many times before, suggesting the pace may have been a matter of adaptation to the audience's prior knowledge. Regardless, here the model shows a distinct funneling format in this sermon, with several types of evidence, a couple of justifications for them, and a singular claim to which they point.

As expected, Scott finds a passage of Scripture for which the meaning of certain words makes all the difference. In the verse from Romans, these words are "no difference." The claim being made here is not simply about the meaning of these words, however, but what that meaning implicates: that *all* sin has been defeated, eradicating the source of guilt and shame. Once again, Scott uses the meaning of Scripture as a tool to draw a larger conclusion about the psychological aspect of Christian life. Using biblical text, anecdotal description, and an allegorical conversation, Scott provides evidence that sin is pervasive in and inherent to the human condition. She then uses the well-known verse which states that all sin is equal to bridge the connection between our sinful nature and its redemption through Christ. Perhaps it is necessary to add that while some elements of this argument, such as the equality of sin and the universality of man's sinful nature, could appear to be claims in and of themselves, these are contextual assumptions made by the audience, enabling them to serve the roles of warrant and data, respectively.

All things considered, this sermon follows to some degree the standard procedure for presenting the Gospel message: that we all live in sin and fall short of the glory of God, but that Jesus's death rescued us from our otherwise dismal fate.

Argument structure using Monroe's Motivated Sequence.

	Presence	Example of use
Gaining attention	Strong	[at the very beginning] "Romans 3:22—the last portion of the phrase—and Romans 3:23. . ." [0:05] [after reading the passage] "That's my point of departure. Now, I picked a little something to read to you before I get started from Pinkham." [1:20-1:25]
Identifying need/problem	Strong	"You [can do] worse [than be a "bad person"] in the act of saying you're not like that person, spiritual pride and the sin of saying 'I'm not like him,' when the fact of the matter is you all—*we* all—are born in Adam." [2:55-3:05]
Proposition of solution	Strong	"Jesus, when He hung on the cross . . . He hung on the cross for me [and you]. That means the shame, the guilt, the reproach, it hung on the cross with Him." [3:30-3:40]
Visualization of participating successfully	Strong	"[B]y carrying it [guilt] around, I basically say, 'I'm just going to crucify Christ anew every day. That's my act.' I've got this bag on my back stuffed with my sin. Let me carry it around and show everybody what it looks like so you can all get a good look at what I'm carry around. And then if that's not enough, let me hand over what I'm carrying so you can beat me over the head with it." [3:45-4:05]
Call to action	Missing	

Table 7: Monroe's Motivated Sequence in "Guilt and Sin" Sermon

This sermon also followed the Motivated Sequence closely, but with a different missing piece than before. Scott establishes attention for both the initial passage in Romans and the additional passage from the author Pinkham, giving her audience cues to listen in for slightly longer than they might have otherwise. She then bases her argument with the presentation of the problem upon which to build—well known as the sinful nature of man. Following the identification of the problem, Scott explains how Christ's crucifixion was the ultimate solution, having already been done for our sake. Then, for the first time in our sample, Scott provides a vivid description of the consequence of the solution—though not exactly in the way Monroe intended, as in this case she chooses to describe the negative consequence of not adopting the solution by having guilt and shame metaphorically symbolized by a heavy burden upon one's shoulder which is then used as a weapon by others. This sermon did have a missing element, however, and was the only one to not make an explicit call to action; instead, it ends with "That's not the Christianity that I want, because that's not the Christianity that I came to know. . .or that's in the Bible, or that's been promised to me and to you." While the call to action is an extremely important part of the pattern, its absence does not outweigh the fact that this sermon undoubtedly shows significant similarity to the progression of Monroe's Motivated Sequence.

Argument structure using the theory of transformative explanation.

The closest Scott came to acknowledging the plausibility of the lay theory was imitating the person who might be holding to it, but in a conspicuously negative way (i.e., as someone who would beat a stranger over the head); therefore, not only is this not

proper acknowledgement, but it would have worked against her if a member of the audience saw it that way and was offended by her imitation. She did, however, offer an explanation of its inadequacy, however vague it was. The reason the Pharisee is used as proof of inadequacy is that the Pharisee was the ultimate hypocrite in biblical times, having impressive knowledge of the Bible as well as an impressive ignorance toward its

	Presence	Example of use
State common theory	Strong	"Like, 'I'm not as bad as this person—I didn't rob a bank, therefore I'm not as bad as that person. Well, I don't do that. . .'" [2:40-2:45]
Acknowledge common theory's plausibility	Missing	
Demonstrate common theory's inadequacy	Weak	"Hey, guess what? Go read the Bible. The Pharisee and the publican: 'I thank my God I'm not like so and so.'" [2:50]
Convey greater understanding of the issue	Strong	"You [can do] worse [than be a "bad person"] in the act of saying you're not like that person, spiritual pride and the sin of saying "I'm not like him" when the fact of the matter is you all—we all—are born in Adam." [2:55-3:05]
Propose more adequate theory based on new understanding	Weak	"That's not the Christianity that I want, because that's not the Christianity that I came to know, or that I know, or that's in the Bible, or that's been promised to me and to you." [4:10-4:15]

Table 8: Transformative Explanation in "Guilt and Sin" Sermon

meaning; therefore, if the Pharisees had the viewpoint that it is possible to be better than another person, it is an incorrect opinion to hold. Finally, although no call to action was made as Monroe's motivational sequence demands, there was a statement which suggested a more appropriate understanding of sin for the audience, following the final step of transformative explanation.

Argument structure using the theory of metanarration.

Once again, interpretation of Scripture has been used to argue for a new narrative, this time regarding the nature and consequences of sin. It could also be argued that this particular narrative shift is fairly common in evangelism as a whole: that Jesus's crucifixion served to redeem all people from their sin. To that end, Scott chose to personalize her message by focusing on the very specific word choice in the verse at hand. The primary narrative she introduces is of those who consider some sin to be more egregious than others, making some sinners "worse" than others. In response, she quotes Romans 3:22-23, in which Paul explains that sin is simply sin, and all sin leads to death. To substitute the previous notion, Scott offers a secondary one: that although the wages of sin is death, Jesus's death on the cross paid the debt owed my mankind and freed us from guilt over our human nature. A strong response, rooted in Scripture, makes this sermon an adequate example of metanarration in practice.

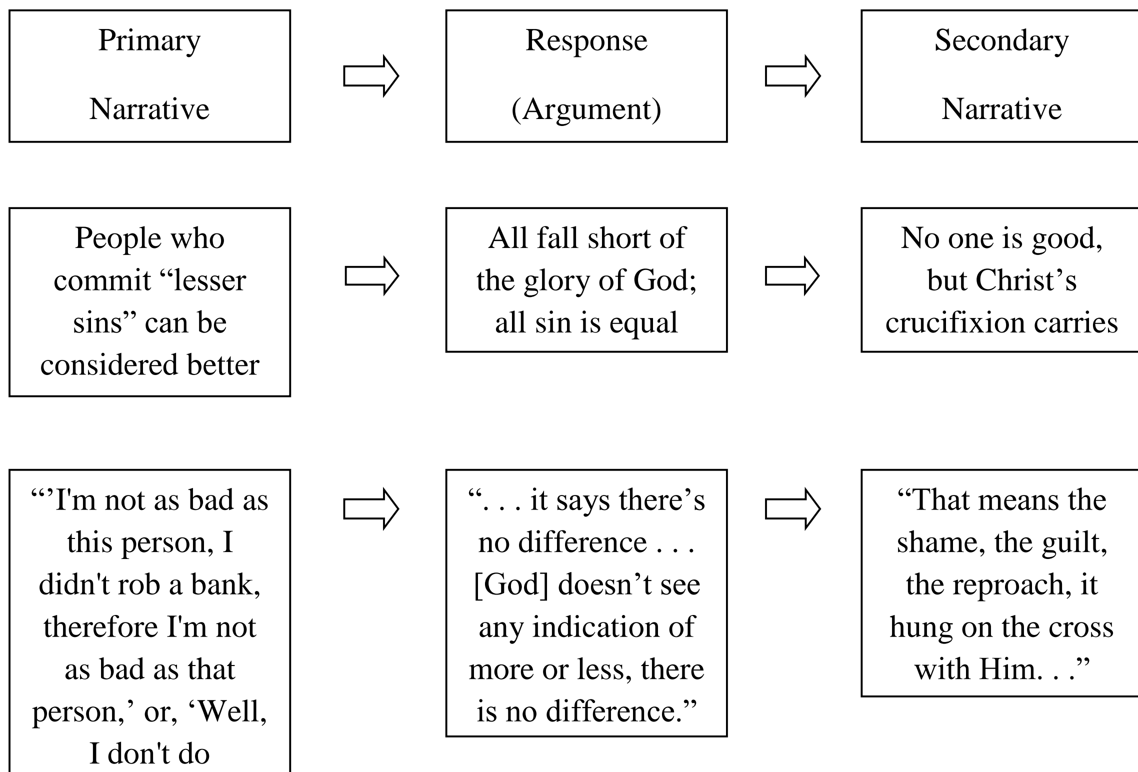


Illustration 9: Metanarration in "Guilt and Sin" Sermon

Cumulative Analysis

When applied on an individual basis, the structure theories used in this study can glean information about a single instance of rhetorical action. When viewed collectively, as parts of a broader rhetorical style, patterns emerge which reveal information about the speaker him- or herself. Generally speaking, Scott's sermons followed Monroe's Motivated Sequence more closely than the model for transformative explanation. Additionally, her arguments showed no predictable structural patterns through the Toulmin model—though the sample size was likely too small to detect any meaningful pattern in a model with so many variables. Whereas the first argument was mostly linear, with one claim, one warrant (with backing), and one point of evidence, the second had multiple claims, and the third had multiple points of evidence. In regards to metanarration, Scott appears to frequently implement Scripture-based arguments to advance toward a secondary narrative.

In terms of general persuasive tactics or strategies, Scott was usually rather straightforward. Rather than appeals to convince her audience, she seemed to rely on the credibility her congregation attributes to her. As audience adaptation is usually less of a concern for pastors—given they speak to roughly the same audience week by week—Scott's focus was most likely on invention, or the creation of meaningful content. Enthymeme was used in some capacity in one of the sampled sermons, though in a way

which is normal for ministry—namely, that the lessons in Scripture are intrinsically applicable to all. In sum, Scott relied less upon general communication "tactics", while making use of Monroe's Motivated Sequence more than transformative explanation in her argument structure as well as operating under the conditions necessary for metanarration to take place.

The tables below show the cumulative results of all three sermons, first for Monroe's Motivated Sequence, then for transformative explanation.

	"Forgiveness" Video	"Call of God" Video	"Guilt and Sin" Video
Gaining attention	Strong	Strong	Strong
Identifying need/problem	Strong	Strong	Strong
Proposition of solution	Strong	Strong	Strong
Visualization of participating successfully	Missing	Weak	Strong
Call to action	Weak	Strong	Missing

Table 9: Cumulative Results for Monroe's Motivated Sequence

	"Forgiveness" Video	"Call of God" Video	"Guilt and Sin" Video
State common theory	Strong	Missing	Strong
Acknowledge common theory's plausibility	Missing	Missing	Missing
Demonstrate common theory's inadequacy	Weak	Missing	Weak
Convey greater understanding of the issue	Strong	Strong	Strong

Propose more adequate theory based on new understanding	Strong	Weak	Weak

Table 10: Cumulative Results for Transformative Explanation

Viewed side by side, it is easy to see that the sample represented Monroe's Motivated Sequence almost completely, whereas only the "Guilt and Sin" video can be said to have come close to using the format for transformative explanation. One possible reason for this is that the Motivated Sequence follows a more natural flow, indicated by the fact that in each of the selected sermons, Scott introduces the steps of the sequence in chronological order. On the other hand, the model for transformative explanation, while it follows an equal logical progression, simply demands more of a rhetor in situations requiring education of or explanation to an audience. Likewise, the model for metanarration calls for a chronological presentation of certain information but, unlike transformative explanation, defines its terms more generally, allowing for a greater range of applicable context.

Given what we have found using these theories, we can now answer the questions raised regarding their relevance to the apparent persuasiveness to Scott's preaching:

RQ 1: How does Pastor Scott's use of Toulmin's structure positively affect the likelihood of her intended message's acceptance?

A well-constructed argument will present at the very least the three basic criteria displayed in the Toulmin Model: data, warrant, and claim. Similarly, increased complexity of the argument, while offering no guarantees as to its acceptance, should contain all the elements pertaining to any further exposition of data or warrants—namely,

backing, qualification, and rebuttal. Thus, the persuasiveness of any particular argument can be heavily attributed to its completeness in providing the reasoning required for effective agreement from its audience.

In the first of our three cases, Scott uses a relatively simple argument structure: a single claim, backed by a single warrant with some backing of its own, following a single point of evidence. While simple, this argument is also quite straightforward; in her effort to provide a more accurate understanding of the selected verse in Ephesians, Scott provides a single correction regarding the part of speech of a single word in the verse which alters its meaning entirely. By addressing the specific discrepancy between that single word in the original language and its English translation, including the context of the words surrounding it, Scott ensures that her audience is supplied with sufficient information to make an informed decision about the true purpose of Paul's statement in his letter. This sermon is a strong, albeit simple, example of persuasive speech on display through the Toulmin Model.

The second sermon in the sample introduces slightly more complexity than the first. In this case, Scott is both commenting on a parable found in the Gospel of Luke which she argues describes the process of salvation as well as making a broader statement regarding the condition of the modern Church as it pertains to the interpretation of such passages. As with the first sermon, Scott's argument for reinterpretation is mostly linear, with only one of each element presented for her primary claim. Unlike before, however, her first claim leads to another secondary claim, which encompasses a total of twenty seconds of her eight-minute presentation. While it, too, is quite linear and essentially a two-sentence interjection, this quick argument presents the over-arching implication of

the first: that the Church (and, subsequently, its congregation) is missing out on the true lesson Scripture such as this provides. This style of making a larger claim out of an example that demonstrates a smaller, more meaningful argument is certainly interesting, though the Toulmin model suggests it is disjointed, perhaps even unfocused. Were the two claims more developed, the argument would appear stronger, but as it is, it seems as though insufficient effort was applied to the secondary claim to send its message across.

Finally, the third sermon in the sample shows some variation by providing ample evidence for the claim it supports. Here, Scott draws from three separate sources of information to educate the audience about the nature of sin and its status in the life of a Christian. By consolidating that information into a single warrant, backed by Scripture, she is able to make a strong case for the uselessness of guilt. The Toulmin model shows an ideal "funneling" structure, making use of as much as is needed to come to a single conclusion. Of the infinite possibilities, this variation of the format would rank quite highly, as it certainly enhances the likelihood of audience acceptance according to the underlying theory.

In total, Scott showed a tendency to use linear arguments, presenting simple chains of reasoning. Within the selected sample, Scott did indeed include each necessary element for the Toulmin model to demonstrate a complete argument. According to their successful application to the model, it can be said that the structure of these sermons did in fact positively affect the likelihood of audience acceptance of the sermons' messages.

RQ 2: How does Pastor Scott's use of Monroe's Motivated Sequence positively affect the likelihood of her intended message's acceptance?

The theory behind Monroe's Motivated Sequence is that information can be presented in such a way that a rhetor is able to create a desired response in his or her audience; thus, if Scott's sermons show a similar structure to that of the sequence, it follows that her audience will be more compelled to positively respond to her pleas or admonitions. As such, the most important element in the sequence is arguably the call to action—after all, nothing is accomplished by bringing an audience to an understanding of a problem without also offering a solution.

Scott's sermon on forgiveness follows the first three steps perfectly, but has a weak finish. After skipping the fourth step, Scott concludes with a vague call to action—and, while her audience is likely well-accustomed to the sort of message she is presenting, Monroe calls for a rhetor to create a specific response through one's dialogue. Although the majority of the elements are present in this sermon, the one element that is missing disqualifies it as a representative of the sequence.

Scott's sermon about salvation is undoubtedly the best of the three when it comes to following the sequence laid out by Monroe. Each criterion is met with a clear example of their requirements, each presented in order. Interestingly, Scott uses plenty of visualization when describing the scene in the passage she reads from, yet fails to do the same later on when Monroe calls for reflection upon the consequences of the audience's action and/or inaction. Regardless, having a strong call to action makes this sermon a worthy example of the Motivated Sequence.

Scott's sermon on sin and guilt is also incomplete from Monroe's viewpoint. While four out of its five parts are well represented in this sermon, the final and arguably most crucial part is left out. After following the sequence exactly through the first four

steps, Scott abruptly concludes her sermon without providing a specific call to action to allow her audience to respond to her message the way she intends; therefore, it would appear that this sermon cannot be said to follow the Motivated Sequence.

Overall, all three sermons contained at least four of the five necessary steps to following Monroe's Motivated Sequence. For the two with parts missing, however, Monroe's theory would argue that a significant amount of persuasiveness is sacrificed without their inclusion—and along with that, the chances for her audience's acceptance are diminished.

RQ 3: How does Pastor Scott's use of transformative explanation positively affect the likelihood of her intended message's acceptance?

Because the purpose of transformative explanation is to alter one's audience's perception of a particular phenomenon, adherence to each part of the process is necessary to its implementation. Each of the five steps in the process leads into the next, increasing the likelihood that an audience is given enough of the right kind of information to change its views of the topic at hand. Each element is equally important for successfully creating a speech with transformative qualities.

In the first of Scott's sermons in our sample, Pastor Scott utilizes the unique style she came to be known for. Using her knowledge of the original language the sermon's biblical passage was based upon, she is able to provide the greater understanding of the subject that is required for her audience to gravitate toward her re-translation. Scott also abides by the requisite demand for a clear proposal of her alternate theory. Though both of these elements were strongly represented in her sermon, the key components which come before them are insufficient. Scott neglects to speak on the behalf of those who

agree with the original understanding of the passage, as well as only disagree with it as a matter of fact. This means that this sermon lacks the elements required by the process of transformative explanation to have the desired effect.

The next sermon in our sample shares similarities with the first: while Scott does well to explain a more accurate depiction of the passage in Luke, she provides none of the preceding information that frames her opposition to the prevailing theory in place. With the absence of an iteration of the common theory, an acknowledgement of its plausibility, and a demonstration of its inadequacy, this sermon, too, falls well short of the guidelines for transformative explanation.

The third sermon in our sample is quite nearly identical to the first: lacking an acknowledgement of the lay theory's plausibility and only weakly describing its shortfalls. Furthermore, not only does Scott not provide acknowledgement for the lay theory, but she presents its proponents in a negative light—no doubt having an adverse effect on those who perceived her statements that way. Alike to the second sermon, however, this one also ends without a strong proposal of the interpretation Scott is advancing. As was said about the first sermon in the sample, a single missing step means this sermon lacks the necessary elements to transform the attitudes of Scott's audience, according to the theoretical basis of transformative explanation.

As far as the steps of transformative explanation are concerned, this sample of Scott's sermons did not display the format well, with each sermon having at least one missing element and one which was weakly represented. With their theme of reinterpretation of Scripture, it is vital for these sermons to tactfully guide their audiences

to new understanding; having left out certain key elements, this sample cannot be said to have used the model to enhance the likelihood of its messages' acceptance.

RQ 4: How does Pastor Scott's use of metanarration positively affect the likelihood of her intended message's acceptance?

In this study, the detection of metanarration was based upon the presence of both a primary and secondary narrative, along with a response which connected the two to each other. As the style of Scott's sermons typically involve redefining the meaning of Scriptural passages, it was not difficult to find examples of this communication theory within the sample of this study.

In the first sermon examined, Scott addresses the meaning of a verse that is lost in translation. Responding with a detailed discussion of several of the words as they were written in Greek, she is able to guide her audience toward an alternate understanding of the primary narrative. In the second sermon, Scott presents a syllogistic argument for the true nature of salvation, with the inference of the first premise being that Christians believe they must pursue their own salvation, the second being Scott's response with the story of Zacchaeus (in which God sought man for man's salvation), and the conclusion being that Christians should instead believe that God seeks them for their salvation. In the third sermon, Scott responds to the ever-present socially constructed dichotomy of "good people" and "bad people." To counteract the prideful notion that some people are better than others, Scott cites the passage that reminds us how we all fall short of the glory of God in order to put forth a message of redemption and equality through Christ's crucifixion.

Each sermon in the sample contains a primary narrative, a response, and the proposition of a secondary narrative, seemingly proving the implicit involvement of metanarration in biblical exposition. As in the context of crises, the use of metanarration serves to encourage recovery and resolution from the apparent mistakes or confusion of the primary narrative. In Scott's case, we find that metanarration provides encouragement for her audience to adopt new ideas about the meaning of Scripture.

Next, we discuss the study's findings as they relate to the bridging of communication studies and ministry, as well as the limitations present in this study and suggestions for further research.

Chapter Five: Discussion

This study was born out of a desire to connect the common theories and practices in communication studies with the art of homiletic ministry. In particular, this study intended to use Pastor Melissa Scott as an exemplar of pastors whose sermons intrinsically involve academically-proven techniques for public speaking in the field of communication studies. By analyzing how she presents her translation-based arguments to her congregation, we gain the ability to glean what sermons might be lacking in terms of communication theory and propose ways to improve upon common preaching methods for the betterment of both speaker and hearer in the global setting of ministry.

Explanation

Through the application of four separate structure theories found within the curriculum of communication studies, we were able to dissect the basic structures of three sermons given by Pastor Melissa Scott during her tenure at Faith Center in Glendale, California. The first stage of this study implemented the Toulmin Model to provide a simplified visual demonstration of the structures of each sermon's argument. Though the three sermons in the sample show no distinct pattern, each contains the elements required for a complete argument. Due to its general nature, this completeness serves as the indicator of use of the Toulmin Model. Of course, these findings do not imply the speaker's direct knowledge and implementation of the structure theories at hand, but rather that the speaker—likely unknowingly—included the ideas these theories represent in her sermons due to their intrinsic connection.

As we see above, the sample offered a variety of combinations one might find in the structure of an argument: one rather straightforward, one multi-faceted with more than one claim present, and one imbued with facts to make its point. According to their adaptability to the Toulmin Model, all three appear to accomplish the flow necessary to provide persuasive reasoning for an audience. Although there are no specific criteria for what an argument should look like—as it should be, for context (among myriad other factors) often dictates the requirements of a speaker and his or her message—the Toulmin Model appears to bolster the likelihood that Scott's audience was given an adequate amount of information to accept the messages conveyed in her sermons.

With both Monroe's Motivated Sequence and the model for transformative explanation, the judgment of Scott's use or nonuse of the underlying theory becomes a simple matter of whether Scott's sermons followed the steps laid out by each model. In the case of Monroe's Motivated Sequence, we found that the final two steps presented the greatest challenge to Scott. Both the visualization of successful participation and the call to action were missing in one sermon and weakly represented in another. While this might mean that the preceding steps of gaining attention, stating the problem, and proposing a solution are fairly intrinsic to the homiletic process, it certainly indicates that more emphasis upon what happens after the implementation of the solution takes place is needed.

On the other hand, the application of the model for transformative explanation showed a weakness in the beginning stages of argument, especially in regard to the second step of acknowledging the credibility of the status quo. According to the sermons' interaction with the criteria present, the flaw in Scott's performance rested in

the transition from the common theory to her own. Being the essence of argument itself, Scott neglected to offer that information which communication scholars contend to be vital information for the acceptance of one's message. Our findings demonstrate that even experienced speakers must be careful to provide clear, complete instruction to create a logical argument that is acceptable to one's audience; otherwise, as is the case for this sample, the model of transformative explanation will illustrate the gaps which detract from the likelihood of one's audience accepting the message one's desires to convey.

For the purpose of this study, the basis for evaluating the presence of metanarration—like the Toulmin Model—was based around the single criterion of the presence of each of its parts: a primary narrative, a response, and a secondary narrative. Each sermon succeeded in providing all three elements, although on one occasion the primary narrative was merely implied by the speaker. Indeed, the format of worship in which sermon-giving is prevalent is likely to include certain presumptions which qualify as a primary narrative, making the bulk of the sermon the speaker's response to and modification of the audience's predispositions. Given the ease of applying the theory of metanarration to Scott's sermons, these findings serve to demonstrate the relevance of communication theory such as metanarration to those who wish to improve their understanding and practice of homiletic ministry.

Implications

The comparisons drawn between Scott's sermons and the communication theory used within this study enable us to provide constructive criticism regarding expository preaching for the benefit of any rhetor. Having highlighted the structural weaknesses of the sermons in the sample, several suggestions can now be made which exemplify how a

pastor might strengthen his or her argument according to modern communication scholarship to create a more persuasive message. While these suggestions likely will not be applied to this selection of sermons by Scott, it does in the least provide a template for revision based upon the four theories discussed herein. The Toulmin Model demonstrates the flexibility afforded to the public speaker; a variety of formats can be successfully employed to argue a point—so long as each claim is provided with a warrant backed by data of some kind. Ideally, the complexity of an argument will be adjusted to suit not only the subject matter but also the audience receiving the information. As such, pastors in particular might want to avoid overly complex or thorough examinations of material due to their wide audience base (ergo, varying levels of knowledge and interest) as well as the time constraint often placed on homily for the average Sunday worship service. Another concern for the pastor is to be aware of when a part of an argument is left to the listener to infer; as mentioned before, it is not uncommon in ministry to hear a message which contains a number of presumptions.

One such example of this phenomenon was displayed in Scott's sermon on the Call of God. In referring to the story of Zacchaeus being sought out by Jesus on his way to Jerusalem, Scott expounds upon the mechanics of the founding of Zacchaeus's relationship with God based upon the assumption that her congregation shares her understanding that the Scripture and its teachings are directly applicable to modern life. While this is perhaps not a great leap in reasoning given the context, it would certainly be better for Scott to verbally acknowledge this philosophy to her congregation so that those who might not see the purpose in discussing the account of Zacchaeus in Luke 19 understand that each of us is—metaphorically speaking—Zacchaeus to God.

Monroe's Motivated Sequence lends a convenient method for ensuring one's speech possesses the ability to incite some desired action or change. Interestingly, the majority of the sequence was found in each sermon of the sample, while the final two elements either appeared in a lesser capacity or did not appear at all. In Scott's sermon on forgiveness, the listener is provided no explanation of what successfully leading a life of forgiving looks like; in addition, the sermon ends without offering clear instruction for the listener to take away from the lecture. According to the format of the sequence, Scott should have first described the life of a person who correctly understands and practices what it means to be forgiving and concluded with an assurance that each person in her congregation now had the necessary information to be that person, which is what any dedicated believer would want. In her sermon on guilt, Scott again concludes her message before providing her listeners with a proper call to action; in fact, she simply ends with restating the contradiction between our usual behavior and the beliefs which should prevent them. Scott—and any pastor with a similar message—should make sure to leave her audience with a specific avenue for implementing the knowledge imparted to them. Making the visualization of future success and the call to action more prominent in one's sermon will bolster the chances that one's audience will be moved to act towards the resolution of the problem at hand.

The method of transformative explanation showed that, when attempting to alter a listener's perception of an idea, careful attention must be applied to the transition from the preconceived notion to the alternate perspective being introduced. Each sermon in the sample lacked acknowledgement of the plausibility of the lay theory—in this case, the likelihood that a particular passage could be interpreted the way in which it is popularly

understood. The very next requirement in the process, demonstrating the lay theory's inadequacy, was likewise either absent or executed poorly. It appears that much of the information these sermons lack is due to a tendency to gloss over the finer details of the argument rather than verbalize each step in its rationalization. To strengthen Scott's sermon on the Call of God, this would mean specifically stating the common interpretation of the account of Zacchaeus's summoning, acknowledging the merit of said interpretation, and explicitly describing its inaccuracies before conveying greater understanding and forming a proposal for new understanding. Without a clear depiction of the juxtaposition of the popular interpretation and Scott's own, the audience is less likely to perceive Scott's message as good reason to forsake its knowledge of the subject and adopt her ideology as its own.

Understanding the nature of narrative shift through the lens of metanarration allows a rhetor to plan an appropriate response to an existing condition. In her sermons, Scott was tasked with effecting the transition from one way of thinking about Scripture to a newer, more correct understanding. Our sample invariably shows Scott presenting an argument, whether on a linguistic, anecdotal, or theological basis, for abandoning the common perception of selected passages and encouraging her audience to adopt—and share—a secondary explanation for the concepts found within them. While this information offers little opportunity to critique the text itself, it further demonstrates the usefulness of communication theory to the rhetor in its ability to inform such decisions as what language to include or not include and how to present it in the most effective way for persuading an audience (Cicero's rhetorical canons of invention and arrangement, respectively).

In sum, we have gleaned from this case study in rhetorical analysis what a rhetor of homily might neglect to include in his or her preaching method, whether due to the ironic disconnect between the fields of academic and ministerial speech education or the unawareness of emergent theories in the former by the latter. First, we know that a variety of structure formats are permissible, so long as they contain all the parts of a complete argument. Second, we see that for maximum persuasive effect simply proposing a solution to one's rhetorical problem does not suffice; the speaker should also be held accountable to provide a description of its successful implementation and describe the way in which the listener is responsible for its success by way of a specific call to action. Third, we support the notion that explicitly stating an idea, acknowledging its merit, and explaining its shortcomings are equally important criteria when speaking to an audience in an attempt to alter its perception of a common thought process. Finally, we find that the theory of metanarration holds true for the "rhetorical situation" of preaching; therefore, developments in its understanding should only add to the preacher's rhetorical skill and ought to be articulated to the preaching community for its benefit.

Contribution

Fostering cooperation between scholars of different fields can often be as simple as proving each community's value to the other. While preaching expands the communication scholar's scope of study and increases the depth of communication theory's practicality, rhetorical analysis offers rhetors in ministry additional tools for speechcraft which might not exist in the curricula of modern seminaries. This study is an attempt to provide not only proof of this mutually beneficial relationship but a specific example of its implementation. Even at the undergraduate level, the potential for

discussion is overwhelming; continued research is necessary if we are to forge a permanent link with communication theory and homiletic practices.

Limitations

While this analysis is intended to provide a thorough description of Pastor Scott's homiletic style, there will always be room for improvement. As the analysis focused upon the single rhetorical element of structure, it covers only a fraction of the broader context of the rhetorical act; should one feel compelled, an entirely new analysis could be composed centered around any combination of the remaining six elements. Additionally, the finite quantity of digital recordings of Scott's sermons contributed to a small selection of sermons dating from January 2008 to October 2009. Though the recency—or lack thereof—of the sermons has no effect upon their relevance in regard to the structure theories used to analyze them, this greatly reduces the usefulness of the results of the analysis to Scott herself should she take an interest in the research to hone her style based on the critique above. Naturally, other useful structure theories exist within the field of communication; however, not all such theories are as pertinent to argument structure as those present in this study. Finally, due to the inescapably subjective nature of qualitative research, much could be said for the significance of the inclusion of differing perspectives on the topic—a truth which serves as yet another indicator of the need for additional academic effort along the vein of this case study.

Suggestions for Further Research

Future research could serve the communication studies community best by continuing to allow new theories and new explanations for argumentation and persuasion attempt to define and explain the nuances of homiletic ministry. Besides the inclusion of

more preachers who are met favorably, the analysis of the trends in style may help to suggest where the genre of expository preaching is headed in the future, rather than simply focusing on the present. Analysis emphasizing the importance of the other rhetorical elements could also provide a fuller demonstration of the wealth of knowledge already in place in the field of communication studies at the disposal of those interested in improving their performance ability. Rhetorical analysis is certainly not the only way to accomplish this goal, however, and the options remain abundant as more literature of this kind is produced. What is needed now is the recognition of this qualitatively tangible relationship and the motivation to enhance the practices employed on behalf of ministry and evangelical mission work.

Conclusion

Studies like this one are necessary to the effort to establish the connection between communication theory, like that of argumentation and persuasion, to homiletic efficacy for aims such as the resignification of biblical terms and concepts and translation-related theological discourse. A marriage of these two academic worlds can and should provide mutual benefits for each other to create a system where one of the most prevalent and practical circumstances of public oratory—preaching—can act as the closing link in a feedback loop for studies in rhetoric, which then recycles that information back to ministry, and so on.

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Appendix A: Sermon Transcripts

"Pastor Melissa Scott Teaches on Forgiveness (Ephesians 4)"

We're in Ephesians, the fourth chapter, today, verses 22 through 32. So, we know what we're talking about. "That should put off concerning the former conversation, the former behavior, the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lust"—I'm only reading King James at this point—"be renewed in the spirit of your mind that ye put on the new men, which after God was created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore put away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor. For we are members, one of another. Be ye angry: *be ye angry*, and sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Neither give place to the Devil. Let him who stole steal no more but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth. But that which is good to the use of the edifying that it may minister grace upon the hearers and grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitter and wrath and anger and clamor and evil-speaking be put away from you with all malice. Be ye kind, one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another--even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.

There is an order here, there is a command here that He gives and this is what I want to look at, very quickly. That last verse says—I wrote it up here [on the white board]—"even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you." But He starts with saying,

"and be ye kind to one another." Now, γιnϵσΘϵ: "become." I put the "and" here for flow, but really become—an imperative. Become—an imperative—to one another, kind, and this word here "euσ—," it's very hard to pronounce, "euσplaγCnoι." Good—you good—tender-hearted "Caριζomϵnoι": freely forgiving. Now, these here I put as adjectives. They're describing something. But these are verbs for us. To be or become and forgiving—freely forgiving—because this word here, Caριζomϵnoι, at the root you have Caριζ, from where we get grace—and grace is unmerited favor freely given by God to us—so freely forgiving each other, one another. . . KaΘwσ: "just as." Kaι δ Θϵoσ: "just—also, as God—in Christ; Θϵoσ ϵn Cρισtw: "in Christ," and this puts this in the past "ϵCaρισato υμιn"—and I wanted to make this correction because it is very misleading. It says "even," in your King James, it says, "even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you." No . . . I mean, that sounds very nice and poetic, but no, not so. He's saying, "you become to one another kind and good or tender-hearted, freely forgiving each other, just as God"—and here's the big word—"in Christ, God—*in Christ, ϵn Cρισtw*—forgave you."

Now, you'd be surprised at how many people ask me about forgiveness and they say, "Well, how do I do it?" I'll come back to what Paul says when he says, "Become." Become. Not just, "I'm asking you to." This is one place where he tells us to become kind—and it's not, these are not, by the way, these aren't—kindness is not a verb and being good or tender-hearted is not a verb. But forgiving is, which means it's an action—and it's an action which you, *you*, by the power of the Holy Spirit say, "I'm forgiving." We're not asked in any capacity to do anything beyond what we're told here. "Become kind to one another." Become. The imperative command, it's an action, it's not gonna

happen like this. And this whole element of being forgiven—maybe you already understood it and I'm only talking to one person—the things that have been put on me or put on you and the things that I'm instructed to do begin with this one act: my recognition [that] I am not to bereave the Holy Spirit away. The rest of it He will take care of, if you'll trust him.

"The Call of God by Pastor Melissa Scott"

Now I'm going to start here in Luke 19. I want you to picture this: there are thousands of people coming into Jericho, in that direction, heading toward Jerusalem and here comes Jesus entering into the scene. And what I love most about this, this description is it tells that Zaccheus is not only just a tax collector but he was chief among the tax collectors and he was very rich and, if you know a little bit of the history, the Roman empire would bid out these jobs for tax collector and it was, for example, Zaccheus, he was the chief tax collector, was his duty to collect a tax from everybody coming through—picture it like a toll booth—everybody coming this way, pay up. "What do you got here, you got 3 cows, 5 donkeys, you got a couple of chickens over here, okay . . . that's how much tax it's going to cost you. Oh—wait a minute. Uh, we gotta add on this 25% tax because, uh. . . Zaccheus said so. That's my salary, you know. Gotta make a living somehow." He was hated—not only because he was a traitor and worked for the Romans, but because he ripped people off. You could not get by him without paying taxes to Rome and then paying extra, additional taxes. So. Here's what happens:

It says in verse 3, "And he sought to see Jesus, who he was." Let me go over here for a minute [to the white board]. [writes] "He sought to see Jesus." Now, I want you to

take notice, I'm not going to do any Greek lessons today but I want you to just take note of one thing. That this word "to seek" and this word "sought" are the same in the Greek. So, when we're told to seek the kingdom of God and Zaccheus was, it says he sought to see Jesus—he was literally seeking—as the same word, he was seeking to see Jesus. He could not for the press—and that's not the media—because he was of little stature. Or like the Greek says, "He was μικapos": a little guy. And he ran before, climbed up a sycamore tree to see him, for he was to pass that way. Now, I could just--I'm sorry, when I read this, and indulge me because I read these things and I don't just read them like, "Oh, it's . . . you know. . ." I picture this guy in his robe, you know, the traditional type of robe they wore in that day, climbing up a tree like a little monkey and you know sycamore trees are big, a full tree with big full leaves. I can just see him climbing up the tree. I want you to really get the picture of the multitudes streaming by, lots of hustle and bustle, and there's got to be this buzz—not just the people going to pay their taxes—but there's got to be this buzz about Jesus, because Jesus, as he was going, his fame was already well heard throughout the land. And I can just see this little guy, climbing up the tree, getting up the tree, he's in the tree, and if there was a possibility—now, this is the funny part, I have some visions of him, he had his bag of pomegranate seeds and it was like popcorn, you know, he's gonna watch the Superstar Jesus pass by—who is this guy. And, you know, just his whole demeanor I can just see his whole demeanor and when Jesus came to the place he looked up, he saw him, and he said to him, "Zaccheus, make haste, come down, for today I must abide at thy house."

Now, if there's any debate about how God comes to man—if there's any debate, if people are not clear about my theology—it's spelled out perfectly clear here. The way of

salvation is just like this. There was in Zaccheus's mind a curiosity to see this Jesus pass by, probably didn't even know why, just wanted to see him. You know, like some people say, "I was passing by the channels and I'm not religious, but I just stopped because I didn't know what you were doing at the blackboard and I just stopped and I don't know why I stopped, I stopped by accident. . ." [laughter] And then they'll call in a few months later and say, "I found you a couple of months ago by accident, and now I'd like a King's House number, please, and I want to be a tither and participate." This is the way salvation comes to man. I think it's a terrible shame—and forgive the simplicity of this message—but it's a terrible shame that the body of Christ, the Church world at large today, is not showing people this is how it happens. Jesus didn't say, "Hey, can you make room available for me? Hey, Zaccheus, can you spare a room for me? I'm knocking at the door, please let me in. It's cold outside. Let me in." [laughter] I'm sorry, I just—sometimes I feel like am I the only person reading the Bible or something because Jesus said, "I must abide at thy house." He didn't say, "I must abide at the neighbor's house." He said, "I must abide at *your* house." Think about that. And if there was ever a clearer way to describe the way God comes to man—and He didn't say to Zaccheus, "Look, before you get down from that tree there, I want you to say, 'My name is Zaccheus, I'm a sinner, [laughter] I know I'm a sinner, I repent of my sins.' Now, you cannot come down until you've said that a couple of times, until you believe it." So, this is the way salvation comes. It cannot come by coercion; there was something Zaccheus was searching for, just like you, just like me, he was searching for something.

Now, this is such a foreign message to the rest of the church world because the rest of the church world: "We're gonna go through the traditions that make void the Word

of God." Now, how can reciting a prayer, trying to get you to repeat what's coming out of my mouth, that's maybe not even in my heart, how can it be coming out of your heart? Zaccheus made haste, came down, received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured, they complained, saying that he was gone to be a guest with a man that is a sinner. "Oh, my, what are you doing Jesus? What are you doing? [Laughter] Don't you know?"

Now, all I know is that from this word, two things are sure: God's grace is sufficient for Zaccheus or for you or for me, and that whatever was discussed in that house, whatever was said, Zaccheus came out absolutely changed. The things of this world were no longer holding him. He was fixed on the kingdom of God and that's the starting point of having a right relationship with Him and relating to Him. Again, it comes back to a recognition of who owns what in your life, who's the owner, who's the boss, who is calling the shots. And one message is being said over and over again, beginning with have faith in God. Trusting him who called you and brought you here, and has not set you up to fail but has given you the steps, ordered them and put you on a path to His Kingdom. Follow it. Stay on the course, would you? That's my message.

"Pastor Scott teaching on Guilt and Sin"

Romans 3:22—the last portion of the phrase—and Romans 3:23. The last portion of the phrase says, "There-"—I'm gonna write it in English so we can all read it together—"there is no difference-"—I think I'm writing English—"there is no difference—" and it should continue as one sentence—"for all have done good, for all are perfect [laughter]"—just checking, some of you might have already departed me—"for all have love, for all have sinned." Who, me? No. *And*—there's an and in there, a

conjunction—"and come short"—I'm just writing it as it appears in the King James—"come short of the glory of God." That's my point of departure. Now, I picked a little something to read to you before I get started from Pinkham, his book called "The Lamb of God." Listen to what he says: "Sin is everywhere. It's in the heart, it's on the tongue, it's in the actions. It's not only in the bar room and the gambling den. Sin is behind the counter, it's in front of the counter. Sin is in the palace, in the rubble, in the city, in the country. Sin is in the state, it's in the Church, sin is in the legislator, the judge, the jury, the clerk, and the constable. Sin in confessional, sin in cloistered clergymen, laymen, sin in the little child, and the man with gray hairs. A race marked with sin, for there is not a just man upon the Earth that doeth good and sinneth not. A race marked with sin, thus sayeth the Lord whose Word standeth forever. The conscience of a man who bears witness—also persons [who are] found who, in resisting the appeals of God's messenger, say "I do not know that I am a sinner"—they acknowledge sin in all others though professedly blind to its existence in themselves.

I could go on and read but I'm gonna stop. I may come back to this. Somehow degrees of sin, like "I'm not as bad as this person, I didn't rob a bank, therefore I'm not as bad as that person" or "Well, I don't do that. . ." Hey, go read the Bible, the Pharisee and publican: "I thank my God I'm not like so and so. . ." Guess what, you just did worse, you just did worse in the act of saying you're not like that person, spiritual pride and the sin of saying "I'm not like him," when in fact the fact of the matter is you're all—*we* all—are born in Adam, and all have sinned. It doesn't say—it says there's no difference—you know what that means? It means black, it means white, it means yellow, it means red, it means God sees no color. He doesn't see any indication of more or less,

there is no difference. Now, I'm going to say this, because maybe there are some of you that are like me, where people have tried to just beat you over the head and say, "Well, you know, this and that and the other thing." Jesus, when he hung on the cross—and I'm going to personalize it for me, you personalize it for you—He hung on the cross for me. That means the shame, the guilt, the reproach, it hung on the cross with Him, and I—by carrying it around—I basically say "I'm gonna just crucify Christ anew every day. That's my act. I've got this, uh, bag on my back stuffed with my sin. Let me carry it around and show everybody what it looks like so you can all get a good look at what I'm carry around. And then if that's not enough, let me hand over what I'm carrying so you can beat me over the head with it." That's not the Christianity that I want, because that's not the Christianity that I came to know or that I know or that's in the Bible or that's been promised to me and to you.

Appendix B: Selected Bibliography of Rhetorical Criticism and Biblical Studies

These works, while unnecessary for the specific purpose of this study, demonstrate the recent scholarly effort to establish a correlation between rhetorical criticism and biblical studies. Worthwhile publications include *Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Currents in Biblical Research, Expository Times, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Journal for the Study of the New Testament,* and *Vetus Testamentum*.

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[7] This book is one of a series which shares the subtitle "A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary" by Ben Witherington.

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